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COMMENTARIES

EXPOSITION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

EZEKIEL

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 EZEKIEL

This book is rightly placed after Jeremiah; since Ezekiel was among the captives in Chaldea, when prophesied; whereas Jeremiah began to prophesy long before that captivity, and concerning it. The name of this prophet signifies, as it is commonly interpreted, “the strength of God”, or “strengthened by God”, as he was, and as he needed to be, having great work to do, and a perverse people to deal with; see (~~2008~~ Ezekiel 3:8); but the learned Hillerus^{f1} chooses to render it, “God shall prevail”; with which compare (~~2407~~ Jeremiah 20:7). There was a Levite of this name, of whom mention is made in (~~1346~~ 1 Chronicles 24:16); whose name is there read “Jehezkel”; and this prophet was a priest, (~~2008~~ Ezekiel 1:3); and both Clemens Alexandrinus^{f2} and Eusebius^{f3} cite a Jewish writer of tragedies, of the same name; which some have very wrongly thought to be the same with our prophet; but whether Ezekiel is not the same with Nazaratus or Zabratius, the master of Pythagoras, mentioned by Clemens as such, according to the opinion of some, is a matter of question; and which the learned Selden^{f4} seems to think probable. According to the judgment and opinion of Jerom^{f5}, his style is neither very eloquent, nor very rustic; but between both, and has a mixture of each. The visions he saw are very abstruse and difficult of interpretation, especially the vision of the living creatures and wheels; wherefore the Jews^{f6} forbad the reading of it, as well as the end of this prophecy, until persons were thirty years of age. The divine visions in this book, the whole subject matter of it, its agreement with the prophecy of Jeremiah, and the accomplishment of events predicted in it, prove the authority of it; and its divine authority has always been allowed, both by the Jewish synagogue and the Christian church. There were indeed some ancient Jewish Rabbins, who were perplexed about some things in it, and consulted about laying it aside, because of some words in it, which seemed to them to be contrary to the law of Moses; but R. Chananiah ben Goron, a very famous doctor in those times, withdrew to his chamber, and wrote a commentary, in order to remove those difficulties to satisfaction^{f7}. This book, in general, contains various visions the prophet saw; several threatenings against the people of the Jews; and prophecies against other nations; and an abundance of comfortable promises of the Messiah, and of blessings of grace by him; and of the state and condition of the Gospel church, and the worship of it. Josephus^{f8} says Ezekiel left two

books written by him; one of which Athanasius^{f9}: or the author of the Synopsis under his name, thinks is lost; but the learned Huetius^{f10} is of opinion that the prophecy of Ezekiel, in the times of Josephus, was divided into two parts; the first containing the first thirty nine chapters, and the other the nine last chapters; which is not improbable. If the authorities of Epiphanius^{f11}, or the writer of the lives of the prophets that goes by his name, and of Isidorus^{f12}, are of any weight, Ezekiel was born in the land of Sarera; killed by the governor in Babylon; and buried by the people in the field of Maur or Mahurim, in the sepulchre of Shem and Arphaxad. The account R. Benjamin Tudelensis^{f13} gives is, that there is a synagogue of the Prophet Ezekiel by the river Euphrates; and over against the synagogue sixty towers, ; and between every tower a synagogue. In the court of the synagogue is a library; and behind it the grave of Ezekiel the son of Buzi the priest; and over it a large vault, of a beautiful building, erected by Jeconiah king of Judah, and thirty five thousand Jews, who came with him, when Evilmerodach brought him out of prison; and over the grave a lamp burns night and day. The Cippi Hebraici say^{f14} he was buried by, the river Hiddekel; and Menasseh ben Israel^{f15} affirms that he died in Babylon, and was buried there; and so Kimchi^{f16} says the tradition is.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 1

This chapter contains a vision, which is the introduction to the prophet's call and commission to perform his office; in the account of which may be observed the time when it was seen, (^{<3003>}Ezekiel 1:1,2); and the place both where the prophet was when he saw it, and the object or things that were beheld by him; and the original, form, and manner of the vision, (^{<3003>}Ezekiel 1:3,4); next follow the particulars of it; and first, four living creatures appear, described by their general likeness, as human, (^{<3005>}Ezekiel 1:5); and, in particular, by their faces, feet, hands, and wings, (^{<3006>}Ezekiel 1:6-11); by their motion and progress, and the spirit by which they were influenced, (^{<3012>}Ezekiel 1:12); and by their forms of light, brightness, and heat, in which they appeared and moved, (^{<3013>}Ezekiel 1:13,14); and next the wheels, described by their number; for, though they seemed to be as one, they were four; and by their situation on the earth, and by the side of the living creatures, (^{<3015>}Ezekiel 1:15); by their appearance, which was alike in them all, and as the colour of beryl, and as a wheel within a wheel, (^{<3016>}Ezekiel 1:16); by their motion, which was on their sides, and not retrograde, (^{<3017>}Ezekiel 1:17); by their rings or circumferences, which were high, dreadful, and full of eyes, (^{<3018>}Ezekiel 1:18); by their dependence on the living creatures, moving as they, having the same spirit they had, (^{<3019>}Ezekiel 1:19-21); and then a firmament is seen, described by its situation, over the heads of the living creatures; and by its colour, as the terrible crystal, (^{<3022>}Ezekiel 1:22); by what were under it, the wings of the living creatures of which a more particular account is given, (^{<3023>}Ezekiel 1:23,24); by what was heard from it, a voice, (^{<3025>}Ezekiel 1:25); and by what was above it, a throne; described by its colour, as a sapphire stone; and by a person on it, who had the appearance of a man, (^{<3026>}Ezekiel 1:26); who, in general, looked like the colour of amber; within which was the appearance of fire from his loins upwards, and from his loins downwards; the fire had a brightness round about it; and that brightness was like a rainbow in a cloud, on a rainy day; and this appearance was no other than that of a divine and glorious Person; which, when seen by the prophet, caused him, through reverence, to fall upon his face; when he heard a voice

speaking to him what is recorded in the following chapter, (~~3017~~Ezekiel 1:27,28).

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year*, &c.] Either from the last jubilee, as R. Joseph Kimchi^{f17}, Jarchi, and Abendana; or from the time that the book of the law was found by Hilkiyah the priest^{f18}; so the Targum, which paraphrases the words thus,

“and it was in the thirtieth year after Hilkiyah the high priest found the book of the law, in the house of the sanctuary, in the court under the porch, in the middle of the night, after the moon was down, in the days of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah;”

or, according to Jerom^{f19}, from the time of the prophet’s birth, who was now thirty years of age, and was just entered into his priestly office; or rather it was the thirtieth year of Nabopolassar, or the father of Nebuchadnezzar: this was the twelfth year of the captivity, reckoning from the third of Jehoiakim, which was the first captivity, and from whence the seventy years are to be reckoned, and also the twelfth of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign; and if two years are taken, as Vitringa^{f20} observes, from the twenty one years, which are given to Nabopolassar in Ptolemy’s canon, in which Nebuchadnezzar his son reigned with him, there will be found thirty years from the beginning of Nabopolassar’s reign to the fifth of Jeconiah’s captivity, when Ezekiel began his prophecy, and which, as Bishop Usher^{f21}, Mr. Bedford^{f22}, Mr. Whiston^{f23}, and the authors of the Universal History^{f24}, place in the year 593, before the birth of Christ:

in the fourth [month]; the month Tammuz, as the Targum expresses it; which answers to part of June, and part of July:

in the fifth [day] of the month; which some take to be on a sabbath day; because, seven days after, the word of the Lord came to him again (~~3016~~Ezekiel 3:16); just as John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, (~~3010~~Revelation 1:10); between one of whose visions and this there is a very great likeness, as will be seen hereafter:

as I [was] among the captives by the river of Chebar; which is another agreement in circumstance between Ezekiel and John, when they had their visions: John was an exile in Patros, and Ezekiel among the captives by the river Chebar in Chaldea. Some think this is the same river which is called by Ptolemy^{f25} Chaboras; and is said by him to pass through Mesopotamia: others say it was a river that was drawn off from the river

Euphrates, by the order of one Cobaris, or Gobaris, a governor, from whence it had its name; that the river Euphrates might not, by its rapid course, hurt the city of Babylon; and by the Assyrians it was called Armalchar, or Narmalcha^{f26}, the king's river; though it seems to be no other than Euphrates itself; and Kimchi observes, that in some copies of the Targum on this place it is interpreted of the river Euphrates; and he says their Rabbins of blessed memory say, that Chebar is Euphrates; and so Abarbinel; see (^{<9170>}Psalm 137:1). Monsieur Thevenot^{f27} speaks of a river called Chabur, which is less than Alchabour, another mentioned by him; and has its source below Mosul, and on the left hand to those that go down the Tigris, and at Bagdad loses itself in the Tigris which he takes to be the same as here:

that the heavens were opened; as at our Lord's baptism, and at the stoning of Stephen; and so when John had his vision which corresponds with the following, a door was opened in heaven (^{<604>}Revelation 4:1);

and I saw the visions of God; which God showed unto him, and which were great and excellent; as excellent things are called things of God, as mountains of God, and cedars of God, (^{<916>}Psalm 36:6 80:10); and indeed he had a vision of a divine Person, in a human form; to which agrees the Targum,

“and I saw in the vision of prophecy, which abode on me, the vision of the glory of the majesty of the Lord.”

The Arabic and Syriac versions read, “the vision of God”.

Ver. 2. *In the fifth [day] of the month*, &c.] The month Tammuz, as before:

(which [was] the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity); the same with Jeconiah and Coniah, as he is sometimes called; he was taken by the king of Babylon, when he had reigned but three months, and his captivity held seven and thirty years, (^{<1248>}2 Kings 24:8,12 25:27).

Ver. 3. *The word of the Lord came expressly*, &c.] Or, “in being was”^{f28}; which phrase denotes the reality, certainty, substantiality and evidence of the word of the Lord to him:

unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi; which Buzi, some say, was Jeremiah. Kimchi observes, that, in the Jerusalem Targum, the Prophet

Ezekiel is called the son of Jeremiah the prophet: and Jeremiah was called Buzi because they despised him; this is rejected by Abarbanel; nor is there any reason to believe it, any more than what Nazianzen^{f29} says, that Ezekiel was a servant of Jeremiah:

in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar; (see Gill on “^{<300>}Ezekiel 1:1”). The Chaldee paraphrase makes the word of the Lord to come to him at two distinct times and places;

“the word of prophecy from before the Lord was with Ezekiel the son of Buzi the priest in the land of Israel: it returned a second time, and spoke with him in the province, the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar:”

and the hand of the Lord was there upon him; by which is meant the gift and word of prophecy, which came with power and efficacy, clearness and evidence; so the Targum, and the

“spirit of prophecy from before the Lord there abode by him;”

by which he saw all later visions, and delivered out the following prophecies; (see ^{<602>}2 Peter 1:21).

Ver. 4. *And I looked,* &c.] Being under the influence of the Spirit and power of God:

and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north; which some understand of Nebuchadnezzar and his army coming from Babylon, which lay north of Judea: (see ^{<2014>}Jeremiah 1:14); but it seems to me to be, with what follows, only an apparatus to the following vision: and is designed to awaken the mind of the prophet, and to fix his attention to what should proceed from hence, and be seen by him; just as the Lord speared in and answered Job out of, the whirlwind, (^{<880>}Job 38:1);

a great cloud; as is usual when there is much thunder and lightning; though some understand this also of Nebuchadnezzar’s army, which came in great human, swiftly and powerfully, as a cloud:

and a fire infolding itself: in the cloud; rolling within it, when it burst out in thunder and lightning. The Targum renders it, “fire inflamed”, the same phrase is used of the storm of thunder, lightning, and hail, in (^{<0024>}Exodus 9:24). Some understand this of the wrath of the Babylonian monarch; or of the wrath of God by him; or of the sins of men, the cause thereof:

and a brightness [was] about it; that is, the cloud. This brightness was an emblem of the glory of the divine Being; who was now present, an enlightened the mind of the prophet to see the following things, and which all proceeded from him:

and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber out of the midst of the fire; that is, out of the midst of the fire, and out of the midst of the brightness about it, there was something which was as “the colour of amber”; or, “like the chasmal”^{f30}; which, the Jews^{f31} say, is the name of an angel. It is asked^{f32}, what is “chasmal?” R. Judah says, *twhmm ца twyj*, “fiery animals speaking”: who, when God speaks, are silent; and when he does not speak, they speak; but Christ is meant; for the appearance of the man upon the throne is said to be as the colour of “chasmal”, (²⁰¹⁷Ezekiel 1:27). The word, read the contrary way, is the Messiah, or the anointed, or to be anointed. Jarchi thinks it is the name of a colour, nearest to the colour of fire, Junius and Tremellius render it, “a most lively colour”; and perhaps may mean the colour of a burning coal; and Buxtorf translates it, “a coal exceedingly fired”; a clear, burning, red-hot coal; which may denote the pure light of Christ, who is the brightness of his Father’s glory; his flaming love for his people; his burning zeal for the glory of God, and the good of his church; and his fiery indignation against his enemies. We render the word amber, as do others; by which must be meant, not that which is the juice of certain trees, which is hardened by the air, and is of a yellowish colour; nor that liquid substance which comes from sea shores and rocks, and, being hardened in the same way, is of the colour of wax; but a sort of mixed metal, compounded of gold and silver; the fifth part of it is silver, as Pliny^{f33} says, and four parts gold; though Bochart is of opinion that the “quichalcum”, a metal made of gold and brass, is meant; which is the most fine brass; to which the feet of Christ are compared in (²⁰¹⁵Revelation 1:15); and so this “chasmal” may denote the two natures in Christ; the preciousness of his person; his brightness and glory; and his great strength and power. R. Abendana^{f34} conjectures, that the colour of “chasmal” means the colour of some precious stone, as the colour of “tarshish”, or “beryl”, (²⁰¹⁶Ezekiel 1:16); and so he that sat upon the throne, in (²⁰¹⁸Revelation 4:3); was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone.

Ver. 5. *Also out of the midst thereof, &c.]* The fire; or out of the whole that was seen; the whirlwind, cloud, fire, and the brightness about it:

[came] the likeness of four living creatures; not really four living creatures; they appeared like to such they were in the form of such; by which we are to understand, not the four monarchies; nor the four Gospels; nor the angels; but ministers of the Gospel; the true key for the opening of this vision is that which John saw, (⁶⁰⁶Revelation 4:6-8); the four beasts there, or living creatures, as it should be rendered, are the same with these here, and these the same with them; and who manifestly appear to be not only worshippers of the true God, but to be men redeemed by the blood of Christ; and are distinguished from angels, and also from the four and twenty elders, the representatives of the Gospel churches; and so can design no other than the ministers of the word, with whom all the characters of them agree, as in that vision, so in this; (see ⁶⁰⁶Revelation 4:8,9 5:8-11). “Creatures” they are; not gods, but men; they are indeed in God’s stead, and represent him, being ambassadors of his; but they are frail, mortal, sinful men, of like passions with others; and therefore great allowances must be made for their infirmities and weaknesses: yea, as ministers, they are the creatures of God; he, and not men, has made them able ministers of the New Testament: and they are “living” creatures; they have spiritual life in themselves, and are the means of quickening others; and have need to be, and should be, lively and fervent in their ministrations. Their number, “four”, respects the four parts of the, world, to which their commission to preach the Gospel reaches; and whither they are sent, whensoever it is the will and pleasure of God they should go and he has work for them to do;

and this [was] their appearance, they had the likeness of a man; their general likeness was the human form, except in some particulars after mentioned, because they represented men; men humane, tender, kind and pitiful; knowing, and understanding, and acting like men.

Ver. 6. *And or but everyone had four faces*, &c.] Which are described, (see Gill on “³⁰⁰Ezekiel 1:10”). The Targum multiplies the faces in a strange monstrous manner, paraphrasing the words thus,

“each had four faces, and there were four faces to everyone “of them”, and every creature had sixteen faces; the number of the faces of the four creatures was sixty and four;”

and everyone had four wings; the seraphim in (²⁰⁰Isaiah 6:2); and the four beasts or living creatures in (⁶⁰⁶Revelation 4:8); had six wings; and so it seems that these had also, from (³⁰⁰Ezekiel 1:11,23); as will be seen there;

nor is this any contradiction to the account here given, since it is not said they had only four wings. The Targum gives the same monstrous account of their wings as of their faces, saying,

“each had four wings, and there were four wings for everyone of them, sixteen wings to every face, and sixty four to every creature; and the number of the wings of the four living creatures were two hundred and fifty six.”

Jarchi is of the same opinion, and confirms it in his note on the text, which is this,

““four faces to one”; that is, to the face of a man only were four faces, and so, to the lion, to the eagle, and to the ox, lo, sixteen to a living creature, and so to every living creature; and four wings to everyone of the faces, lo, sixty and four wings to a living creatures and which, according to the Targum of Jonathan, amounts to two hundred and fifty six wings;”

what these wings signified, (see Gill on “^{<3011>}Ezekiel 1:11”);

Ver. 7. *And their feet [were] straight feet, &c.*] And they went straight forward, as in (^{<3012>}Ezekiel 1:12); they made straight paths for their feet, and walked uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel; did not go into crooked paths, or turn to the right hand, or the left; and having put their hand to the plough of the Gospel neither looked back, nor turned back.

And or “for”

the sole of their feet [was] like the sole of a calf’s foot; round, and the hoof divided, and fit for treading out the corn, in which oxen were employed; denoting the firmness and constancy of ministers in their work, treading out the corn of the word for the nourishment of souls, to whom they minister. The Septuagint render it, “their feet were winged”; or “flying”, as the Arabic version; in like manner as Mercury, the Heathen god, is painted: this may denote the readiness and swiftness of Gospel ministers to do their master’s work; their feet being shod with the preparation of the Gospel, and so very beautiful, (^{<4015>}Ephesians 6:15 ^{<2511>}Isaiah 52:7). The Targum is,

“the sole of their feet as the sole of feet that are round^{f35}, and they moved the world where they went;”

and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass; that is, their feet; being burning and shining lights in their conversation, as well as in their doctrine; (see ⁴⁰¹⁵Revelation 1:15).

Ver. 8. *And [they had] the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides, &c.*] “Hands of a man” denote action, according to knowledge; ministers of the Gospel are men of practice and business, as well as have the theory and knowledge of things; and they act like men in a rational way, according to the will of God revealed in the word: and these being “on their four sides”, show that they have much work to do all around, on every side; in ministering the word, administering ordinances; visiting their people; giving counsel, caution, comfort, exhortation, instruction, &c. and that they have many hands to do, it with, much grace and strength from above; and they have need of all the hands they have; and what they have they constantly employ, and are steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Briareus, a man of business, is represented by the poets as having a hundred hands. These being “under their wings”, show that, besides their public ministrations, they do much work secretly and privately, in their closet and studies, where no eye sees them but the eye of God, as well as in private houses, by their visits and conversation; and is also expressive of their modesty and humility, not doing what they do to be seen of men, nor boasting of their works; but ascribing all to the grace of God, and strength of Christ, by which they perform them, and which give them success The Jews, in the Talmud¹³⁶, interpret this of the hand of God himself which is stretched out under the wings of the living creatures, to receive penitent persons; because it is written *wdy*, “his hand”, but read *ydy*, “hands”. And they four had their faces and their wings; that is, on their four sides; a face and a wing before, and a face and a wing behind, and a face and a wing on each side; and under each wing a man’s hand and arm. The Targum of the whole is,

“and hands, as the hands of a man, were made for them under their wings on their four sides; to take in them coals of fire from between the cherubim under the firmament, which was over their seats, to, put them into the hands of the seraphim, to scatter upon the place of the ungodly, to destroy the wicked that transgress his word; and their faces and their wings were equal to them four;”

(see ³⁰⁰²Ezekiel 10:2,6-8).

Ver. 9. *Their wings [were] joined one to another, &c.*] “A woman to her sister”^{f37}, in the Hebrew; denoting the concord, harmony, and agreement of Gospel ministers, and their affection to one another; they preach the same Gospel; administer the same ordinances; do the same work of the Lord; have the same zeal for the glory of God; the same love for Christ, and affection for the souls of men; are of the same mind and judgment, and help each other in the service of the Lord; and especially so it will be in the latter day glory, when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, (~~2518~~Isaiah 52:8);

they turned not when they went; they went everyone straight forward; they go not into the path of error and immorality; they do not become apostates from the truth; they are not of them that draw back unto perdition; they go on in the course of their ministry straightforward; let what will be in their way, nothing diverts them from it; notwithstanding all difficulties and discouragements in themselves; reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions from men; and the temptations of Satan; (see Gill on “~~3007~~Ezekiel 1:7”).

Ver. 10. *As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, &c.*] For these living creatures are men, redeemed from among men by the blood of Christ; their business lies with men, to preach the Gospel to them: and they should be humane, kind, and tender in their behaviour towards them; wounded consciences of weak believers, distressed and disconsolate souls, requiring such usage; and they should be men in understanding, have a large knowledge of the Scriptures, of the truths of the Gospel, and of Jesus Christ, since their work is to feed men with knowledge and understanding; and should act the manly part, quit themselves like men in defence of the Gospel, and the truths of it;

and the face of a lion on the right side; denoting the strength of Gospel ministers, the lion being the strongest among beasts, (~~2100~~Proverbs 30:30); and they have need to be strong in the grace of Christ, and in the power of his might, to do the several parts of their work; to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ; to wrestle with principalities and powers, and to bear the infirmities of the weak: and also their courage and fortitude of mind; their boldness in preaching the Gospel of Christ, not fearing the faces of men, nor their revilings; (see ~~2100~~Proverbs 28:1);

and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; expressive of the patience of Gospel ministers in bearing the yoke that is upon them, not only of the ministry, but of the weaknesses of saints, and the reproaches and indignities of the wicked; and in instructing those that oppose

themselves, and in waiting the issue of their ministry: and also of their laboriousness in their ministrations; particularly in treading out the corn of the word, for the subsistence of the saints: (see ^{f38}1 Corinthians 9:9,10);

they four also had the face of an eagle; showing their strong and clear sight of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it; the eagle having so strong an eye, that it is able to look full and steadfastly upon the sun; and their diligence in searching into the deep things of God, and particularly to find out where the carcass is, a crucified Christ, to feed upon themselves, and to direct others to it likewise. It seems as if these four living creatures had four distinct heads, as well as faces, and that the position of them was in this manner; the face of a man before; the face of a lion on the right side; the face of an ox on the left; and the face of an eagle behind, These four are the most excellent of creatures. The Talmudists have a saying,

“there are four that are proud (or excel) in the world; the lion among beasts; the ox among cattle; the eagle among birds; and man, whom God has exalted above all, for he rules over all^{f38}.”

Ver. 11. *Thus [were] their faces: and their wings [were] stretched upward, &c.*] The former clause, “thus [were] their faces”, either belongs to (^{f38}Ezekiel 1:10); and the meaning is, this, as now represented, was the likeness of their faces, and this the position of them: or it may be read in connection with the following clause, and be rendered, “and their faces and their wings were stretched upwards”; as they are in the Chaldee paraphrase, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions: “their faces were stretched upwards”, showing that the ministers of the Gospel look up to Christ for fresh supplies of gifts and grace, of light, knowledge, wisdom, and strength, to enable them to perform their work: “and their wings were stretched upwards”, that is, two of them; not four, as the Arabic version has it; for two covered their bodies, as is after said. Those that were stretched upwards answer to the two with which Isaiah’s seraphim flew; for these were, as in the original text, “parted upwards”^{f39}; though they were joined together at the bottom of them, as in (^{f38}Ezekiel 1:9); yet being spread in flying, they opened wider and wider, and were at a greater distance from each other in their extreme points. This may design the agility, swiftness, and readiness of ministers in the performance of their work;

two [wings] of everyone [were] joined one to another: with which they, covered their heads and faces, as did Isaiah’s seraphim, as conscious of

their unworthiness and infirmities; looking upon themselves to be less than the least of all saints, unfit to be ministers of the Gospel; acknowledging they have nothing but what they have received and therefore would not glory as though they had not received, and as ashamed of their poor performances and ministrations;

and two covered their bodies; their lower and secret parts called their feet in Isaiah; which however to others beautiful upon the mountains, running and bringing the good news of peace, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; yet sensible of their deficiencies, they cover them, and confess, when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants; from hence it appears that these living creatures had six wings, as the seraphim in Isaiah, and the four beasts in John's vision.

Ver. 12. *And they went everyone straight forward, &c.*] Or, "over against his face"^{f40}; for, which way soever they went, whether forward or backward, or on either side, they had a face to go before them, to direct the way, and steer their course; so the ministers of the Gospel have a face to go by and follow after, the word of God, to look to and direct them, which way soever they go, or whatsoever service they are called unto;

whither the spirit was to go they went; which may be meant of their own spirit, will, and inclination; so the Targum,

"to the place where it was their good pleasure to go they went;"

so Jarchi and Kimchi; but this is not always the case, (see ~~4416~~ Acts 16:6-9); rather the Holy Spirit of God is intended, by whom holy men of God were moved, and spoke formerly; and by whom Gospel ministers are led into the truth, as it is in Jesus; and by whom they are directed where to go, and what to do; and they are sent, and go where the Spirit of God is designed to go, in order to work upon the hearts of men and effectually call them by his grace, which is usually done by the ministry of the word; and therefore Gospel ministers must go, and they do go where the Spirit of God has work to do by them; (see ~~4416~~ Acts 16:6,7);

[and] they turned not when they went; they had no occasion to turn their bodies, because, which way soever they went, they had a face to go before them, and direct the way; (see Gill on "~~3000~~ Ezekiel 1:9").

Ver. 13. *As for the likeness of the living creatures, &c.*] That is, of their bodies; for their faces, feet, hands, and wings are described before:

their appearance [was] like burning coals of fire: because of their ministerial gifts; the gifts of the Spirit are compared to fire, and like coals of fire are to be stirred up, and not covered or quenched; (^{<40B>}Acts 2:3 ^{<50C>}2 Timothy 1:6 ^{<51B>}1 Thessalonians 5:19); and because of their clear shining light in the truths of the Gospel; and because of their ardent love to Christ, and the souls of men; the coals whereof give a most vehement flame, which all the waters of reproach and persecution cannot quench, (^{<21B>}Song of Solomon 8:6,7); and because of their burning zeal for the glory of God, and the interest of the Redeemer; hence they are called “seraphim”, fiery or burning (^{<21B>}Isaiah 6:2);

[and] like the appearance of lamps: so the ministers of the Gospel are compared to lamps, which hold forth the light of the Gospel to the sons of men; they are the lights or lamps of the world, and some of them are bright burning and shining ones, as John was, (^{<41B>}Matthew 5:14 ^{<41B>}John 5:35);

it went up and down among the living creatures; that is, fire went up and down among them; so the Targum,

“and fire inflamed was among the creatures;”

by which may be meant the word of God, comparable to fire, (^{<21B>}Jeremiah 20:9 23:29); common to all the ministers of the Gospel, by which their minds are enlightened, and their hearts are warmed and filled with zeal, and by which they are the means of enlightening and warming others:

and the fire was bright; and clear, as the word of God is:

and out of the fire went forth lightning; by means of the ministry of the word, the kingdom and interest of Christ spread like lightning in the world, from east to west; so the coming of the son of man in his kingdom and power is compared to lightning, (^{<41B>}Matthew 24:27); it denotes the quick, penetrating, and enlightening power and efficacy of the word.

Ver. 14. *And the living creatures ran*, &c.] Did their work with great readiness and swiftness; so, especially in the latter day, ministers of the Gospel shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased, (^{<21B>}Daniel 12:4);

and returned; for though before it is said, “they turned not when they went”, they kept straight on till they had done their work; but when they

have done it, then they return, and give an account of it to him that has sent them: and their running and returning are said to be,

as the appearance of a flash of lightning; very sudden and swift.

Ver. 15. *Now as I beheld the living creatures*, &c.] While he had the vision of them, and when he was considering their form and likeness, and what should be the meaning of them:

behold, one wheel upon the earth; the Jews^{f41} understand this of an angel, who stood upon the earth, and his head reached to the living creatures, and his name is Sandalphon; and so many expositors interpret the wheels of angels: but the more common interpretation of them is, that they design the visible world, and all things in it, which are movable and uncertain; though the true interpretation of them, as of the living creatures, is to be fetched from the vision in the fourth chapter of Revelation and as the four living creatures here are the same with the four beasts there; so the wheels are the same with the four and twenty elders, the representatives of Gospel churches, as appears by both being in the same situation; as there is a throne, and next to that the four beasts, and next to them the four and twenty elders, (⁴⁰⁰Revelation 4:3,4,6 5:6,11); here also is a throne, and next to the throne the four living creatures or cherubim, and next the living creatures, and by the side of them the wheels, (³⁰⁰Ezekiel 10:1,2,6,7, 9); and this is further manifest by their being both under the same influence and motion; as the four beasts were the first agents and movers, and the four and twenty elders were directed by them, who went before them in their devotion, (⁴⁰⁰Revelation 4:9,10 5:14); so the wheels moved as the living creatures did; when the living creatures went, they went; when they stood, the wheels stood; and when the creatures were lifted up, the wheels were also, (³⁰⁰Ezekiel 1:19,21 10:16,17,19); and the wheels are a very proper emblem of churches under the Gospel dispensation; partly for their round form, a symbol of perfection; the churches of Christ being more perfect under the gospel dispensation than the church was under the legal one: and partly for their movableness from place to place; churches are not always in the same place; they have been removed from Judea into the Gentile world; and they have wheeled about there, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another: as also for their changeable state and situation; being sometimes in prosperity, and sometimes in adversity: likewise for the work done by them; many things are done by the help and with the use of wheels; much work is done in and by the churches of Christ; here the

Gospel is preached, ordinances administered, divine worship in all its parts performed, sinners are converted, and saints are edified and comforted; and as, when wheels are in motion, they make a great noise and rattling; so when there is any great work going on in the churches of Christ, it makes a great noise in the world; as at the first preaching and spread of the Gospel, both in Judea, and among the Gentiles; and at the time of the Reformation; and as there will be when antichrist shall be destroyed, and the Gospel shall be spread all the world over, (~~690B~~ Revelation 19:1-6); to which may be added, that these wheels, together with the cherubim or living creatures, make a chariot; and as the cherubim in the temple are called the chariot of the cherubim, (~~138B~~ 1 Chronicles 28:18); so the author of Ecclesiasticus in the Apocrypha,

“It was Ezekiel who saw the glorious vision, which was shewed him upon the chariot of the cherubims.” (Sirach 49:8)

says, that Ezekiel was shown the glorious vision upon the chariot of the cherubim; and nothing is more common with the Jews than to call this vision of Ezekiel **hbkrm**, “mercavah”, or “chariot”. So in the Targum on (~~107B~~ 1 Kings 7:33); it is said,

“the work of the wheels was as the work of the wheels of the glorious chariot;”

meaning this in Ezekiel; and a chariot is a fit emblem of the churches of Christ, in which he rides about the world, and does his work; (see ~~219B~~ Song of Solomon 3:9); and though but one wheel is here mentioned, yet it appears that there were “four”, as in (~~201B~~ Ezekiel 1:16 10:9); a wheel by every living creature; so though there is but one general assembly and church of the firstborn written in heaven, of which Christ is the head, and for which he gave himself; yet there are many particular congregated churches, which may be signified by the number “four”; partly with respect to the four parts of the world, where Christ has an interest, and which will more manifestly appear in the latter day; and partly with respect to the four living creatures, a wheel to every cherub, a church to every minister and pastor; for though sometimes there have been more pastors than one to a church, when large, yet never more than one church under the care of one pastor: moreover, this wheel or wheels were seen “upon the earth”; which is observed, to distinguish the church militant from the church triumphant in heaven; and to point out the place where the churches are; which though they consist of men that are not of the world, yet they are in the world: as

also to denote the firmness of them; they are on the earth, not in the air or sea, where wheels cannot move and rolls; but upon “terra firma”, and that to the churches, is Christ Jesus; and may also signify, that the mutability and movableness of churches are only while they are on earth, in, the present state of things: it follows,

by the living creatures: that is, the wheel or wheels were seen by the side of the living creatures; which is more fully expressed in (³⁵⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:9); churches are placed by the ministers of the Gospel, to direct them in matters of faith and worship; to put them in motion; to stir them up to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; to watch over them in the Lord; and to feed them with spiritual knowledge and understanding:

with his four faces; either the living creatures; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “having four faces”: and the meaning is that the wheel or wheels were on, the four sides of the living creatures: or rather, as Jarchi, the wheels, four faces; for upon every wheel there were the same four faces as were in the living creatures, as, is clear from (³⁵¹³Ezekiel 10:13,14); there being a great likeness between Gospel churches and Gospel ministers: the “first” was the face of a “cherub” or “ox”; which may denote the patience of Gospel churches, and the members thereof, in bearing afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, for the sake of Christ; their meditation on the word of God continually, the ox being a creature that chews the cud; and their constancy and laboriousness in the work of the Lord: the “second” was the face of a “man”; which may be expressive of their knowledge and understanding of divine and spiritual things; and of their tenderheartedness, sympathy, and compassion, one towards another, in distressed circumstances: the “third” was the face of a “lion”; signifying their boldness and intrepidity in, the cause of Christ, and the profession of his name: and the “fourth” was the face of an “eagle”; showing that they mount up on the wings of faith and love, as on eagles’ wings; that they soar aloft, and dwell on high, and have their affections set on things in heaven, and not on earth. Cocceius interprets the wheel or wheels of the word of God, and the course of the ministry of it, under the influence of the Spirit; and so Starckius of late.

Ver. 16. *The appearance of the wheels, and their work, [was] like unto the colour of a beryl, &c.*] Which is a precious stone; (see ¹²⁸⁰Exodus 28:20 ⁶²¹Revelation 21:20); the Syriac version renders it a chrysolite; the Arabic, a jasper; and so may denote the preciousness, glory, and excellency of the

churches, and the true members of them, which are as jewels and pearls of great price in the esteem of Christ; and the colour of this stone being a sea green, from whence it has here the name of “tarshish”, a word sometimes used for the sea, may signify the fluctuating and uncertain state of the churches in this world, and in their present circumstances:

and they four had one likeness: this shows that there were four wheels, and that they were all alike, as the true churches of Christ are; they are alike gathered out of the world, and consist of the same sort of persons, true believers in Christ; they profess the same faith; they have the same officers and ordinances; keep up the same discipline, and are under the same form of government, and have all the same power and authority:

and their appearance and work [was] as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel; not as if one wheel was comprehended and included in another; for then one must be lesser than another; whereas all the wheels were alike, as for form, so for size; but the work or make of them was in a transverse way, or cross way; just as two hoops may be put together cross ways, and so form four semicircles, and these a globe or sphere; hence this wheel is called **l g l g**, “an orb” or “globe”, in (²⁶⁰¹³Ezekiel 10:13); and it was on those four semicircles that the four faces of the ox, the man, the lion, and eagle, were engraved; the reason of their being wrought in this form was, for the motion of them; as follows:

Ver. 17. *When they went, they went upon their four sides*, &c.] On either of their crossing rings, as they were directed by the living creatures, at whose side they stood:

[and] they returned not when they went; they had no need to turn about when they were to go east, west, north, or south, as wheels usually do; but they turned upon the crossing ring, which was towards either of the four points. This denotes the perseverance of the churches, and the true members thereof, in faith and practice; they do not turn back, nor look back, but go right on, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in all his ways and ordinances.

Ver. 18. *As for their rings, they were so high, that they were dreadful*, &c.] The circles and circumferences of them were “high”: which may denote the visibility and extensiveness of the churches of Christ, especially in the latter day; when they shall be exalted above the mountains and hills, the kingdoms and states of this world; and there shall be such numerous

additions to them, that the place will be too strait for the members of them to dwell in, (^{<2311D>}Isaiah 2:2 49:20); and “they were dreadful”; terrible, as the churches of Christ will be to their enemies to look at, when they shall be in their exalted state, (^{<611D>}Revelation 11:12,13); or the words may be rendered, “and they had fear”^{f42}; there was fear and reverence in them; the fear of God, and a reverential affection for him; they were waiting on him, and attending his worship with great reverence and godly fear:

and their rings [were] full of eyes round about them four; everyone of the four wheels, and each of their four semicircles, were full of eyes; expressive of the knowledge of the Gospel, and the truths of it, in church members; their continual looking to Christ for fresh supplies of grace and strength; and their constant watchfulness over each other.

Ver. 19. *And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them,* &c.] When the ministers of the Gospel begin the worship of God, and move in acts of devotion, the churches join with them; (see ^{<611D>}Revelation 4:9,10 5:14); and in their lives and conversations they are examples to them; and churches and members ought to walk as they have them, for an example in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;

and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up; when the ministers of the word have their affections raised, and are in lively frames of soul in preaching the Gospel, generally speaking, so it is with the churches and the members thereof, that sit under their ministrations; their hearts burn within them; their affections are raised, and their souls are lifted up heavenwards, while the Scriptures of truth are opened unto them.

Ver. 20. *Whithersoever the spirit was to go they went,* &c.] That is, the Spirit of God; wherever that leads and directs, whether in the paths of faith or duty, they follow; they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; he guides their feet in the way of peace, and into all truth; and leads them in a right way to the land of uprightness:

thither [was their] spirit to go; their spirits or souls being regenerated by the spirit of God, are moved and actuated by him, and readily go where that directs:

and the wheels were lifted up over against them; that is, over against the living creatures; being by their sides going where they go, and being lifted up when they are:

for the spirit of the living creature [was] in the wheels; the same Spirit of God, which is a spirit of life, a quickening spirit, and a free spirit; which gives motion and liberty in religious exercises; that which is in the ministers of the Gospel is in the churches of God; there is but one Spirit, and ministers and members are actuated and influenced by it; (see ^{<404>}Ephesians 4:4,5).

Ver. 21. *When those went, [these] went; and when those stood, [these] stood, &c.*] When ministers are active and lively, then the churches are; but when they are indolent, dull, and inactive, then the churches are so likewise:

and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them; (see Gill on “^{<3019>}Ezekiel 1:19”);

for the spirit of the living creature [was] in the wheels; or, “the spirit of life”, as in (^{<3020>}Ezekiel 1:20); (see ^{<6111>}Revelation 11:11).

Ver. 22. *And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature, &c.*] This was not a real firmament, but the likeness of one; it was like the firmament which God created on the second day, which divided between the waters above and below, and which he called Heaven; and is no other than the airy and starry heavens. Its name is in Hebrew **[yqr]**, “an expanse”; from its being stretched out as a curtain, and a tent to dwell in; and a “firmament” from its firmness and continuance; and therefore called the firmament of his power, (^{<0008>}Genesis 1:8 ^{<3402>}Isaiah 40:22) (^{<3900>}Psalms 150:1); and this visionary one was “over the heads of the living creatures”; which shows that they could not be angels, for those have their habitation in the third heaven, above the firmament; much less in hieroglyphic of the trinity of Persons, who are the three that bear record in heaven, and are not under the firmament; but ministers of the Gospel, who are on earth, and are subject to Christ, whose throne is above the firmament, (^{<3026>}Ezekiel 1:26); and who receive their commission and gifts from him, and are accountable to him. This firmament

[was] as the colony of the tenable crystal; crystal is a very white, transparent, precious stone, resembling ice, from whence it has its name; hence Pliny^{f43} thought it was no other than ice vehemently frozen; and here it is called “terrible”, because exceeding clear and bright, so that there was no looking upon it, without the eyes being dazzled with the glory of it. The sky is called a molten looking glass, in which the glory of God, and his

handiwork, may be seen, (^{<183718>}Job 37:18) (^{<19101>}Psalm 19:1); and as the throne of Christ was over this crystal firmament, it shows that, though he is in heaven, he sees all that is done on earth, and in his churches, and by his ministers; and the saints also see him by faith, and through the glass of the Gospel: it is only a crystal firmament that is between them,

stretched forth over their heads above; that is, over the heads of the living creatures, as before; said to be stretched out, in allusion to its name, an expanse, as before observed.

Ver. 23. *And under the firmament [were] their wings straight, the one toward the other, &c.*] A further account is here given of the wings of the living creatures, which were under the firmament: two of their wings were stretched straight upwards towards the firmament, and joined each other; (see Gill on "^{<2100>}Ezekiel 1:9");

everyone had two, which covered on this side; besides the two that were carried straight upright towards heaven, they had other two, which covered their back and belly: and

everyone had two, which covered on that side, their bodies; that is, on each side of their bodies; so that there were in all six wings, as in Isaiah's vision, and in that of the Revelation of John: as their wings in general denote the swiftness and readiness of Gospel ministers to do the work of Christ, for which they exact help and assistance from above, signified by two being stretched straight upwards; (see ^{<2111>}Ezekiel 1:11); so covering the several parts of their bodies with the rest shows their modesty and humility, as being ashamed of themselves and their services, when performed in the best manor; it being altogether owing to the grace of God they are what they are, have and do; they themselves being the chief of sinners, and the least of saints, in their own account.

Ver. 24. *And when they went, &c.*] In their ministrations, preaching the Gospel, and administering ordinances:

I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters: so the voice of Christ, which is no other than his Gospel preached by his ministers, is said to be as the sound of many waters, (^{<2115>}Revelation 1:15); which is heard a great way off, as the Gospel ministry is, even to the ends of the earth; thither the sound of the apostles' words reached, (^{<2108>}Romans 10:18); and which, as they move with great force, yield a pleasant sound of and may denote both the energy of the word, and the delightfulness of it:

as the voice of the Almighty; the Gospel being the word of God, and not of man; which is quick and powerful, and full of majesty, and works effectually in them that believe:

the voice of speech; an articulate voice, a human one, pronounced by men, whom God employs to deliver out his mind and will:

as the noise of an host; the church being militant, to whom they minister; so that their voice, in their ministry, is sometimes reproofing, convincing, confuting, contending, and disputing, as well as teaching and instructing. The Targum is,

“and the voice of their words, when they confess and bless the Lord, the living everlasting King, is as the voice of the host of angels on high:”

when they stood, they let down their wings; those two with which they flew, and with them covered their faces, or some part of their bodies, as ashamed of their own unworthiness and imperfections; or this may denote their having done their work, and finished their course.

Ver. 25. *And there was a voice from the firmament that [was] over their heads, &c.*] Which was the voice of Christ upon the throne, above the firmament, over the heads of the living creatures; which directed them when and where to go, and what to do, and when and where to stop:

when they stood, [and] had let down their wings; either encouraging them to lift them up, and go on in their work, notwithstanding the sense they had of their own weakness and unworthiness; or, having done their work, calling them to himself in heaven.

Ver. 26. *And above the firmament that [was] over their heads, &c.*] The heads of the living creatures:

[was] the likeness of a throne; a symbol of Christ's kingly power and authority, who is the person that sat upon it; as he is God, he is on the same throne with his Father; as Mediator, he is King of saints, and was so from eternity; he exercised his office before his incarnation; and as he was prophesied of as a King, he came as one, though little known, and his kingdom was not with observation; upon his ascension he was declared Lord and Christ; and will appear on a throne, when he shall come to judge

the world, and particularly in the New Jerusalem church state: and this throne was

as the appearance of a sapphire stone; which is a stone very clear and transparent; very hard, solid, and durable; very precious and excellent; and of an azure sky colour; denoting the clear manifestation of Christ's righteous judgments, in the ministration of his kingly office; the duration of his government; the excellency of it; and its heavenly nature and original:

and upon the likeness of the throne [was] the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it; this was no other than Christ; who, though he was not really man before his incarnation, yet often appeared in the form of a man; and, through his incarnation, he was found in fashion as a man; and was really man, though not a mere man; nor was the person here designed; for that was the appearance and likeness of the glory of the Lord, (²⁰¹²Ezekiel 1:28); and this shows, that when Christ, as man, had done his work, he should sit down upon his throne above the firmament, being made higher than the heavens,

Ver. 27. *And I saw as the colour of amber, &c.*] That is, the man upon the throne looked like the colour of amber; of which (see Gill on "²⁰¹⁰Ezekiel 1:4");

as the appearance of fire round about within it; which may denote the deity of Christ, or Christ as God, who is a consuming fire to his enemies; a fire enlightening and warming to his people; as a wall of fire protecting them; and as a pillar of fire guiding and directing them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness; and who has such light and glory in him, as is incomprehensible to us; and therefore this fire appeared round about within, the colour of amber, and under his human nature, through which it broke forth:

from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire; it reached upwards and downwards, as well as all around him:

and it had brightness round about; the fire; which shone through the human nature, and was upon it, in virtue of its union to the Son of God; and through the Gospel, in which, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord is seen; and which will be brighter and brighter in the latter day; which may be signified by the appearance of his loins downward.

Ver. 28. *As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, &c.]* The rainbow, which is no other than the reflection of the rays of the sun in a thin watery cloud on a rainy day:

so [was] the appearance of the brightness round about it; so Christ is represented as clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow about his head, (~~600~~ Revelation 10:1); which is a token of the covenant of grace, in which Christ is concerned; it is round about him; he is the head mediator, surety, and messenger of it; all the blessings and promises of it are in him; and he is that itself, which is only a reverberation him, the sun of righteousness; and it is also about the throne on which he sits, which is upheld by mercy and truth; and it is ever in his view and he is always mindful of it: this part of the vision agrees with (~~604B~~ Revelation 4:3);

this [was] the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God: of the divine Shechinah; the Word of God that was made flesh and dwelt among us; whose glory is as the only begotten of the Father; and who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person:

and when I saw [it], I fell upon my face; through fear and reverence of the glorious Person that appeared to him; (see ~~607~~ Revelation 1:17);

and I heard a voice of one that spake: what is delivered in the following chapter; which contains Ezekiel's commission from Christ, who is the person that spake unto him.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 2

This chapter contains the prophet's call, commission, and instruction to prophesy. The preparation to it is in (^{<A11B>}Ezekiel 2:1,2); being fallen upon his face, he is bid to stand upon his feet, with a promise to speak to him; and the Spirit entering into him, he is set by him on his feet, and he hears what is spoken to him; then follows his mission to the children of Israel, who are described as rebellious, impudent, and stiff-hearted; and to whom he is sent, to render them inexcusable, (^{<A11B>}Ezekiel 2:3-5); and he is exhorted not to be afraid of their words, nor dismayed at their looks, however fierce and furious they might be; but faithfully declare his message, and not be discouraged, should it be without success, (^{<A11B>}Ezekiel 2:6,7); and he is instructed not to be rebellious, as they were; but open his mouth and eat what should be given him, (^{<A11B>}Ezekiel 2:8); when, in a visionary way, a hand was seen, and a roll in it, and this spread before him, written within and without, full of lamentation, mourning, and woes, as a symbol of the substance of his prophecy, (^{<A11B>}Ezekiel 2:9,10).

Ver. 1. *And he said unto me*, &c.] The glorious Person who sat upon the throne, whose appearance is described in the latter part of the preceding chapter:

son of man; as he was to be that spake unto him; and so it may denote relation, affection, and familiarity; or otherwise it is expressive of humiliation; of the frail, mean, and low estate of man, through the fall, (^{<A11B>}Psalms 8:4); wherefore some think Ezekiel is thus addressed, lest he should be lifted up, and think himself as one of the angels, because he had seen so great a vision; just as the Apostle Paul was humbled, lest he should be exalted above measure, through the visions and revelations he had, (^{<A11B>}2 Corinthians 12:7). Kimchi mentions this, but assigns another reason; that because he saw the face of a man in the above vision, he let him know that he was right and good in the eye of God; and was the son of man, and not the son of a lion, &c. which is exceeding weak and trifling. Abendana, besides these, mentions some other reasons given; as that because he saw the “mercavah” or chariot, and ascended to the dignity of the angels on

high, it is as if it was said, there is none born of a woman, as this; or because he was carried out of the holy land, as Adam was drove out of Eden; and therefore called the son of the first Adam, being drove out of Jerusalem, and out of the temple, where he was a priest. It may be observed, that this is a name which our Lord frequently took to himself in his state of humiliation; and that none but Ezekiel, excepting once the Prophet Daniel, is called by this name; and no doubt the reason of it is, because he was an eminent type of Christ; and particularly in his mission and commission, as a prophet, to the rebellious house of Israel:

stand upon thy feet; for he was fallen upon his face, at the sight of the vision, (²⁰¹³Ezekiel 1:28); when a divine Person speaks, men ought to stand and hear, and be in a readiness to do his pleasure:

and I will speak unto thee; which is said for his encouragement, being spoken by him who has the words of truth and grace, and of eternal life.

Ver. 2. *And the spirit entered into me*, &c.] Not his own spirit or soul; for it does not appear that that went out of him upon the sight of the vision; nor any of the ministering spirits, the angels, who are never said to enter into the prophets or people of God; but the Holy Spirit of God; the same Spirit that was in the living creatures, and in the wheels; in the ministers, and in the churches; who entered with his gifts to qualify him for his office as a prophet; and who enters with his graces into the hearts of all the saints, to quicken, renew, comfort, and sanctify them:

when he spake unto me; at the same time the Spirit went along with the word; and when the word of Christ is attended with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, it is effectual:

and he set me upon my feet; not he that spake with him, and bid him stand on his feet; but the Spirit; for the word, though it is the word of God, and of Christ, yet is ineffectual without the Spirit; when he enters, he gives the word a place, and it works effectually; when he enters, as the Spirit of life from Christ, the soul is quickened and strengthened; and such that are fallen down stand up; yea, such as are dead arise and stand upon their feet:

that I heard him that spake unto me; so as to understand; for the Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, reveals them to his ministers, and causes them to understand the word of Christ, that they may be able to instruct others in it.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man, &c.*] Now follow his mission and commission, and an account of the persons to whom he was sent:

I send thee to the children of Israel; that were captives in Babylon, in Jehoiakim's captivity; so Christ was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, (^{<4154>}Matthew 15:24);

to a rebellious nation, that hath rebelled against me; or, "rebellious Gentiles", ^{f44}; not the nations of the earth, though Ezekiel did prophesy many things concerning them; but the Jews, the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; or the twelve tribes of Israel, called Gentiles, because they joined with them in their idolatries; and, as Kimchi says, were divided in their evil works; some worshipping the gods of the Ammonites; and some the gods of the Moabites; and all guilty of rebellion and treason in so doing against the God of heaven:

they and their fathers have transgressed against me, [even] unto this very day; which is an aggravation of their rebellion; their fathers had sinned, and they had followed their ill examples, and had continued therein to that day; and as they, did to the times of Christ, when they were about to till up the measure of their iniquity, (^{<41231>}Matthew 23:31,32).

Ver. 4. *For [they are] impudent children, &c.*] "Hard of face", ^{f45}; as is commonly said of impudent persons, that they are brasen faced; they had a whore's forehead, and refused to be ashamed, and made their faces harder than a rock, (^{<2403>}Jeremiah 3:3 5:3); they declared their sin as Sodam, and hid it not; they sinned openly, and could not blush at it:

and stiffhearted; or, "strong of heart" ^{f46}; whose hearts were like an adamant stone, and harder than the nether millstone; impenitent, obdurate, and inflexible; they were not only stiff-necked, as Stephen says they were in his time, and always had been; but stiff-hearted; they were not subject to the law of God now, nor would they submit to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ in his time, and in the times of his apostles, nor to his righteousness, (^{<5103>}Romans 10:3);

I do send thee unto them; even to such as they are: this is a repetition, and a confirmation, of his mission; and suggests, that though they were such, he should not refuse to go to them, since he had sent him:

and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord God: that what he said came from the Lord, and was spoken in his name.

Ver. 5. *And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear,* &c.] Or “cease”^{f47}; that is, from hearing, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; or from sinning, as the Targum. The sense is, whether they would hear the word of the Lord, as spoken by the prophet, attend unto it, receive it, and obey it; or whether they would reject it, turn their backs on it, and discontinue hearing it; or whether they would so hear as to leave their sinful course of life, or not: this the prophet could not know beforehand, nor should he be concerned about it, or be discouraged if his ministry should be fruitless; since he could not expect much from them:

(for they [are] a rebellious house); or, “a house of rebellion”^{f48}; a most rebellious one; hard of heart, face, and neck:

yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them; so that they were left without excuse, which was the end of the prophet’s being sent unto them; there was little or no hope of reclaiming them; but, however, by such a step taken, they could not say that they had no prophet sent to reprove them for their sins, and warn them of their danger; had they, they would have listened to him, and so have escaped the evils that came upon them,

Ver. 6. *And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them,* &c.] Of any of them, the greatest among them, their princes and nobles; who, by their grandeur and authority, their stern looks, and big words, might awe and terrify him; wherefore it follows:

neither be afraid of their words; of their calumnies, revilings, and reproaches, their scoffs and jeers, their menaces and threatenings:

though briers and thorns [be] with thee; that is, men comparable to such; wicked men are like to briers and thorns, (²³¹⁶2 Samuel 23:6 ²³⁷⁴Isaiah 27:4); are grieving, pricking, and distressing to good men, and are of no worth and value; are useless and unprofitable, and fit fuel for everlasting burning. The Targum is,

“for they are rebellious, and hard against thee;”

so Jarchi and Kimchi explain the first word, **pybrs**, translated “briers”, as signifying rebellious and disobedient; though the former observes, that R. Donesh interprets it of a kind of thorns, of which there are twenty names, and this is one:

and thou dost dwell among scorpions; that is, as the Targum paraphrases it,

“thou dwellest in the midst of a people whose works are like to scorpions.”

Some interpret it, as Kimchi observes, of sharp thorns, of a thorny plant that grows in the form of a scorpion^{f49}; but scorpions here are a kind of serpents, subtle, venomous, and mischievous, which have stings in their tails; which, as Pliny says, they are continually thrusting out, and striking with, that they may lose no opportunity of doing hurt^{f50}; and fitly describe wicked men their subtlety and mischievous nature,

be not afraid of their words; as before; with which they are like briars, thorns, and scorpions, being very grievous, defamatory, and mischievous:

nor be dismayed at their looks: their frowning furious, and angry countenances; forbidding with which, as well as with their words, the prophet from prophesying unto them:

though, or “for”,

they [be] a rebellious house; (see Gill on “~~2015~~Ezekiel 2:5”).

Ver. 7. *And thou shall speak my words unto them*, &c.] Not his own words, but those the Lord should put into his mouth. The Targum is,

“and thou shall prophesy the words of my prophecy unto them:”

whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; (see Gill on “~~2015~~Ezekiel 2:5”);

for they are most rebellious; or “rebellion”^{f51} itself; as the carnal mind is said to be “enmity” itself against God, (~~8017~~Romans 8:7); which aggravates their character and state.

Ver. 8. *But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee*, &c.] Which was necessary because he was to speak not his own words, but the Lord’s, and therefore ought to hear before he spoke; and indeed those that speak in a public way, for the instruction of others, ought to hear and learn of Christ first:

be not thou rebellious, like that rebellious house; who would not hear what was said unto them; but they were not to be imitated no, not in a

lesser degree: the prophet was to avoid everything that looked like rebellion; as in, attention to what was said to him hesitation about it, or backwardness to publish it;

open thy mouth; be ready to receive what should be given, as a symbol of the prophecy he was to deliver. The Targum is,

“incline thy soul, and receive what I give thee.”

Jarchi’s note is incline thine ear and hear and let it be sweet to thee, as if thou didst eat food for hunger; and Kimchi observes, the intention of the figurative expression is to learn the words of the prophecy, and to remember them:

and eat that I give thee; which may be safely done; for Christ gives his ministers and people nothing but what is wholesome; his doctrines are wholesome words and may be eaten without fear, (⁴⁰⁰1 Timothy 6:3).

Ver. 9. *And when I looked, behold, an hand [was] sent unto me*, &c.] Not of an angel, but of Christ himself, in a visionary way; for this was not a real hand, but the likeness of one, as in (⁴⁰⁰Ezekiel 8:3); and so the Targum here,

“and I saw, and behold, the likeness of a hand stretched out on the side to me.”

This symbol was to show that his prophecy, that he was sent to deliver, was from heaven and came from Christ; and that hand that delivered it to him would protect and defend him:

and, lo a roll of a book [was] therein; held in it, and held forth by it, to the prophet. Books were frequently written on parchment or vellum, and rolled about a stick, in form of a cylinder; and hence they were called volumes or rolls, (⁴⁰⁰Psalms 40:7). This roll was a symbol of the prophecy of this book.

Ver. 10. *And he spread it before me*, &c.] Unrolled it, that what was written in it might be seen and read; that so, understanding it, he might deliver the contents of it to the people: thus the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, must be explained by Christ to his ministers; and their understandings must be opened before they will be capable of making them known to others: and

it [was] written within and without; on the back, of the vellum or parchment as well as inside; and such writings were called “opisthographa”; of this kind was the book John saw (~~(110)~~ Revelation 5:1). It was usual only to write on the inside; but when they had a great deal to write, then they wrote on the backside also^{f52}; so that this roll being thus written denotes the largeness and abundance of the prophecies contained in this book; some respecting the Jews, and others the nations of the world. The Targum is,

“it was written before and behind, what was from the beginning, and what shall be in the end:”

and [there were] written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe; afflictions, chastisements, and punishments, that should be inflicted upon the Jews, and other nations of the world; which, when made known to them, and especially when inflicted on them, would occasion sorrow and distress among them. In the Talmud, “lamentations” are interpreted of the punishments of the righteous in this world; “mourning” of the gift of reward to the righteous in the world to come; and “woe” of the punishments of the wicked in the world to come^{f53}. The Targum is,

“if the house of Israel transgress the law, the people shall rule over them; but, if they keep the law, lamentation, and mourning, and sorrow, shall cease from them.”

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 3

This chapter contains a further account of the prophet's call and mission; of his preparation of him for his work; of the persons to whom he was sent; of what happened to him upon this; of the nature of his office, and the work of it; and of what followed upon the renewal of his call. His further preparation for prophesying is in (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:1-3); where he is bid to eat the roll showed him, which he did, and found it in his mouth as honey for sweetness; and then he receives fresh orders to go to the people of Israel, and prophesy to them, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:4); and, that he might not be discouraged, an account is given beforehand of the people to whom he was sent; of their language, behaviour, and disposition; by which he could not expect success, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:5-7); and, for his further encouragement, strength, boldness, resolution, firmness, and presence of mind, are promised him, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:8,9); also a revelation of mere things to him; all which he should hear, receive, and speak, whether the people would attend to them or not; which ought to be no discouragement to him, since it was not regarded by the Lord, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:10,11); then follows an account of his being lifted up by the Spirit from the earth, when he heard a voice, which is described by the manner and matter of it; and a noise, both of the living creature's wings, and of the wheels he had seen in a former vision, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:12,13); and next of his being carried away by the same Spirit; and of the condition he was in, in his own spirit, as he went; and of the strength he received from the Lord; and of the place to which he, was carried; and his state and circumstances, and time of continuance there, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:14,15); where, after a time mentioned, he has a fresh call to his office, under the character of a watchman, whose business was to hear Christ's words, and warn the house of Israel from him; and who are distinguished into wicked and righteous; and whom the prophet was to warn at his own peril, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:16-21); and the chapter is concluded with a narration of various events which befell the prophet; he is bid by the Lord to go into the plain, which he did, and there saw the glory of the Lord, as he had before seen it at the river Chebar; which so affected him, that he fell upon his face, (^{<A180>}Ezekiel 3:22,23); the spirit entered into him,

let him on his feet, and spake with him; ordered him what he should do himself, that he should shut himself up in his house, (^{<3134>}Ezekiel 3:24); informed him what the people would do to him; bind him with bands, that he should not come forth, (^{<3135>}Ezekiel 3:25); and what Christ would do to him; strike him dumb in judgment to the people, that he might not be a reprover of them, (^{<3136>}Ezekiel 3:26); but he is told that, when the Lord spoke to him; his mouth should be opened, and he should declare what was said to him, (^{<3137>}Ezekiel 3:27).

Ver. 1. *Moreover he said unto me, &c.*] The same glorious Person who had been speaking all along in the preceding chapter; and who was seen by the prophet on a sapphire throne, and described in (^{<3125>}Ezekiel 1:26-28); the first fifteen verses of this chapter are by Junius and Tremellius made a part of the second:

son of man, eat that thou findest; not anything, but what he found in the hand sent unto him; wherefore the Targum is,

“son of man, receive what is given thee;”

which was the roll, as follows:

eat this roll; not literally, but figuratively, as John is bid to eat the little book, (^{<610>}Revelation 10:9,10); that is, read it, meditate upon the things contained therein; and digest them, that he might be able to impart them, and make them known to others: it is explained in (^{<3130>}Ezekiel 3:10); by hearing and receiving the words of the prophecy; and so the Targum,

“receive what is written in this roll;”

this is to eat it; as great readers of books are called “helluones librorum”, eaters of books, gluttons at them; read them greedily, deeply meditate upon what is in them, and thoroughly digest them; so it becomes all good men to eat the word, to mix it with faith, to receive it in the love of it, and constantly meditate on it, (^{<3001>}Psalms 1:1,2); and especially ministers of the Gospel, (^{<3115>}1 Thessalonians 4:15);

and go, speak unto the house of Israel; or, as the Targum,

“go, and prophesy to the house of Israel;”

for by eating the roll, in the sense given, he was fit for it; and when ministers of the word have read, and thought of, and digested the truths of

the Gospel themselves, then they are prepared to go and enter upon their work, and feed others with knowledge and understanding.

Ver. 2. *So I opened my mouth, &c.*] To take in the roll, and eat it; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; he did all that he could towards eating it, but was not sufficient of himself; and therefore it follows:

and he caused me to eat that roll; he, the Lord, put it into his mouth, caused him to eat it, and tilled him with it, according to his promise, (⁽⁻¹⁸¹⁰⁾Psalm 81:10). The efficacy and sufficiency to think of good things, to meditate upon them, receive and digest them, are of God; it is he that makes men prophets, and able ministers. The Targum is,

“and I inclined my soul, and he taught me (or made me wise “with”) what was written in this roll.”

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man, cause thy belly to eat, &c.*] Or “devour”^{f54}, and consume; that is, concoct and digest; do not cast it out of thy mouth, as soon as thou hast tasted of it; but let it go down into the stomach, and there digest it; and from thence into the belly, that so, upon the whole, virtue may be received, and nourishment come by it:

and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee; eat to satiety; so the Targum,

“son of man, thou shalt satiate thy soul, and fill thy belly, if thou receivest what is written in this roll, which I give thee:”

this was sufficient to qualify the prophet for prophesying, and furnish him with materials enough; and these fit and proper for the discharge of his office; and so such who study the word of God with application become scribes well instructed in the kingdom of heaven; and being filled themselves, are able to bring forth things to the comfort and satisfaction of others:

then did I eat [it], and it was in my mouth, as honey for sweetness; that is, as the roll was spread before him, he looked into it, and read it, and meditated upon it, and laid it up in his memory, in order to deliver it out when commanded; and though it contained things very distressing, and which would occasion lamentation, and mourning, and woe; yet, considering that these were the will of God, and in righteous judgment to men, he could not but acquiesce in and approve of them. All the words that

come out of the mouth of God are as sweet as, honey, yea, sweeter than that, (^{459B}Psalm 19:10 119:103); and so the Targum interprets it of the words of the Lord,

“and I took it, and his words were in my mouth as sweet honey;”

and especially the Gospel, and the truths of it, are like honey; they are gathered by laborious ministers, as honey by the industrious bee, out of the various flowers of the Scriptures, with which being laden, they bring into the hive of the church, and dispose of for general usefulness; these are like honey for healthfulness, for nourishment, and for sweetness to the taste; that which makes the Gospel so are the exceeding great and precious promises in it: its doctrines of grace, and those of peace and reconciliation, of pardon, righteousness, eternal life and salvation, by Jesus Christ; and, above all, Christ himself, who is the sum and substance of it; and all its truths being quickening; comforting, and refreshing: but thou the Gospel is, only sweet when it is eaten; not merely heard, assented to, and superficially tasted of, but eaten and fed upon by faith; and so, it is sweet, not to unregenerate persons, whose taste is not changed; nor to nominal and notional professors, who have only a superficial taste of it; but to true believers in Christ, spiritual men, who judge and discern all things; (see ^{460B}Revelation 10:9,10).

Ver. 4. *And he said unto me, son of man, go, &c.*] After he had eaten the roll; for then was he qualified to prophesy:

get thee unto the house of Israel; to whom he was to prophesy:

and speak with my words unto them: not with his own words; nor with the words of men, the enticing words of man’s wisdom; but with the words of Christ; with the taught words of the Holy Ghost; with what is written in the roll; the words of this prophecy are meant. So the Targum,

“and thou shalt prophesy the words of my prophecy unto them;”

in like manner John after he had eaten the little book, is told that he must prophesy before many people, nations, tongues, and kings, (^{460B}Revelation 10:9-11); though Ezekiel was only sent to one nation, as follows:

Ver. 5. *For thou [art] not sent to a people of a strange speech, &c.*] “Deep of lip”⁴⁵⁵, or “speech”; difficult to be got at and understood:

and of a hard language: or “heavy of tongue”^{f56} of a barbarous and unknown language, whom he could not understand, nor they him; and so would have been barbarians to one another; and consequently it could not be thought his prophesying among them, could have been of any use. This may be considered, either by way of encouragement to the prophet to go on his errand to such a people; since as he could understand them, and they him he might hope to meet with success; or, however he could deliver his message so as to be understood: or as an aggravation of the impiety perverseness and stupidity of the Israelites; that though the prophet spoke to them in their own language, yet they would not hear nor receive his words:

[but] to the house of Israel; who were a people of the same speech and language with the prophet; all spoke and understood the language of Canaan; nor were the things he delivered such as they were altogether strangers to being the same, for substance, which Moses, and the other prophets, had ever taught.

Ver. 6. *Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, &c.*] The prophet was sent, not to different nations, of different languages; but to one nation of the same language; indeed several of his prophecies concern other nations, as the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Tyrians, Philistines, Egyptians, and Assyrians; but then these had a relation to the, people of Israel, and were chiefly on their account; and therefore he was not sent to those nations to deliver his prophecies unto them, but to the people of Israel only; and so had no difficulty on his part concerning their language, which he would have had, had he been sent to the barbarous nations;

whose words, thou canst not understand: the prophet being, only used to the language of the Jews and not having the gift of speaking with and understanding divers tongues; as the apostles of Christ had, when they were sent to many people of different languages, and which is here tacitly intimates:

surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee; which is an aggravation of the obstinacy and disobedience of the people of Israel; that had the barbarous nations been favoured with the same means of instruction they were they would have been obedient; (see ^{<4112>}Matthew 11:21,23); for though they could not understand the prophet’s language, nor he theirs; yet, as Kimchi observes, they would have sought for an

interpreter to have explained the prophecy to them. The thing is very strongly affirmed, “surely”, verily, **tmab**, “of a truth”; as the same Jewish writer interprets **al ma**; and both he and Jarchi take it to be the form of an oath. Some render the words, “if I had not sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee”^{f57}; and the sense is, either that if the Lord had not sent him to the Israelites, but to the people a strange speech, they, the people, would have hearkened to him: or, if the Lord had not sent the prophet, but he had gone of himself, as the false prophets in their own name, the Israelites would have hearkened to him; such was their perverseness and rebellion: others render the words, “if not”, or had it not been for their strange speech and hard language, “I would have sent thee to them”^{f58}, the barbarous nation, and “they would have hearkened unto thee”; but the first sense seems best; which is confirmed by the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions.

Ver. 7. *But the house of Israel would not hearken unto thee, &c.*] “They are not willing”^{f59}; they have no desire, no inclination, to hear and hearken; but the reverse; they were capable of hearing and understanding his speech and language, and though he was sent unto them by the Lord: and indeed the reason why they did not hearken to him was not because they rejected him and his words, but because they rejected the Lord and his words; they were the words of the Lord, and his reproofs; and therefore they would not hearken to them as follows:

for they will not hearken unto me; and which is an argument why the prophet should bear with patience their disregard to him and his words, and their neglect and contempt of them; for, seeing they would not hear the Lord, how could he exact they should hear him? and therefore he should not be uneasy at it; (see ^{<B15D>}John 15:20);

for all the house of Israel [are] impudent and hardhearted; or, “strong of front, and hard of heart”^{f60}; they had a whore’s forehead, an impudent face, that could not blush and be ashamed; and hearts of stone, like a rock, and harder than the nether millstone, on which no impressions, could be made by all the admonitions and reproofs given them; (see ^{<B104>}Ezekiel 2:4); and this was the case of all of them in general, excepting some very few; which shows the sad degeneracy of this people.

Ver. 8. *Behold, I have made the, face strong against their faces, &c.*] Not that the prophet should have the same sort of impudence and confidence

they had; but that God would “give”^{f61} him such a face, as it is in the Hebrew text, such spirit and courage, that he should neither be ashamed of the words of the Lord, nor afraid to speak them to this people; so that he should be a match for them; they should not be able to outface him, or look him out of countenance; he should behave with an undaunted spirit, and with great intrepidity, amidst all opposition made to him: the Lord fits his ministers for the people he sends them to, and gives them courage and strength proportionate to the opposition they meet with; as their day is, their strength is; and all that invincible courage, boldness, and strength, with which they are endowed, it is all from the Lord, and a gift of his:

and thy forehead strong against their foreheads; which is the same thing in different words.

Ver. 9. *As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead, &c.]* Or, “than a rock”^{f62}; the “adamant” has its name in Greek, because it cannot be conquered or subdued, neither by the hammer, nor by fire; the one cannot break, nor this other consume it; land it is called “shamir” in Hebrew, from its preserving itself from both; it will cut iron in pieces, which is harder than stone, and therefore must be harder than that. Bochart takes it to be the same with “smiris”, a hard stone, which jewellers use to polish their gems with; (see ^{<3470>}Jeremiah 17:1 ^{<3472>}Zechariah 7:12). The design of the simile is to set forth the courage and fortitude of mind the prophet was endowed with, in order to face an impudent and hardhearted people;

fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they [be] a rebellious house; (see Gill on “^{<3476>}Ezekiel 2:6”).

Ver. 10. *Moreover he said unto me, son of man, &c.]* The same glorious Person as before continued speaking to him, and added, as follows:

all my words that I shall speak unto thee; not only what he had spoken to him, but what he should hereafter; for he did not tell all at once what he should say, but gradually, revealing his mind to him by little and little; but then he was to receive all that he should say, and reject nothing, nor shun to declare the whole counsel of God:

receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears; what the Lord says should not only be diligently attended to, and heard with eagerness, but should be received, in the love of it, into the heart, and laid, up in the mind and memory, in order to be delivered out to others at a proper time.

Ver. 11. *And go, get thee to them of the captivity, &c.*] Not in the times of Hoshea king of Israel, by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, for these were placed in the cities of the Medes, (^{<2776>}2 Kings 17:6); but in the times of Jeconiah king of Judah, (^{<3000>}Ezekiel 1:2);

unto the children of thy people; the Jews, which were in the land of Chaldea:

and speak unto them, and tell them: the words the Lord spoke to him:

thus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: (see Gill on "^{<3016>}Ezekiel 2:5").

Ver. 12. *Then the spirit took me up, &c.*] Not the wind, nor an angel, but the Spirit of God; who took up the prophet from the ground, from the place where he was, among the captives by the river Chebar, and had seen the glorious vision described in the first chapter; and had had his call and mission, as expressed in the second chapter, and hitherto in this; and was carried by him to another company of captives, who were at another place by the same river, as appears by comparing (^{<3000>}Ezekiel 1:1-3), with (^{<3016>}Ezekiel 3:15); for this was not done in a visionary way, as Kimchi thinks, but in reality; not in spirit, but in body; just as the Spirit caught away Philip from the eunuch, (^{<4039>}Acts 8:39);

and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing; of the living creatures and wheels, as is afterwards explained:

[saying], blessed [be] the glory of the Lord out of his place; either out of heaven, the place where his glory is manifested; so the Targum, out of the place of his Shechinah or majesty; or out of the temple, from between the cherubim over the mercy seat, from whence he was about to remove, (^{<3004>}Ezekiel 10:4). These words may be considered either as a doxology of the church, and people of God, ascribing glory, blessing, and praise unto him; not only on account of the perfections of his nature, but because of his works of nature, providence, and grace, and even for his righteous judgments on men. Maimonides^{f63}, by his place, understands the essence of God. Or as a lamentation for the departure of the blessed and glorious majesty of God from the temple, which seemed to be threatened; for the words may be rendered, "the blessed glory of the Lord out of his place"^{f64}; that is, it is just ready to go out of his place.

Ver. 13. [*I heard*] *also the noise of the wings of the living creatures, &c.*] Which they clapped, when they uttered the preceding words; (see Gill on “²⁰²⁴Ezekiel 1:24”);

that touched one another; or “kissed, a woman her sister”^{f65}; denoting their affection and agreement in the doxology or ascription of glory to God; (see ²⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 1:9,11,23);

and the noise of the wheels over against them: the living creatures; for the wheels were by the living creatures, and went over against them, as they went, (²⁰¹⁵Ezekiel 1:15,19-21); ministers and churches join together in this doxology:

and a noise of a great rushing; which is repeated for the confirmation of the thing, and to express the greatness of the noise made by the living creatures and wheels, like that of thunder or an earthquake; it is said to be like the noise of great waters, (²⁰²⁴Ezekiel 1:24).

Ver. 14. *So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, &c.*] Lifted him up from the earth, and carried him through the air:

and I went in bitterness; full of trouble and sorrow, that the Lord was departing from the temple; that his people had been guilty, of such crimes they had, and were such an impudent, and hardhearted people they were; and that such judgments were coming upon them he had seers written in the roll, full of lamentations, mourning, and woe:

in the heat of my spirit; the Targum and Vulgate Latin render it, “in the indignation of my spirit”; his spirit was hot and angry, he was froward and unwilling to go on the errand, to prophesy sad and dismal things to his people:

but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me; the Spirit of the Lord powerfully wrought upon him, and obliged him to go; and the hand of the Lord strengthened him, and removed his frowardness and perverseness of spirit. The Targum is,

“and prophecy from before the Lord was strong upon me;”

so Kimchi interprets it of the hand of prophecy; the Spirit of the Lord, as a spirit of prophecy, came upon him, with great impulse upon his spirit, and he could not refuse going to his people, to declare it to them.

Ver. 15. *Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, &c.*] For it seems the captive Jews were disposed of at different places, and there were some at this place; for this was the name of a place, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe; as were Telmelah, and Telharsa, (^{<1379>}Ezra 2:59 ^{<1079>}Nehemiah 7:69); it signifies “a heap of new fruit”, and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it: not that there were such at this time here; and the captives were beating out the ripe ears of corn, as “abib” signifies; whence the month Abib has its name, and which was the first month with the Jews; whereas it was in the fourth month when Ezekiel was here, and there could no ears of new corn, (^{<300>}Ezekiel 1:1); according to Junius, this Telabib was a tract in Mesopotamia, reaching from Mount Masius to the river Euphrates, and lay between two rivers, Chebar and Saocoras; and he thinks the captive Jews were placed here, partly that they might be secured safe from getting away, or returning from their captivity; and partly that they might secure and defend the place from enemies, it being through inundations uninhabited, and so exposed unto them:

that dwelt by the river of Chebar; (see Gill on “^{<300>}Ezekiel 1:1”);

and I sat where they sat; there is a double reading here; the “Cetib” or writing is **rçaw**, which Junius takes to be the name of a river the prophet calls Haesher, the same with Saocoras, connecting it with the preceding clause, “that dwelt by the river of Chebar and Haesher”; the “Keri” or marginal reading is **bçaw**, “and I sat” or “dwelt”; but both signify the same thing, Since **rça** is from **hrç**, which in Chaldee signifies to dwell⁶⁶; and the “Keri” is confirmed by the Targum, which we follow. The sense is, that he placed himself among the captives,

and remained there astonished among them seven days: at the change of place and company; at the sad condition his people were in; and, above all, at the dreadful things he had to deliver to them. The Targum renders it, “silent”; through grief and trouble. So many days Job’s friends kept silence, when they came to visit him, and saw his distress, (^{<323>}Job 2:13). Or he might be waiting all this time for orders and instructions to prophesy; or to prepare the people to attend with more reverence and earnestness, to hear what he had to say when he should break silence. The Septuagint render it the reverse, “conversing in the midst of them”.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass at the end of seven days, &c.*] Some think it was on the sabbath day he had the following declaration made to him, and

instructions given him; but this is not certain; nor does it follow, or to be concluded, from such a way of speaking:

that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; the Targum is,

“the word of prophecy from before the Lord.”

Ver. 17. *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel*, &c.] Not in a civil sense, a watchman of a town or city, or of the whole country, but in an ecclesiastical sense. So the Targum renders it by **Pyl m**, “a teacher”; whose business it was to instruct the people in divine things, to warn them of their evil ways, and of the danger they exposed them to; such were the prophets of old, and such are the ministers of the New Testament: the office is the same with that of bishops or overseers; and lies in watching over the souls of men, as shepherds over their flocks, that they go into right pastures, and not astray, and so preserves them from beasts of prey; and as watchmen of cities, to give the time of night, and, notice of approaching danger; to the discharge of which office are necessary quick sight, diligence in looking out, sobriety and vigilance, courage, constancy, and faithfulness: and they are “sons of men” that are put into this office, and not angels; sons of fallen Adam, sinful men; men subject to infirmity, weak, frail, mortal men, and oftentimes of a mean and low extraction, and greatly unworthy of so high an honour; but Christ counts them faithful, and puts them into this office; they are not made and constituted watchmen or ministers by themselves or by others, but by him; and they are given by him as such to the church of God: “son of man, I have given thee a watchman”^{f67}, &c. they become watchmen through gifts bestowed upon them, qualifying them for this office; and they themselves are gifts to the churches over whom they are placed, signified by “the house of Israel”; for a church is a house of Christ’s building, and where he dwells, and a family named of him, which he takes care of, and consists of Israelites indeed;

therefore hear the word at my mouth; for, as the prophets of old, so the ministers of the Gospel are first to hear what Christ says; and then deliver out his doctrine, called the doctrine of Christ, and the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus. So the Targum,

“and thou shalt receive the word from my Word;”

the word of prophecy, or the word of the Gospel, from Christ the essential Word;

and give them warning from me; in his name and stead, and as from his mouth, to take care of sinning against him, dishonouring his name, and wounding their own souls; that they live soberly, righteously, and godly, and adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour; that they avoid all appearances of evil, and shun the company of wicked men; the house of Israel, or church of God, are to be warned to be careful who they take into their communion, and to exclude such that are bad in principle and practice; to beware of innovations in worship, and of false teachers and false doctrines; and that they do not forsake the word, worship, and ordinances of God's house, but fill up their places, and perform all duties incumbent on them. The Targum is,

“and thou shalt warn them from sinning before me.”

Ver. 18. *When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die*, &c.] Not only a corporeal but an eternal death for this is what the law threatens with, and there the Lord says this; and this is the wages, end, and issue of sin, if grace prevent not:

and thou givest him not warning; of the evil nature of sin, and of the danger it exposes to:

nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way; to abstain from it, and live another course of life:

to save his life; for such warning, caution, exhortation, and doctrine, may be a means of converting a sinner from the evil of his way, and of saving a soul from death, (⁵⁰¹⁶1 Timothy 4:16 ⁵⁰¹⁶James 5:20);

the same wicked [man] shall die in his iniquity; with the pollution and guilt of sin upon him, and so be punished for it; (see ⁴⁰²⁴John 8:24);

but his blood will I require at thine hands; thou shalt be answerable for him; his death shall be laid to thy charge, and thou shalt be chastised for thy negligence; (see ⁴⁰²⁵Acts 20:26).

Ver. 19. *Yet if thou warn the wicked*, &c.] Of his sin and danger; lay before him his evil, and show him the sad consequences of going on in a course of sin, and warn him to flee from wrath to come:

and he turn not from his wickedness, and from his wicked way; does not repent of it, nor abstain from it:

he shall die in his iniquity; and for it, and that very righteously:

but thou hast delivered thy soul; thou hast done the duty of thine office; thou art clear from the charge of negligence and sloth, and from being answerable for the death of the sinner; and shalt save thyself, though not the wicked man; (see ^{<5016>}1 Timothy 4:16).

Ver. 20. *Again, when a righteous [man] doth turn from his righteousness, &c.]* This is to be understood not of one that is truly righteous, or is justified by the righteousness of Christ; for such can never turn from that righteousness, or be in an unjustified state; seeing that is the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one; but of one that is denominated righteous, from “his” own righteousness, from a righteousness “which he hath done”, as is afterwards expressed; one that is outwardly righteous before men, that is outwardly reformed, that has a righteousness of his own, consisting of a little negative holiness, and a few moral performances; from such righteousness a man may apostatize, and go into a vicious course of life:

and commit iniquity; live in sin, make a trade of it; lead a life, the whole series and course of which is nothing else but sin; in this sense, one that is born of God, and has the righteousness of Christ revealed from faith to faith unto him, and lives by faith upon it, cannot commit sin, (^{<6189>}1 John 3:9);

and I lay a stumbling block before him; the Targum renders it, “the stumbling block of sins”; which designs either an occasion of sinning, which God permits, leaving him to his own lusts, and suffering him to fall thereby; and by this means he is discovered to be what he is, not a truly righteous man, but only one in appearance; that looked like a righteous person, but secretly a sinner, and now the Lord by such means exposes him openly; so Jarchi and other Jewish Rabbins; but Kimchi’s father interprets the stumbling block of prosperity in this world ^{f68}: or rather the punishment of sin is meant, as Kimchi himself observes; and the Septuagint renders it “torment”; since this follows up on his turning from righteousness, and committing sin; and seems to be explained by the next clause:

he shall die; the second death:

because thou hast not given him warning: of the dreadful evil of apostasy, and the sad estate of apostates, and the danger they are in, their last estate being worse than the first:

he shall die in his sin; of apostasy, and for it, being never to be recovered and brought to repentance:

and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; according to the “Keri” or marginal reading it is, “his righteousnesses”; all his works of righteousness which he hath done; and which reading is followed by the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and the eastern versions; these shall not be remembered, neither in this world nor in that to come; no account shall be taken of them, nor shall they be reckoned as a righteousness unto him:

but his blood will I require at thine hand; (see Gill on “~~21:18~~ Ezekiel 3:18”).

Ver. 21. *Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous [man], &c.*] Every righteous man, that is so in a judgment of charity, whether truly righteous or not, which the event shows; who should be warned not to trust in their own righteousness, but to depend on the righteousness of Christ; that they be careful to maintain good works, to avoid sin, and live holy lives and conversations, as follows:

that the righteous sin not; not that there is any just man that does good, and sins not; the best of men are often sinning in thought, word, or deed; but he is to be warned that he does not continue in sin, and lead a sinful course of life; which is contrary to his character, and to his faith in Christ for righteousness, which is attended with good works:

and he doth not sin; the warning and exhortation given him having so good an effect, through the power of divine grace, as to be a means of preserving him from a vain conversation:

he shall surely live; spiritually and comfortably now, and eternally hereafter:

because he is warned; that being a means, and with the divine blessing taking effect:

also thou hast delivered thy soul; (see Gill on “~~21:19~~ Ezekiel 3:19”).

Ver. 22. *And the hand of the Lord was there upon me, &c.]* At Telabib, (^{אֶבְיבִים}Ezekiel 3:15). The Targum interprets “the hand of the Lord” of the spirit of prophecy, which remained upon him there; but it seems to design a fresh impulse of the Spirit, a powerful emotion of the spirit upon his spirit, stirring up to attention to what might be said unto him:

and he said unto me; the same glorious Person, the Lord Christ, described in (^{אֶבְיבִים}Ezekiel 1:26-28);

arise, go forth into the plain; or “the valley”^{f69}; the Arabic version renders it, “the desert”; a solitary place, free from noise and hurry, and from the company and conversation of men; and so more fit for retirement and contemplation, and for attention to divine orders. What plain this was is not certain; Kimchi thinks it was the plain in which Babel was built, and where the Lord showed the prophet what he had in his providence done in this place formerly, in confounding the languages of men, and causing their devices to cease;

and I will there talk with thee; when alone, sedate, and composed; so God sometimes brings his people into a low and humble state and condition, into the valley of humility, and there grants them communion with himself; (see ^{אֶבְיבִים}Hosea 2:14); perhaps the allusion to a custom among the Jews of revealing secrets to others in fields and deserts, and such like solitary places; (see ^{אֶבְיבִים}Genesis 31:4,5)^{f70}.

Ver. 23. *Then I arose and went forth into the plain, &c.]* He was obedient to the heavenly vision, which was owing to the hand of the Lord being upon him; the power of the Spirit and grace of God influences and engages to obedience; he went forth where he was ordered, though he knew not what would be said to him, or what he should see there:

and, behold, the glory of the Lord stood there; the glorious Person described in (^{אֶבְיבִים}Ezekiel 1:26-28);

as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar; (^{אֶבְיבִים}Ezekiel 1:1-3:27 28:1-26); which vision was repeated for greater certainty, and to confirm the prophecies delivered to him, and to encourage him in the performance of his office:

and I fell on my face; as he did before, when he first saw this glorious object, (^{אֶבְיבִים}Ezekiel 1:28).

Ver. 24. *Then the spirit entered into me,* &c.] Again; the Spirit of God, that was in the wheels and living creatures: (see <sup>^{AMM>}Ezekiel 2:2);

and set me upon my feet; as he had done before, when in the same prostrate condition, (<sup>^{AMM>}Ezekiel 2:2);

and spake with me; either the Spirit that entered into him, and set him upright; or rather the Lord Christ, the glory of the Lord that stood where he was, and appeared to him:

and said unto me, go, shut thyself within thine house: this was not said ironically, but in earnest; and the reason either was, because the people were not fit for reproof and correction, as Jarchi thinks, being a rebellious people; or that the prophet might receive further instructions, and have all the words of his prophecy delivered to him, before he began to prophesy. Some think this shutting up was an emblem of the siege of Jerusalem. It may seem strange that the prophet should be bid to go into the plain, where the Lord promised to talk with him; and this is all that is said to him, to go home, and shut himself up in his house: but it should be observed, that this was not the only thing for which he went into the plain: he was to have, and had, a fresh view of the glory of the Lord, and of the vision he had before, for the further confirmation of him; besides, this moving him from place to place, before he prophesied, might be partly to try his faith, and partly to preserve him from the violence of the people; who, had he delivered his message at once, might have been so provoked, as to have fallen upon him, and destroyed him; as well as to prepare them to receive his prophecies with more respect and reverence, when they saw he did not rashly, and at once, deliver them out to them.

Ver. 25. *But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee,* &c.] Or, “bands shall be put upon thee”; either visionally, or really; not by angels, but by the Jews, who, taking the prophet for a madman by his motions and gestures; would bind him, and keep him within doors: or figuratively this may be understood of the sins of the people, their rebellion and obstinacy, which hindered the prophet from prophesying among them as yet; and so this is observed to conciliate his mind to the divine order, to shut up himself for a while in his own house, and be silent: or else by these bonds may be meant the divine order itself, which restrained him from doing his office as yet. So the Targum,

“behold, I have appointed the words of my mouth upon thee, as a band of ropes with which they bind;”

and shall bind thee with them; which some think is emblematical of the Jews being bound by the Chaldeans:

and thou shall not go out among them; to converse with them, or prophesy unto them. The Septuagint version renders it, “shall not go out from the midst of them”; as if he should be taken out of his own house by the Jews, and be bound by them, and kept among them, and not able to get away from them; but it is to be understood of his being bound in his own house, and not able to go out of that to them; and may signify, that in like manner the Jews should not be able to go out of Jerusalem when besieged by the Chaldeans.

Ver. 26. *And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shall be dumb*, &c.] Which is to be understood not literally, as if he was really struck dumb, as Zechariah was; (see ²⁶⁰⁹Ezekiel 4:9,14); but that such silence should be charged upon him by the Lord, that he should be as if his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, as Kimchi interprets it, and as if he was a dumb man: and so the Septuagint version renders it, “I will bind thy tongue”; lay an embargo upon it, that is, it shall be silent; and this sense is confirmed by what follows:

and shall not be to them a reproof; which was in judgment to them, and a giving them up to their own hearts’ lusts; for, though reproofs were disagreeable to them, and they chose to be without them, yet they were necessary for them, and might have been useful to them; but they provoking the Lord, he takes away his word from them, and commands his prophet to be silent, and let them alone, to go on in their sins without control; which was a sore judgment upon them:

for they [are] a rebellious house; (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁵Ezekiel 2:5”).

Ver. 27. *But when I speak with thee*, &c.] Either when I have made an end of speaking to thee, when I have told thee all my mind, and have given thee all the instructions and prophecies thou art to deliver out; or when I shall speak to thee again, and give thee orders to speak:

I will open thy mouth; loose thy tongue, cause thee to break silence, and thou shall speak freely and fully all that I command thee; fulness of matter, and freedom of speech, are both from the Lord; liberty and opportunity of

speaking are at his pleasure; and when he speaks his servants must prophesy, (^{<3188>}Amos 3:8);

and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord God; so and so, whatsoever he is pleased to order to be spoken; not that the following words are what were to be said to the people; but they are said to the prophet for his own use, that he might not be uneasy at the unfruitfulness and failure of his ministry:

he that heareth, let him hear; if any will hearken to what is sent to them, as few of them will, it is very well:

and he that forbeareth, let him forbear; or, “he that ceaseth, let him cease”^{f71}; he that ceaseth from hearing, let him do so, do not mind it, or be discouraged at it:

for they [are] a rebellious house; (see Gill on “^{<3188>}Ezekiel 2:5”). The Targum is,

“he that receiveth, let him receive instruction; and he that ceaseth, let him cease from sinning, for it is a rebellious people.”

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 4

This chapter contains a prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, and of the famine that attended it. The siege is described by a portrait of the city of Jerusalem on a tile, laid before the prophet, (²⁹⁰¹Ezekiel 4:1); by each of the actions, representing a siege of it, as building a fort, casting a mount, and setting a camp and battering rams against it, and an iron pan for a wall, between the prophet, the besieger, and the city, (²⁹⁰²Ezekiel 4:2,3); by his gesture, lying first on his left side for the space of three hundred ninety days, and then on his right side for the space of forty days, pointing at the time when the city should be taken, (²⁹⁰³Ezekiel 4:4-6); and by setting his face to the siege, and uncovering his arm, and prophesying, (²⁹⁰⁷Ezekiel 4:7); and by bands being laid on him, so that he could not turn from one side to the other, till the siege was ended, (²⁹⁰⁸Ezekiel 4:8); the famine is signified by bread the prophet was to make of various sorts of grain and seeds, baked with men's dung, and eaten by weight, with water drunk by measure, which is applied unto the people; it is suggested that this would be fulfilled by the children of Israel's eating defiled bread among the Gentiles, (²⁹⁰⁹Ezekiel 4:9-13); but upon the prophet's concern about eating anything forbidden by the law, which he had never done, cow's dung is allowed instead of men's, to prepare the bread with, (²⁹¹⁴Ezekiel 4:14,15); and the chapter is concluded with a resolution to bring a severe famine on them, to their great astonishment, and with which they should be consumed for their iniquity, (²⁹¹⁶Ezekiel 4:16,17).

Ver. 1. *Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile*, &c.] Or "brick"^{f72}. The Targum renders it, a "stone"; but a tile or brick, especially one that is not dried and burned, but green, is more fit to cut in it the figure of a city. Some think that this was ordered because cities are built of brick; or to show the weakness of the city of Jerusalem, how easily it might be demolished; and Jerom thinks there was some design to lead the Jews to reflect upon their making bricks in Egypt, and their hard service there; though perhaps the truer reason may be, because the Babylonians had been used to write upon tiles. Epigenes^{f73} says they had celestial observations of

a long course of years, written on tiles; hence the prophet is bid to describe Jerusalem on one, which was to be destroyed by the king of Babylon;

and lay it before thee: as persons do, who are about to draw a picture, make a portrait, or engrave the form of anything they intend:

and portray upon it the city; [even] Jerusalem; or engrave upon it, by making incisions on it, and so describing the form and figure of the city of Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *And lay siege against it, &c.*] In his own person, as in (^{צוהב}Ezekiel 4:3); or draw the form of a siege, or figure of an army besieging a city; or rather of the instruments and means used in a siege, as follows:

and build a fort against it: Kimchi interprets it a wooden tower, built over against the city, to subdue it; Jarchi takes it to be an instrument by which stones were cast into the city; and so the Arabic version renders it, “machines to cast stones”; the Targum, a fortress; so Nebuchadnezzar in reality did what was here only done in type, (^{צוהב}2 Kings 25:1); where the same word is used as here:

and cast a mound about it; a heap of earth cast up, in order to look into the city, cast in darts, and mount the walls; what the French call “bastion”, as Jarchi observes:

set the camp also against it; place the army in their tents about it:

and set [battering] rams against it round about; a warlike instrument, that had an iron head, and horns like a ram, with which in a siege the walls of a city were battered and beaten down. Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret the word of princes and generals of the army, who watched at the several corners of the city, that none might go in and out; so the Targum seems to understand it^{f74}. The Arabic version is, “mounts to cast darts”; (see Gill on “^{צוהב}Ezekiel 21:22”).

Ver. 3. *Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, &c.*] Which Kimchi thinks, for its metal, represented the hardness of the hearts of the people of Israel; and, for its colour, the blackness of their sins: though others are of opinion, this being a pan in which things are fried, it may signify the miseries of the Jews in captivity; the roasting of Ahab and Zedekiah in the fire, and particularly the burning of the city: others, the wrath of God

against them, and his resolution to destroy them: but rather, since the use of it was as follows,

and set it [for] a wall of iron between thee and the city, it seems to represent all such things as are made use of by besiegers to screen them from the besieged; such as are now used are trenches, parapets, bastions, &c. for the prophet in this type is the besieger, representing the Chaldean army secure from the annoyance of those within the walls of the city:

and set thy face against it; with a firm resolution to besiege and take the city; which denotes both the settled wrath of God against this people, and the determined purpose of the king of Babylon not to move from it until he had taken it:

and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it; as an emblem of the army of the Chaldeans besieging it, which is confirmed by the next clause:

this [shall be] a sign to the house of Israel; of the city of Jerusalem being besieged by the Babylonians; this was a sign representing it, and giving them assurance of it.

Ver. 4. *Lie thou also upon thy left side*, &c.] Some think this was not in reality, but in vision, as Kimchi observes; and so Maimonides^{f75}; and in like manner they understand his eating and drinking by measures and preparing food, as he is directed in a following part of this chapter: but others are of opinion that all this was really done. The reasons given on both sides are not despicable. It is urged against the reality of the fact, that the prophet, without a miracle, could never have lain so long on one side; and besides, this seems to be contradicted by a later account, of his sitting in his house before the expiration of those days; since from the fifth day of the fourth month of the fifth year, in which he began to prophesy, (^{<BOOK>}Ezekiel 1:1,2), (and this order was seven days after that at least, (^{<BOOK>}Ezekiel 3:15)), to the fifth day of the sixth month of the sixth year, when we find him sitting, (^{<BOOK>}Ezekiel 8:1); were but four hundred and thirteen days; and if seven are taken out from thence, there are but four hundred and six; whereas the whole time of his lying for Israel and Judah were four hundred and thirty; and it is further observed, that it does not seem decent that the prophet should be obliged really to eat such bread as he was ordered to make. On the other hand it is observed, that the order of portraying the siege of Jerusalem on a the, and setting an iron pan for a wall, seem to direct to the

doing of real facts, and to that this order is subjoined, without any mark of distinction; besides, the prophet was to have this portrait in view, while he was lying on his side, and uncover his arms, which seem to denote real facts: and was to prophesy, not by words, for he was to be dumb, (^{<3185>}Ezekiel 3:26); but by facts; and he was to do all this in the sight of his people; and if the order to make a cake of bread was not to be really performed in the manner directed, there would have been no occasion of deprecating it. The learned Witsius¹⁷⁶, who has collected the arguments on both sides, is inclined to the latter; and observes from others, that some persons have lain longer on one side than the prophet, without a miracle: particularly a certain paralytic nobleman, who lay sixteen years in such a manner: and as for the computation of time, Cocceius is of opinion that the forty days for Judah are included in the three hundred and ninety for Israel; and which indeed seem to be the whole number, (^{<3009>}Ezekiel 4:9); and which at once solves the difficulty; and besides, the force of the objection may be taken off by observing, that the fifth year might be intercalated, and consist of thirteen months, which was common with the Jews to have a “Veadar”, or intercalated month: nor is it dishonourable nor unusual for the Lord to call his dear servants sometimes to hard and disagreeable service, as both these cases seem to be, when he has ends of his own glory, and the good of others, to be answered thereby. And the lying on the left side for the sins of the house of Israel was, as Jarchi thinks, because that Samaria, which was the head of the ten tribes, lay to the left of Jerusalem: see (^{<3166>}Ezekiel 16:46); or rather, because the left hand is not so honourable as the right; it may show that the Lord had not such an esteem for Israel as for Judah;

and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it; not to atone for it, but to show what was the cause of their captivity; for herein the prophet was no type of Christ, but represented the people of Israel; who had been grievously sinning against God, during the term of time hereafter mentioned, and now would be punished for it; for by “iniquity” is meant the punishment of it, which is often the sense of the word used; (see ^{<0043>}Genesis 4:13);

[according] to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity: which are particularly declared in (^{<3005>}Ezekiel 4:5).

Ver. 5. *For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, &c.*] Or the iniquity which for so many years they have been guilty of; that is, the punishment of it:

according to the number of the days; a day for a year;

three hundred and ninety days; which signify three hundred and ninety years; and so many years there were from the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, and the setting up the calves at Daniel and Bethel, to the destruction of Jerusalem; which may be reckoned thus: the apostasy was in the fourth year of Rehoboam, so that there remained thirteen years of his reign, for he reigned seventeen years; Abijah his successor reigned three years; Asa, forty one; Jehoshaphat, twenty five; Joram, eight; Ahaziah, one; Athaliah, seven; Joash, forty; Amaziah, twenty nine: Uzziah, fifty two; Jotham, sixteen; Ahaz, sixteen; Hezekiah, twenty nine; Manasseh, fifty five; Amos, two; Josiah, thirty one; Jehoahaz, three months; Jehoiakim, eleven years; Jeconiah, three months and ten days; and Zedekiah, eleven years; in all three hundred and ninety years. Though Grotius reckons them from the fall of Solomon to the carrying captive of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. According to Jerom, both the three hundred and ninety days, and the forty days, were figurative of the captivities of Israel and Judah. The captivity of Israel, or the ten tribes, began under Pekah king of Israel, (¹¹⁵³1 Kings 15:29); when many places in the kingdom were wasted; from whence, to the fortieth year of Ahasuerus, when the Jews were entirely set at liberty, were three hundred and ninety years¹⁷⁷; and the captivity of Judah began in the first year of Jeconiah, which, to the first of Cyrus, were forty years. The Jewish writers make these years to be the time of the idolatry of these people in their chronicle¹⁷⁸ they say, from hence we learn that Israel provoked the Lord to anger, from the time they entered into the land until they went out of it, three hundred and ninety years. Which, according to Jarchi and Kimchi, are, to be reckoned partly in the times of the judges, and partly in the times of the kings of Israel; in the times of the former, a hundred and eleven years: from Micah, till the ark was carried captive in the days of Eli, forty years; and from the time of Jeroboam to Hoshea, two hundred and forty; which make three hundred and ninety one: but the last of Hoshea is not of the number, since it was in the ninth year of his reign the city of Samaria was taken. So Jarchi. Kimchi's reckoning is different. Abarbinel is of opinion that these years describe the four hundred and thirty years of Israel's bondage in Egypt; though, he says, they may be understood of the time of the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam,

from whence, to the destruction of Jerusalem, were three hundred and ninety years; which sense is best, and is what is first given;

so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel; as many days as answer to these years; by the house of Israel is meant not merely the ten tribes, who had been carried captive long before this time, but such of them also as were mixed with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Ver. 6. *And when thou hast accomplished them*, &c.] The three hundred and ninety days, by lying so long on the left side, bearing the sins of the house of Israel in this way; or, as Cocceius renders the words, “and thou shalt accomplish them, and thou shalt lie”, &c.^{f79}, that is, thou shalt so accomplish these days, that thou mayest lie through forty days on the right hand, and then make bare thine arm, and prophesy against Jerusalem; for he thinks the forty days are part of the three hundred and ninety, as before observed: and so Piscator’s note is, “when thou shalt accomplish”, &c. namely, when there shall remain yet forty days, as appears by comparing (²³⁰⁴⁹Ezekiel 4:9) with this verse and (²³⁰⁴⁵Ezekiel 4:5); so Polanus interprets the passage: then

lie again on thy right side; that is, for Judah; which tribe, as Jarchi observes, lay to the south, and so to the right of Jerusalem; (see ²³⁰⁶⁶Ezekiel 16:46); or rather the prophet lay on the right side for Judah, because more honourable, and in greater esteem with the Lord; nor were their sins so many, or continued in so long as those of the ten tribes; and therefore they, and the punishment of them, are borne a less time by the prophet, as follows:

and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: which some think answers to the forty years of Manasseh’s evil reign; others reckon from the thirteenth of Josiah to the end of Zedekiah, and others from the eighteenth of Josiah to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was five years after the carrying of Zedekiah captive:

I have appointed thee each day for a year; which is not only the key for the understanding of the forty days, but also the three hundred and ninety.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege at Jerusalem*, &c.] All the while he was lying either on the left side or the right, his face was to be directed to the siege of Jerusalem, portrayed upon the tile, and to all the preparations made for that purpose, to show that all had reference to that and that it would certainly be; for, as the prophet represented the

Chaldean army the directing and setting his face to the siege shows their resolution and inflexibleness, that they were determined upon taking the city, and nothing should divert them from it:

and thine arm [shall be] uncovered; which was usual in fighting in those times and countries; for, wearing long garments, they were obliged to turn them up on the arm, or lay them aside, that they might more expeditiously handle their weapons, and engage with the enemy: in this form the soldiers in Trajan's column are figured fighting; and it is related that the Africans used to fight with their arms uncovered^{f80}; thus Scanderbeg in later times used to fight the Turks. The design of the phrase is to show how ready, diligent, and expeditious, the Chaldeans would be in carrying on the siege. The Targum renders it,

“thou shalt strengthen thine arm;”

and so do the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions:

and thou shall prophesy against it: meaning not so much by words, if at all, but by these actions, gestures, and habit; for they all foretold what would certainly come to pass.

Ver. 8. *And, behold, I will lay hands upon thee*, &c.] Representing either the besieged, signifying that they should be taken and bound as he was; or rather the besiegers, the Chaldean army, which should be so held by the power and providence of God, that they should not break up the siege until they had taken the city, and fulfilled the whole will and pleasure of God; for these bands were an emblem of the firm and unalterable decree of God, respecting the siege and taking of Jerusalem; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“and, lo, the decree of my word is upon thee, as a band of ropes;”

and to this sense Jarchi interprets it; and which is confirmed by what follows:

and thou shall not turn thee from one side to another till thou hast ended the days of thy siege; showing that the Chaldean army should not depart from Jerusalem until it was taken; for though, upon the report of the Egyptian army coming against them, they went forth to meet it; yet they returned to Jerusalem, and never left the siege till the city fell into their hands, according to the purpose and appointment of God. Kimchi that the

word for siege is in the plural number, and signifies both the “siege” of Samaria and the siege of Jerusalem; but the former was over many years before this time: by this it appears that the siege of Jerusalem should last three hundred and ninety days; indeed, from the beginning to the end of it, were seventeen months, (^{<1271>}2 Kings 25:1-4); but the siege being raised by the army of the king of Egypt for some time, (^{<2576>}Jeremiah 37:5), may reduce it to thirteen months, or thereabout; for three hundred and ninety days are not only intended to signify the years of Israel’s sin and wickedness, but also to show how long the city would be besieged; and so long the prophet in this symbolical way was besieging it.

Ver. 9. *Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches, &c.*] The first of these was commonly used to make bread of; in case of want and poverty, barley was used; but, for the rest, they were for cattle, and never used for the food of men but in a time of great scarcity; wherefore this was designed to denote the famine that should attend the siege of Jerusalem; (see ^{<1273>}2 Kings 25:3);

and put them in one vessel; that is, the flour of them, when ground, in order to be mixed and kneaded together, and make one dough thereof; which mixed bread was a sign of a sore famine: the Septuagint call it an earthen vessel; a kneading trough seems to be designed:

and make thee bread thereof, [according] to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side; the left side, on which he was to lie three hundred and ninety days: and so as much bread was to be made as would suffice for that time; or so many loaves were to be made as there were days, a loaf for a day:

three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof; no mention is made of the forty days, perhaps they are understood, a part being put for the whole; or they were included in the three hundred and ninety days. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read only a hundred and ninety days.

Ver. 10. *And thy meat which thou shall eat [shall be] by weight, twenty shekels a day, &c.*] To eat bread by weight was a sign of a grievous famine; (see ^{<1335>}Leviticus 26:26); a shekel, according to Josephus^{f81}, weighed four Attic drachms, or half an ounce, wherefore twenty shekels weighed ten ounces; so that the bread the prophet had to eat was but ten ounces a day:

from time to time shall thou eat it; at the certain time of eating, or but once a day; from a set time in one day to the same in another; as from morning to morning, or from noon to noon, or from evening to evening; (see ~~28721~~Jeremiah 37:21).

Ver. 11. *Thou shall drink also water by measure*, &c.] Not wine, but water; and this not as much as he would, but a certain measure; which shows great want of it, and expresses a very distressed condition (see ~~28721~~Lamentations 5:4);

the sixth part of an hin; a hin held twelve logs, or seventy two egg shells, or about three quarts of our measure; and the sixth part of one were two logs, or twelve egg shells, and about a pint of our measure; so that it was but a pint of water a day that the prophet was allowed, as a token of the great scarcity of it in the siege of Jerusalem:

from time to time shalt thou drink: as before.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt eat it [as] barley cakes*, &c.] That is, the bread made of wheat, barley, beans, lentiles, millet, and fitches, was to be made in the form of barley cakes, and to be baked as they; not in an oven, but under ashes; and these ashes not of wood, or straw, or turf, but as follows:

and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of men, in their sight: the prophet was to take human dung, and dry it, and then cover the cakes or loaves of his mixed bread with it, and burn it over them, and with it bake it; which must be a very disagreeable task to him, and make the food very nauseous, both to himself and to the Jews, in whose sight it was done; and this shows scarcity of fuel, and the severity of the famine; that they had not fuel to bake with, or could not stay till it was baked in an oven, and therefore took this method; as well as points at what they were to eat when carried captive, as follows:

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said, even thus shall the children of Israel*, &c.] Not the ten tribes only, or those who were among the other two, but all the Jews in captivity:

eat the defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them; so called, not because mixed, but baked in the above manner; which was a symbol of the defilements which they should contract upon various accounts, by dwelling among the Gentiles; so that this foretells their captivity; their pollution among the nations of the world; and that they

should not be the holy people to the Lord they had been, and had boasted of. The Jews^{f82} cite this passage to prove that he that eats bread without drying his hands is as if he ate defiled bread.

Ver. 14. *Then said I, ah, Lord God!* &c.] The interjection “ah” is expressive of sighing and groaning, as Jarchi; or of deprecation, as the Targum, which paraphrases it,

““and I said”, receive my prayer, O Lord God:”

behold, my soul hath not been polluted; not meaning that his soul had not been polluted with sin, or with an evil thought, as Kimchi interprets it; but by his soul he means the inward part of his body, his stomach and belly; which had not been defiled by taking in meats which were unclean by the law, as follows:

for from my youth up, even till now, have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; these were forbidden to be eaten by the law; and such that did were defiled, and obliged to bathing in water, (⁴⁸⁷⁵Leviticus 17:15,16); and from those the priests more especially were careful to abstain, as Kimchi observes; and such an one was the prophet; (see ⁴⁴⁰⁴Acts 10:14);

neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth; corrupt or, putrefied, or whatsoever was unclean by law, as swine’s flesh, or any other. The argument is, that since he had never eaten of anything forbidden by the law of God, he could by no means think of eating that which was abhorrent to nature; as bread baked with men’s dung was.

Ver. 15. *Then he said to me,* &c.] The Lord hearkened to the prophet’s prayer and argument, and makes some abatement and alteration in the charge he gave him:

lo, I have given thee cow’s dung for man’s dung: that is, allowed him to make use of the one instead of the other, in baking his mingled bread:

thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith; having gathered cow’s dung, and dried it, he was to burn it, and bake his bread with it, which is meant by preparing it. In some parts of our nation, where fuel is scarce, cow’s dung is made use of; it is gathered and plastered on the walls of houses, and, being dried in clots, is taken and burnt.

Ver. 16. *Moreover he said unto me, son of man, &c.*] What follows opens the design, and shows what was intended by the symbol of the miscellany bread, baked with cow dung, the prophet was to eat by measure, as, well as drink water by measure: namely, the sore famine that should be in Jerusalem at the time of the siege:

behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: that is, take away bread, which is the staff of life, the support of it, and which strengthens man's heart; and also the nourishing virtue and efficacy from what they had. The sense is, that the Lord would both deprive them of a sufficiency of bread, the nourishment of man; and not suffer the little they had to be nourishing to them; what they ate would not satisfy them, nor do them much good; (see ^{<RB>}Leviticus 26:26 ^{<RB>}Isaiah 3:1);

and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; that they might not eat too much at a time, but have something for tomorrow; and to cause their little stock to last the longer, not knowing how long the siege would be:

and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment; that such a judgment should fall upon them, who thought themselves the people of God, and the favourites of heaven.

Ver. 17. *That they may want bread and water, &c.*] Or, "because they shall want"^{f83} &c. therefore they shall eat the one, and drink the other, by weight; or they shall do this till there shall be none to eat and drink:

and be astonished one with another; when they shall find they cannot relieve one another; and not knowing what method to take for the support of nature:

and consume away for their iniquity; their flesh upon them black through famine, putrid and noisome; and they wasting, pining, and consuming; reduced to skin and bones; and disagreeable to look upon; and all because of their sins and iniquities.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 5

This chapter is of the same argument with the former; and contains a type of Jerusalem's destruction; an explanation of that type; what were the reasons of God's judgments on that city; and the nature, rise, and end of them. The type is in (^{<24181>}Ezekiel 5:1-4); the explanation of that type is in (^{<24185>}Ezekiel 5:5); the reasons of the severe judgments threatened are changing the statutes of the Lord, and not walking in them, and defiling the sanctuary with their abominations, (^{<24186>}Ezekiel 5:6-11); an account of the judgments of God, answerable to each of the parts in the type, (^{<24182>}Ezekiel 5:12); the ends of these judgments are, with respect to God, the accomplishment of his anger, and the satisfaction of his justice; with respect to the Jews, bringing them to an acknowledgment that he had spoken in his zeal; and, with respect to the nations, their instruction and astonishment, (^{<24183>}Ezekiel 5:13-15); and the chapter is concluded with an assurance that these judgments would be sent, (^{<24186>}Ezekiel 5:16,17).

Ver. 1. *And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, &c.]* Or, "sword",^{f84}. The word signifies any sharp instrument, by which anything is cut off, or cut asunder; what is here meant is explained by the following:

take thee a barber's razor. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read this in conjunction with the former, thus, "take thee a knife", or "sword, sharper than a barber's razor"; and so the Syriac version, "take thee a sword sharp as a barber's razor"; this sharp knife, sword, or razor, signifies, as Jarchi interprets it, Nebuchadnezzar; and very rightly; so the king of Assyria is called in (^{<23723>}Isaiah 7:20):

and cause [it] to pass upon thine head, and upon thy beard; the "head" was a symbol of the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; the "beard", of the cities, towns, and villages about it; and the "hair" of both, of the common people; compared to hair for their numbers, for their levity and unsteadiness, and for their being the beauty and ornament of the places where they lived; and the shaving of them denotes their disgrace and destruction, and mourning on account thereof:

then take thee balances to weigh and divide the [hair]. The Syriac version adds, “into three parts”; signifying, that several distinct punishments would be inflicted on them, and these according to the righteous judgment of God; balances being a symbol of justice.

Ver. 2. *Thou, shall burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, &c.]* Of Jerusalem, as portrayed upon the tile, (²³⁰⁰Ezekiel 4:1); or the prophet was now in Chaldea. The burning of the third part of the hair with fire denotes such who were destroyed by the pestilence and famine during the siege; (see ²³⁵⁰Lamentations 5:10); or it denotes the burning of the city itself, when the siege was over; since it follows:

when the days of the siege are fulfilled; for, when it was taken, it was burnt with fire, (²⁶²³Jeremiah 52:13);

and thou shall take a third part, [and] smite about it with a knife; which designs those that fled out of the city whom it was broken up, and were pursued after, and overtook by the Chaldean army, and cut off by the sword, (²⁶³⁷Jeremiah 52:7,8);

and a third part thou shall scatter in the wind; which intends those that fled, and were dispersed into several countries, as Moab, Ammon, and especially Egypt, whither many went along with Johanan the son of Kareah, (²⁴³⁵Jeremiah 43:5-7);

and I will draw out a sword after them; and destroy them; which, as it was threatened, (²⁴²⁶Jeremiah 42:16 44:27); so it was accomplished when Egypt was subdued by Nebuchadnezzar. The Septuagint and Arabic versions, in every clause, read a “fourth part”, instead of a “third”; but wrongly.

Ver. 3. *Thou shall also take thereof a few in number, &c.]* These are they that were left in the land of Judea by Nebuzaradan, for vinedressers and husbandmen, and such as returned out of Egypt into the land of Judah, (²⁴⁴⁸Jeremiah 44:28 52:16);

and bind them in thy skirts; in the pockets of them; signifying both the very small number of them, and their preservation. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret these of those that were carried captive to Babylon, and lived there, and were preserved, and returned again.

Ver. 4. *Then take of them again, &c.]* Of that small number preserved:

and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire: this was fulfilled in Gedaliah and the Jews that were with him, over whom the king of Babylon had made him governor, who were slain by Ishmael, (~~2410~~Jeremiah 41:1-7);

[for] thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel; from this barbarous murder of Gedaliah and his men, judgment came upon all the house of Israel; a war commenced between Ishmael and Johanan the son of Kareah; and afterwards Nebuzaradan carried captive great numbers of them that were left in the land. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, “from these shall a fire come forth”, &c. which Jarchi interprets of these intimations given the prophet, from whence judgments should come upon all the house of Israel. It may be understood of those that were left in the land, and of such who returned from the captivity; for whose sins, and those of their posterity, the wrath of God came forth upon all the house of Israel, to the utter destruction of their nation, city, and temple, by Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God, this [is] Jerusalem, &c.*] A type or sign of it; it may refer to both the former and latter type. It is the city of Jerusalem that is designed by the city portrayed upon the tile; and the same is signified by the head of the prophet that was to be shaved; that being not only the chief city of Judea, but of the whole world, as follows:

I have set it in the midst of the nations; as the chief of them; and distinguished it from them by peculiar favours and blessings, natural and spiritual; being seated in a land flowing with milk and honey; and having the house and worship of God in it; and where were the symbols of his presence, and his word and ordinances; and therefore should have excelled them in true religion, devotion, and holiness, and set an example to them. The Jews generally understand this of the natural situation of Jerusalem. Jarchi interprets it of the middle of the world; as if it was mathematically placed in the centre of the earth. Kimchi says it was in the midst of the continent; and so its air was better than others; and these sort of writers^{f85} often speak of the land of Israel being in the navel or centre of the earth; they say^{f86} that the sanhedrim sat in the middle of the world; and therefore is compared to the navel, (~~2110~~Song of Solomon 7:2); because it sat in the temple, which was in the middle of the world; but the former sense is best; though Jerom gives in to the latter:

and countries [that are] round about her: this is a proposition of itself; fire former clause being distinguished from it by the accent “athnach”; and should be rendered thus, “and the countries [are]”, or “[were], round about her”^{f87}; on the east was Asia, on the west Europe on the south Africa and Libya, and on the north Babylon, Scythia, Armenia, Persia, and Pontus; and was mere conspicuous, eminent, and honourable than them all, having greater privileges, prerogatives, and excellencies; and therefore should have exceeded them in its regard to the laws and statutes of God, which she did not; hence this is said, in order to upbraid her for her ingratitude, as appears by the following words.

Ver. 6. *And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, &c.]* So they changed their glory for that which did not profit; and the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man; and the truth of God into a lie, (^{<21>}Jeremiah 2:11 ^{<8023>}Romans 1:23,25); or, “for wickedness”^{f88}; for judgments and laws that were not good, and which to observe was wickedness. The word rendered “changed” signifies to “rebel against” or to “transgress”: and the may be, she, that is, Jerusalem, has “rebelled” against my judgments, and “transgressed”^{f89} them in a wicked manner, even to a greater degree than the nations of the world. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it changed as we do:

and my statutes more than the countries that [are] round about her.

“Judgments” and “statutes”, are the same laws and ordinances of worship, being just and righteous, and firm and unalterable; unless it should rather be thought that “judgments” belong to the moral law, being given forth by the Lord as a judge, and founded upon judgment and righteousness; and “statutes” to the ceremonial law, being of positive institution and appointment, and to last so long as it was the pleasure of the lawgiver:

for they have refused my judgments and my statutes; they refused to comply with them, and to yield an obedience to them, and that with loathing, disdain, and contempt, as the word^{f90} signifies,

they have not walked in them; they did not make them the role of their walk and conversation; they showed no regard to them; they went out of the way of them, into crooked paths, with the workers of iniquity.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Having observed their sins, and which are still enlarged upon, the Lord proceeds to denounce his judgments against them:

because ye multiplied more than the nations that [are] round about you; not in numbers, nor in wealth and riches, or in blessings and privileges, and therefore grew wanton and forgetful; though this was true: but in sins and wickedness, which abounded among them, and in which they exceeded the nations round about them; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“because that ye have sinned more than the people that are round about you:”

[and] have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments; which as repeated to show the certainty of fact, and how much the Lord resented it:

neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that [are] round about you. The Syriac version leaves out the negative particle and renders the words thus, “but ye have done the judgments of the nations which are round about you”; and it may be observed, that it is omitted in parallel text, (^{Ⲙⲓⲓⲓⲛ}Ezekiel 11:12); and this is what the Jews are often reproved for, that they followed the laws and customs of the Gentiles, and worshipped their gods; and the opposition to the preceding clause seems to require this sense; but the retaining the negative particle is confirmed by the Targum, Masora, and the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and also by the Talmud^{f91}, which reconciles the passage with the parallel text before mentioned, thus,

“according to those things which are right among them (the Gentiles) ye have not done; [but] according to what are corrupt among them ye have done;”

and the meaning is, either that they did not walk according to the law and light of nature, which the Gentiles had, and attended to, (^{Ⲙⲓⲓⲓⲛ}Romans 2:14,15); or that they did not follow them in their conduct and behaviour; they were not so zealous for the true God as the Heathens were for their idols; they were not so tenacious of the laws and worship the true God of Israel as the Gentiles were of their superstitious rites and ceremonies; the Gentiles did not change their gods, and manner of worship, but retained what, they received from their ancestors time immemorial; but the Jews changed their glory for that which did not profit, (^{Ⲙⲓⲓⲓⲛ}Jeremiah 2:11).

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, even I, [am] against thee, &c.*] Or, “behold, I [am] against thee, even I”^{f92}; who am the Lord God omnipotent, great King, and a dreadful one; and a terrible thing it is for a people to have the mighty God against them; or for any to fall into the hands of the living God: this is repeated to show that it certainly was so; and that the Lord was set upon it; and determined to come forth against them in the way of his judgments, as follows:

and will execute judgments in the midst of thee, in the sight of the nations; that is, inflict punishments upon them for their disregard to his righteous judgments, which should take place in the midst of them, and consume them all around; and should be so manifest as to be seen by all the nations about them.

Ver. 9. *And I will do in thee that which I have not done, &c.*] In any other nation, or to any other people; not in the old world, when the flood was brought upon the world of the ungodly; not in Sodom and Gomorrah, when they were destroyed by fire from heaven; not in Egypt, when he inflicted his plagues on Pharaoh and his people; nor among the Canaanites, when they were drove out of their land for their abominations:

and whereunto I will not do any more the like; at least not of a long time; and, besides, this may not only refer to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, but also by the Romans:

because of all thine abominations; the wickednesses of all sorts that were committed among them, which were abominable to the Lord, and particularly their idolatries; these were the causes why he would do, or suffer to be done, things that were never seen, known or heard of before; and are as follow:

Ver. 10. *Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, &c.*] Which was long ago threatened by the Lord, and prophesied of by Moses, (^{<1837>}Leviticus 26:27 ^{<1838>}Deuteronomy 28:53,55,57); and was fulfilled at several times in the people of Israel, as at the siege of Samaria, (^{<1168>}2 Kings 6:28,29); at the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, (^{<2940>}Lamentations 4:10); and at the siege of the same city by Titus Vespasian, as Josephus^{f93} relates; for though these instances only show that mothers ate their children, yet no doubt the fathers took part with them; and if mothers, who are naturally more tender, could do this, it is much more reasonable to suppose that fathers did the same:

and the sons shall eat their fathers; this, though nowhere recorded, yet doubtless was done; it being as reasonable to think that a son might eat his father as a father his son, though both monstrously shocking:

and I will execute judgments in thee; punishments, such as pestilence, famine, and sword, after mentioned:

and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds; that is, those that remain, and are not cut off, by the above judgments, shall be carried captive into Babylon, or be dispersed in to Egypt, Ammon, Moab, and other places: this had a full accomplishment in the dispersion of the Jews into the several parts of the world, when they were destroyed by the Romans.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore, [as] I live, saith the Lord God, &c.*] This is a form of an oath, and shows that what is after said should certainly be done; God would not repent of it, nor revoke it:

surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary, with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations: that is, with their idols and idolatrous worship, which were detestable and abominable to the Lord; so Manasseh not only built altars for Baal in the house of the Lord, but set up in it a graven image of the grove, (^{422B}2 Kings 21:3,4,7);

therefore will I also diminish [thee]; as they lessened his glory by such abominable actions, so he threatens that he would lessen their privileges and blessings; as they took away from him the worship and honour that were due to him, so he would take away from them their civil and church state, his sanctuary, word, and ordinances, and deprive them of everything that was valuable and excellent. The Targum paraphrases it,

“I will cut off the strength of thine arm;”

weaken her power:

neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity; when in the greatest misery and distress. The Targum is,

“my Word shall not spare, &c.”

Ver. 12. *A third part of them shall die with the pestilence, &c.*] This, with what follows, explains the division of the hair into the three parts, and what was done with them; and shows that the burning of one third part denotes

their being destroyed by the pestilence, mentioned along with burning coals, (^{<318>}Habakkuk 3:5); and by famine, as follows:

and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and though there is no account of the former, yet there is of the latter; and no doubt but the pestilence raged, as well as the famine, at the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar:

and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; signified by the third part of the hair, smitten with a knife; and intends such as perished by the sword of the Chaldeans at the taking of the city, and when they fled out of it; and so are properly said to fall round about it:

and I will scatter a third part into all the winds; the greatest part of which were carried into Babylon, and others into other parts; (see Gill on ^{<319>}Ezekiel 5:2”);

and I will draw out a sword after them; particularly after them that went into Egypt. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read a “fourth part” in each clause, as before; and make it out thus, “a fourth part of thee shall be consumed with death (the pestilence); and a fourth part of thee shall be consumed with famine in the midst of thee; and a fourth part of thee I will scatter to every wind; and a fourth part of thee shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will draw out the sword after them”.

Ver. 13. *Thus shall mine anger be accomplished*, &c.] Finished, perfected, consummated, by bringing the above judgments upon them, pestilence, famine, and sword, and by scattering them to every wind: what had been threatened long, and only some drops of it were let fall in times past, now was poured forth to the uttermost:

and I will cause my fury to rest upon them; to continue and abide upon them, and not move, at least for the space of threescore and ten years; (see ^{<320>}Zechariah 1:12);

and I will be comforted; by taking vengeance on them; so satisfying his justice, and easing him of his enemies; (see ^{<321>}Isaiah 1:24); a speech after the manner of men; who, when they have been affronted, and have avenged themselves, are easy in their minds, and satisfied:

and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken [it] in my zeal; that is, they shall find by experience that what the Lord had spoken by his

prophets, and had threatened to bring upon them, was said in earnest, and arose from a jealousy for his own glory; this will be a clear case, and out of question:

when I have accomplished my fury in them; by the utter destruction of them; as follows:

Ver. 14. *Moreover I will make thee waste*, &c.] That is, their land; which, being without inhabitants, lay untilled; and so became barren and unfruitful:

and a reproach among the nations that [are] round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by; who, seeing it in this desolate condition, shall throw out their taunts and jeers upon it, as in (²¹¹⁵Lamentations 2:15,16).

Ver. 15. *So it shall be a reproach and a taunt*, &c.] The subject of the reproaches and taunts of the enemy; (see ²⁴¹⁹Jeremiah 24:9); this is repeated for the greater confirmation of it:

an instruction; or “discipline”, or “correction”^{f94}. The meaning is, that the Gentiles, seeing the judgments of God upon the Jews, would hereby learn righteousness, forsake their sins, amend their ways, and fear, the Lord:

and an astonishment unto the nations that [are] round about thee; being amazed that such judgments should fall upon a people that had been so highly favoured of God; and at their stupidity, hardness, and incorrigibleness under them:

when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury, and in furious rebukes; a heap of words, not only denoting the certainty of divine judgments, but the greatness and fierceness of divine wrath, in the execution of them; that these were not fatherly chastisements, rebukes in love, but the effects of vindictive justice:

I the Lord have spoken [it]; or those things, as the Arabic version; and as sure as I have spoken, I will do. The Targum is,

“I the Lord have decreed in my word;”

and so in (²¹⁵³Ezekiel 5:13); where it is added, and I will confirm or accomplish.

Ver. 16. *When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famines*, &c.] Either famine itself, which is as an arrow; it is taken out of the quiver of the Lord of hosts, and is shot by him; and moves swiftly when it has a

commission; and is very destructive: or arrows which bring on a famine, such as drought, excessive rains, blasting, mildew, locusts, &c. or arrows which the famine brings, as leanness, faintness, blackness, and death; and, in either sense, are evil ones; and are sent of God for the following end:

which shall be for [their] destruction, [and] which I will send to destroy you; God's design in sending them was to destroy, and that was answered; and a very destroying arrow famine is, and therefore called evil:

and I will increase the famine upon you; or "gather^{f95} [it] upon", or "against you"; as if it was an army with bows and arrows:

and will break your staff of bread: take away the virtue from the little they had, that that should not nourish and satisfy; (see Gill on "~~2016~~ Ezekiel 4:16").

Ver. 17. *So will I send upon you famine, and evil beasts,* &c.] Famine is repeated for the further confirmation of it; and "evil beasts" are added, by whom are meant, not the Chaldeans, comparable to such; but literally lions, wolves, bears, &c. which are threatened the Jews, in case of disobedience, (~~1852~~ Leviticus 26:22); and which sometimes were sent, (~~2174~~ 2 Kings 17:24);

and they shall bereave thee; that is, of her children, whom the evil beasts should destroy; they not being able to defend themselves against them, as men can:

and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee, and I will bring the sword upon thee; the pestilence, famine, sword, which is meant by blood, and evil beasts, are the Lord's four sore judgments; (see ~~3441~~ Ezekiel 14:21).

I the Lord have spoken [it]: who was able to perform it, and did, both at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and by Titus.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 6

This chapter contains a prophecy of the desolation of the whole land of Israel, and a promise that a remnant should escape, with a lamentation for the sad destruction, signified by some gestures of the prophet. The order to the prophet to deliver out the prophecy is in (^{<2018>}Ezekiel 6:1,2); the several parts of the land of Israel or Judea, to which the prophecy is directed, are signified by mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys, on which the sword should be brought, (^{<2018>}Ezekiel 6:3); the desolation is described, and the cause of it suggested, the idolatry of the people, (^{<2014>}Ezekiel 6:4-7); the promise of a remnant that should escape, who should remember the Lord, loath themselves for their sins, acknowledge him, and that his word was not in vain, is in (^{<2018>}Ezekiel 6:8-10); the lamentation, signified by the prophet's smiting with his hand, and stamping with his foot, for the sins of the people, and the judgments that should come upon them, is in (^{<2011>}Ezekiel 6:11); a particular enumeration of these judgments follows, and of the places where they should be executed, (^{<2012>}Ezekiel 6:12); the end of them was to bring them to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord, against whom they had sinned and offended by their idolatry, as the places where their slain fell would show, (^{<2013>}Ezekiel 6:13); and the chapter is concluded with a resolution to bring this desolation on them, (^{<2014>}Ezekiel 6:14).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] That is, the word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum: this, according to Junius, was delivered out by the prophet on a sabbath day, the twenty first of the fifth month, and in the sixth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity; and so was more than a year after the vision at Chebar, (^{<2001>}Ezekiel 1:1,2).

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face towards the mountains of Israel, &c.*] Or cities of Israel, the inhabitants of them; not the ten tribes, for they had been carried captive long before this time, even in the times of Hezekiah; unless it can be thought that this prophecy is designed to show the reason of their captivity, which was their idolatry; or that it is directed to those of them which remained in the land, and were mixed with the other tribes; but

rather the land of Judea is intended, in which were many mountains, and one part of it was called the hill country, (~~Q1B~~ Luke 1:39,65); and the mountains are mentioned, against which the prophet is ordered to direct his face, and look unto; partly because idolatry was much practised upon them; and partly to show the stupidity of the Jews, and the failure of the prophecy among them; that it was as well, or better, to speak to the mountains, than to them; for since they had so often put away the word of God from them, they were unworthy of it; wherefore such a direction to the prophet comes some degree of indignation and resentment:

and prophesy against them; as that the sword should be upon them, and the high places built upon them should be destroyed: or “unto them”^{f96}; direct the prophecy to them; speak to them as if they were capable of hearing: or “concerning them”, as the Syriac version; and so the Targum, concerning their desolation.

Ver. 3. *And say, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God,* &c.] Since the people of the Jews would not hear the word of the Lord, the mountains are called upon to hear it; unless the inhabitants of the mountains are meant:

thus saith the Lord God to the mountains and to the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys: these are addressed, because idols were worshipped here; as upon the mountains and hills, so by rivers of water, and also in valleys, as in the valley of Hinnom idols were worshipped; upon mountains and hills, because they thought themselves nearer to heaven; by rivers, because of purity; and in valleys, because shady and obscure, and had something solemn and venerable in them:

behold I, [even] I, will bring a sword upon you; that is, upon the idolaters, which worshipped in these places; otherwise different instruments, as pick axes, &c. would have been more proper. The Targum paraphrases it,

“them that kill with the sword;”

meaning the Chaldeans, who doubtless are intended:

and I will destroy your high places; the temples and altars, built on high places, and devoted to idolatrous worship, as follows:

Ver. 4. *And your altars shall be desolate*, &c.] Being pulled down; or because the priests and worshippers would now be slain, and there would be none to attend them:

and your images shall be broken; the “images of the sun”^{f97}. The word for images has its derivation from heat; and were so called, either from the heat of the sun, to whose worship they were devoted, or from the heat of the love and affections of their worshippers:

and I will cast down your slain [men] before your idols; before your dung, or your “dunhill gods”^{f98}; for the word used has the signification of dung, (^{<3042>}Ezekiel 4:12). The Targum renders it,

“before the carcass of your idols;”

where they committed idolatry, there they should be slain; which points at the cause of their punishment.

Ver. 5. *And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols*, &c.] Which is repeated for the confirmation of it:

and I will scatter your bones round about your altars: which were reckoned a pollution of them; (see ^{<1234>}2 Kings 23:14,16,20).

Ver. 6. *In all your dwelling places your cities shall be laid waste*, &c.] Which denotes that the desolation should be general, wherever they had cities and places to dwell in; the idolatry being universal, as is said in (^{<3028>}Jeremiah 2:28);

and the high places shall be desolate; meaning such as were in cities; as, before, such as were built upon mountains and hills; (see ^{<1235>}2 Kings 23:5);

that your altars may be laid waste and desolate; as they must be, the cities being destroyed in which they were set up:

and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down; such as were made of gold and silver, or of wood and stone; the same words are used for them as in (^{<3101>}Ezekiel 6:4);

and your works may be abolished; not only the works of their hands, but of their brain; whatever they had devised, and was contrary to the pure word and worship of God.

Ver. 7. *And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, &c.*] The word for slain is in the singular number, which perhaps is put for the plural; and so the Septuagint renders it; unless it should design some principal person that should be slain; but, as King Zedekiah was not slain when the city was taken, only his sons and his princes, it seems best to understand it of the multitude that were slain in the midst of the land, not only in Jerusalem, but in all the cities of Judea; and denotes how general and public the destruction would be:

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; the only true God, and Governor of the world; who only is to be worshipped, feared, and served, and not idols.

Ver. 8. *Yet will I leave a remnant, &c.*] Not in Judea, but in Babylon, and in the countries where they should be dispersed, as follows:

that ye may have [some] that shall escape the sword among the nations; which was threatened to be drawn, and sent after them, (^{CHAP}Ezekiel 5:2,12); but all should not perish by it; some should escape; for this was not the time to make a full end of them:

when ye shall be scattered through the countries; that is, of Egypt, Ammon, Moab, and Assyria; for this respects their dispersion at the time of the Babylonish captivity, and not their present dispersion.

Ver. 9. *And they that escape of you shall remember me, &c.*] Either my grace and mercy to them, as Jarchi; or the fear of me, as the Targum; and so return by repentance, and worship the Lord their God, being influenced by his kindness and goodness to them: even when

among the nations, whither they shall be carried captive; so that their afflictions should be sanctified and made useful to them: in prosperity men are apt to forget God; in adversity they are brought to a sense of themselves and duty; and happy it is when chastening dispensations are teaching ones, and bring to God, and not drive from him:

because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me: by committing spiritual adultery, which is idolatry. The sense is, either that he was grieved at heart with their idolatry, which was the reason of their being carried captive, which, when they were sensible of, wrought repentance in them; or that he was full of compassion towards them; his

heart was tender and pitiful towards them, though they departed from him in such a dreadful manner, justly to be resented by him. The Targum is,

“I have broken their foolish heart;”

and so the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions, “I have broken their whorish heart”; by afflictive providences humbled them, and brought them to repentance:

and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols; they committed fornication with their heart and eyes in a spiritual sense, as wicked men do in a natural sense; (see ^{<6024>}2 Peter 2:14);

and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations; abominable idolatry, (^{<6043>}1 Peter 4:3); when men remember God, against whom they have sinned, and consider how grievous sin is to him; and when they are broken for it themselves, they then loathe their sins, and themselves for it; and where all this is there is true repentance.

Ver. 10. *And they shall know that I [am] the Lord, &c.*] As in (^{<2607>}Ezekiel 6:7);

[and that] I have not said in vain; either within himself, in his own purposes and decrees; so the Targum,

“I have not in vain decreed in my word;”

or by the mouth of the prophets:

that I would do this evil unto them; in carrying them captive, and dispersing them in other lands; for this is not the evil of sin, but the evil of punishment, or of affliction.

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord God, smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, &c.*] These are gestures of persons in distress and agony, who, to show their trouble and grief, smite one hand against the other; or smite with the hand upon the thigh, as in (^{<2619>}Jeremiah 31:19); and “stretch out”, or “make a distension with the foot”^{f99}; as it is in the Hebrew text; extend their thighs; throw out their feet; stamp with them; beat the earth, and make it shake, as the Syriac version; all expressive of anguish and sorrow:

and say, alas, for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! the word “alas”, or “woe”, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, an interjection

of mourning and lamentation, explains the above gestures; and what follows shows the cause of all; namely, the sins and abominations committed by the house of Israel; which they being insensible of, and unconcerned about, the prophet is ordered to take such a method to awaken them out of their stupidity and lethargy; and the rather, since the heaviest of judgments were coming upon them:

for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; which are threatened in (²⁰⁵²Ezekiel 5:12,16,17); and the persons on whom they should be separately executed are mentioned in (²⁰⁵²Ezekiel 6:12).

Ver. 12. *He that is far off shall die of the pestilence, &c.*] That flies from the enemy into the wilderness, or into other countries, thinking himself safe there, the plague shall seize him, and he shall die of that; there is no fleeing from God, and escaping his hand; when he resolves to punish for sin, he has various ways to execute his wrath:

and he that is near shall fall by the sword; that is out of the city, and near it, attempting to get away; but within the reach of the enemy, shall be slain by him:

and he that remaineth, and is besieged, shall die by the famine; that abides in the city, and does not attempt to go out; but continues in the siege, hoping the enemy will be obliged to depart, shall perish by the grievous famine. The Targum is,

“he that remains, and goes into the cities of siege, shall die with famine:”

thus will I accomplish my fury upon them; which before had been gradually, by little and little, falling upon them, in order to bring them to repentance; but being incorrigible, wrath is brought upon them to the uttermost; and God fulfils the whole counsel of his will in their destruction.

Ver. 13. *Then shall ye know that I [am] the Lord, &c.*] Whom they had denied, by serving other gods; but now by those punishments their eyes would be opened to see, and be obliged to acknowledge, that there was no God but the Lord:

when their slain [men] shall be among their idols round about their altars; as is threatened, (²⁰⁶⁵Ezekiel 6:5); by which it will appear that the idols whom they worshipped could not save them; since they should fall

just by them, round about the altars on which they sacrificed unto them; which idols were placed, and altars for their worship built,

upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains: mountains and high hills were usual places of idolatry among the Heathens, in which the Jews imitated them, and particularly Herodotus^{f100} says of the Persians, that, going up to the highest parts of mountains, they offered sacrifice to Jupiter; so they called the whole circle of the heavens:

and under every green tree, and under every thick oak; (see <1143>1 Kings 14:23 <1204>2 Kings 16:4 <3421>Jeremiah 2:20 3:6); here their slain were to fall, where they committed their idolatry: even in

the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols; or dunghill gods; yet, though they were such, sweet savour or incense was offered to them; wherefore, in righteous judgment, here their carcasses should fill and lie, and rot and stink.

Ver. 14. *So will I stretch out mine hand upon them,* &c.] Not unto them, in a way of mercy; but upon, or against them, in a way of judgment. The Targum paraphrases it,

“and I will lift up the stroke of my power upon them;”

his mighty hand of vengeance:

and make the land desolate; by destroying the inhabitants of it:

yea, more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath, in all their habitations; so the Syriac version renders it, “and I will make this land more desolate than the land of Diblath”; but other versions, “I will make the land desolate from the wilderness of Diblath”; to which the Targum agrees; or, “from the wilderness to Diblath”: Kimchi and Ben Melech think this is the same with Riblath; as Deuel is put for Reuel in (<0014>Numbers 1:14 2:14); which was in the land of Hamath, and which, Jerom says, was in his times called Epiphania in Syria; here it was that Nebuchadnezzar brought Zedekiah, and slew his sons before him, (<2916>Jeremiah 39:5,6); this, though in Hamath in Syria, was on the borders of the land of Israel, (<0348>Numbers 34:8,11); so that “hence from the desert of Diblath”, as the Arabic version renders it, “even to Jerusalem”, as may be supplied, takes in the whole land, and shows that it should be utterly desolate. There is a Bethdiblathaim mentioned in (<2482>Jeremiah 48:22); as in Moab; and there is

also Almondiblathaim, which was one of the stations of the Israelites; and seems to be in Moab, or on its borders, (~~<06346>~~ Numbers 33:46,47); and appears, by the places named with it, to be the same as that in Jeremiah; and so was part of that terrible wilderness through which the Israelites passed; and to which the desolation of the land of Israel by the Chaldeans is compared; and which serves to confirm our version, which makes the desolation to be greater than that:

and they shall know that I [am] the Lord; the true God; the one and only Lord God; who never changes his purposes; fulfils his promises and threatenings; and there is no escaping his mighty hand.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 7

This chapter contains a prophecy of the speedy destruction of the Jews, as being just at hand; of the particular judgments that should come upon them; of the horror that should seize them, and the distress that all ranks of men among them should be in, a few only escaping, who are described as in mournful circumstances. The destruction in general is denounced as being very near; the end being come, which is often repeated; and as it is represented as sudden, so without mercy; which is declared, (^{<3170>}Ezekiel 7:1-14); the particular judgments, sword, pestilence, and famine, are mentioned in (^{<3175>}Ezekiel 7:15), and the few that should escape are compared to mourning doves, (^{<3176>}Ezekiel 7:16); the trembling, horror, and shame that should be upon all, are intimated in (^{<3177>}Ezekiel 7:17,18); the unprofitableness of their gold and silver to deliver them, and the unsatisfying nature of these things, are expressed, (^{<3179>}Ezekiel 7:19); the profanation and destruction of their temple are prophesied of, (^{<3172>}Ezekiel 7:20-22); and for their murder, rapine, and oppression, it is threatened that their houses should be possessed by the worst of Heathens, and their holy places defiled; and one calamity should come upon another; when their application to prophets, priests, and ancient men for counsel, would be in vain, (^{<3173>}Ezekiel 7:23-26); and king, prince, and people, should be in the most melancholy and distressed circumstances, (^{<3172>}Ezekiel 7:27).

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Or again, as the Arabic version; for this is a distinct prophecy from the former; though of the same kind with it; and was delivered out, either immediately upon the former; or, however, some time between that and the following in the next chapter, which has a date to it. The Targum calls it the word of prophecy from the Lord.

Ver. 2. *Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel, &c.*] The inhabitants of it; not the ten tribes, who were already carried captive; but the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and those that were with them, who dwelt in the land. The mountains, hills, rivers, and

valleys, were before addressed; now the land itself: what the Lord by the prophet said unto the land, or the people of it, follows:

an end: for here a colon is to be placed; that is, the end of God's patience and forbearance; he would bear with them no longer, at least but a very little while; the time of vengeance was coming upon them, and an utter consumption should be made of them; (see ^{<4018>}Lamentations 4:18);

the end is come upon the four corners of the earth, or "land"; for not the whole world, and the end of that, as in (^{<4048>}Matthew 24:3), are meant; but the land of Judea and the destruction of it, which should be general; upon the four wings of it, as in the Hebrew text; that is, in all parts of it, east, west, north, and south. The Targum is,

"the punishment of the end, or the punishment determined to come upon the four winds of the earth;"

(see ^{<4010>}Revelation 7:1); and this punishment was just going to be inflicted on them; for this prophecy was in the sixth year of King Zedekiah; and in the ninth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; and in the eleventh year took it, (^{<4251>}2 Kings 25:1,2).

Ver. 3. *Now [is] the end [come] upon thee*, &c.] This is repeated for the confirmation of it, and for the sake of application of it to the people of Israel, of whom he had before spoken in the third person; but now in the second, in order to arouse them, and excite attention:

and I will send mine anger upon thee; the token of it, the punishment of their sins:

and I will judge thee according to thy ways; pass sentence, and execute it, as their evil ways and practices deserved:

and I will recompense, or "put upon thee"^{f101},

all thine abominations; cause them to bear as a burden the just punishment of their detestable iniquities; which would be more than they would be able to bear, though not more than they deserved.

Ver. 4. *And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity*, &c.] Though the punishment will be heavy, and the lamentation will be great; (see ^{<4051>}Ezekiel 5:11);

but I will recompense thy ways upon thee; the evil of punishment for the evil of sin, the righteous demerit of their actions:

and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee; not taken away, unatoned for, and indeed not repented of. The Targum is,

“and the punishment of thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee:”

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; to whom vengeance belongs; who takes notice of sinful actions, and punishes for them; to whom appertain the perfections of omniscience, omnipotence, and punitive justice.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Here should be a stop, a colon, requiring attention to what follows, it being something awful and terrible:

an evil, an only evil, behold, it cometh; meaning the destruction of the city and temple; which, though but one, was such an one as was never known before nor was there any like it. The Targum is,

“evil after evil, lo, it cometh;”

one evil after another; when one evil is gone, another comes, as in (^{2307B}Ezekiel 7:26). The Syriac version is, “behold, evil for evil comes”; the evil of punishment for the evil of sin.

Ver. 6. *An end is come, the end is come*, &c.] These words, so often repeated, show the eagerness and concern of the prophet’s mind; the speed and haste destruction was making; and the great stupidity of the people, which required such a frequent repetition:

it watcheth for thee; that is, their damnation slumbered not, but was awake, and waited till the time was up, which was just at hand, for it to take place; (see ^{611B}2 Peter 2:3);

behold, it is come; either the end, or rather the evil before mentioned; it was just at the door; it denotes the certainty of it, and its near approach.

Ver. 7. *The morning is come upon thee, O thou that dwellest in the land*, &c.] That is, early ruin was come, or was coming, upon the inhabitants of Judea, which before is said to be awake, and to watch for them; and now the day being broke, the morning come, it hastened to them. Some, because this word ^{f102} is used in (^{2386B}Isaiah 18:5); for a crown or diadem, think a crowned head, a king, is here meant; particularly Nebuchadnezzar

king of Babylon, the instrument of the destruction of Jerusalem. So the Targum,

“the kingdom is revealed upon or against thee, O inhabitant of the land.”

Jarchi interprets it of the morning setting as the sun does, its light and glory disappearing; and so denotes a dark and gloomy day;

the time is come; the appointed time of Jerusalem’s ruin, the time of her visitation;

the day of trouble, or “noise”^{f103},

[is] near; either of the Chaldean army, its chariots and horses, and of their armour; or of the howling and lamentation of the Jews:

and not the sounding again of the mountains; not like the echo of a man’s voice between the mountains, which is only imaginary, but this is real; so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it: or this was not like the shoutings of the vintage, which were joyful ones, (²³⁶⁹Isaiah 16:9,10); but this the voice of lamentation and sorrow, doleful sounds. Jarchi says the word signifies the cry of the voice, proclaiming or calling on persons to fly to the tops of the mountains, which now should not be; and so the Targum,

“and there is no fleeing or escaping to the tops of the mountains.”

Ver. 8. *Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee*, &c.] It might be very well said to be shortly, or near at hand, that the Lord would bring down his judgments upon this people; since it was some time in the sixth year of King Jehoiachin’s captivity that this prophecy was delivered; and it was in the ninth year that Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jerusalem; so that it was but about three years before God would begin to pour out his fury on them:

and accomplish mine anger upon thee; not only send it, and begin to express it, but go on to finish it, till he had spent all his fury upon them he meant and threatened, and their sins deserved:

and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and I will recompense thee for all thine abominations; which is repeated from (²³⁰⁸Ezekiel 7:3), for the confirmation of it, and to show the certainty of it, that nothing would prevent it.

Ver. 9. *And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, &c.]* This verse is the same with (²³⁷⁰⁴Ezekiel 7:4); only instead of “I will recompense thy ways upon thee”, here it is,

I will recompense thee according to thy ways upon thee and thine abominations [that] are in the midst of thee; which have both the same sense, showing the equity and justice of the divine proceedings: and to the clause, it is added,

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord that smiteth; with the rod of his anger, inflicts punishment for sin. The Syriac version is, “that smiteth them”; the Jews, by suffering them to be carried captive: and so the Targum,

“I am the Lord that bringeth upon you a smiting,”

or the blow; the sense is, that when it came, they should be sensible that it was the Lord’s doing. (See Gill on “²³⁷⁰⁴Ezekiel 7:4”).

Ver. 10. *Behold the day, behold, it is come, &c.]* That is, the day of trouble and distress, said to be near, (²³⁷⁰³Ezekiel 7:3);

the morning is gone forth; (see Gill on “²³⁷⁰⁷Ezekiel 7:7”);

the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded; both these phrases may be understood of Nebuchadnezzar; he was the rod, with which the Lord smote his people, as the Assyrian monarch is called the rod of his anger, (²³⁷⁰⁵Isaiah 10:5): and was a very proud prince, and had budded and blossomed, and had brought forth much bad fruit of that kind; (see ²³⁷¹⁵Daniel 3:15 4:30,37); or these may be separately considered; the rod may be interpreted of Nebuchadnezzar, which had been growing up, and preparing for the chastisement of the people of the Jews, and now was just ready to be made use of; and “pride” may respect the sin of that people, which was the cause of their being smitten with this rod, as the following words seem to indicate. The Targum is,

“a ruler hath budded, a wicked one hath appeared.”

Ver. 11. *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness, &c.]* Some understand this of the Chaldeans, who came with great violence against the Jews, and were a rod in the hand of the Lord, to scourge them for their wickedness; and this seems to be the sense of the Targum,

“spoilers are risen up to visit the wicked;”

but rather the violence, oppression, and rapine of the Jews are meant, and mentioned as the cause of their punishment; for this their oppression of the poor and needy, the widow and the fatherless, among them, God suffered the king of Babylon, a wicked prince, to come and chastise them:

none of them [shall remain], nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs; meaning not the Chaldean army, as if they came not of themselves, but of God, and much less were cut off, for they returned to their own land again; but the Jews, who either should die in the siege with the famine and pestilence, or be put to death by the sword, or be carried into captivity:

neither [shall there be] wailing for them; the destruction should be so general, that there would be but few left to mourn; and those that were left would be struck with such a stupor and amazement at the calamity, that they would not be capable of mourning; or with such a dread of the enemy, that there would be no place for lamentation over their dead friends and relations.

Ver. 12. *The time is come, the day draweth near,* &c.] According to the Targum, the time of the recompence of iniquities, and the day of punishment of sins; of the sins of the Jews, by the Chaldean army, which no doubt is true; but it seems chiefly to refer to what follows: and the sense is, the time was coming on, in which

let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn; it is usual for the buyer of houses or lands to rejoice, because an addition is made to his estate, and especially when he has made, as he thinks, a good purchase; and the seller, he mourns because he is obliged to part with his estate to pay his debts, and so is reduced in his circumstances; but now the time was coming when the one would have no occasion to rejoice, nor the other to mourn; not the buyer rejoice, because, being carried captive, he cannot enjoy his possessions; nor the seller mourn, because, if he had not sold his house or field, he must have left it:

for wrath [is] upon all the multitude thereof; upon the whole body of the Jewish nation, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, buyer and seller; those that are in good circumstances, and those that are in bad ones; so that hereby they were all upon a level, in the same case and condition.

Ver. 13. *For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, &c.*] In the year of jubilee, because he shall be in captivity: according to the law in (^{<02513>}Leviticus 25:13), when a man had sold his possession, he returned to it again, if alive, in the year of jubilee; let it come sooner or later, within thirty, or twenty, or ten years after the sale, be it as it will: now the Babylonish captivity being seventy years, in that time there must be a jubilee; and yet those that had sold their estates, being captives in another land, could not return to them:

although they were yet alive: either though what they have sold is in being, and in good condition; or rather, though they that have sold them are in the land of the living, but, not being in their own land, cannot possess:

for the vision [is] touching the whole multitude thereof; the prophecy of the destruction of the Jews is general, and respects the whole body of the people; men of all ranks and degrees, the buyer and the seller, the rich and the poor:

[which] shall not return; void and of no effect, but shall be fully accomplished; (see ^{<2511>}Isaiah 54:11); though some think this refers not to prophecy, but to the people, who did not upon it return by repentance; in this sense it is taken by Jarchi and Kimchi; and so the Targum,

“for the prophets prophesied to the whole multitude of them to return by repentance, and they returned not:”

neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life: either secure himself from danger by his unrighteous mammon, his ill gotten goods; or think to escape by his daring impiety, and vicious course of life, continued in without repentance.

Ver. 14. *They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready, &c.*] That is, the Jews, when they understood that the enemy was approaching, blew the trumpet, to give the inhabitants of their several cities and towns warning of it; that they might gather together, provide themselves with armour, and put themselves in a posture of defence, or go forth to meet the enemy, and stop his progress: or, “blow ye the trumpet”, so the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and so may be considered as an irony or sarcasm; blow the trumpet, as an alarm of war, and see what will be the effect of it:

but none goeth to the battle: not having courage enough to face the enemy, but instead of that find to the fortified cities, and particularly to Jerusalem: the reason of this timidity and cowardice was,

for my wrath [is] upon all the multitude thereof; the intention of God was to destroy them all by one means or another; and therefore a heart was not given them to defend themselves, or oppose the enemy.

Ver. 15. *The sword [is] without, &c.*] Without the city, where the enemy was besieging; so that those that went without, in order to make their escapes fell into their hands:

and the pestilence and the famine within; within the city; so that such who thought themselves safe in their own houses died by those judgments:

he that [is] in the field shall die by the sword; by the hands of the Chaldeans:

and he that [is] in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him; and he shall die by the hand of God.

Ver. 16. *But they that escape of them shall escape, &c.*] Some few should escape the pestilence, famine, and sword, and flee to the mountains, where they should live a very miserable and uncomfortable life; so that this is no contradiction to the wrath of God being upon the whole multitude, (³¹⁷²Ezekiel 7:12,14); as it follows:

and shall be on the mountains; whither they shall flee, when the city is broken up and taken; and so the Syriac version reads it, in connection with the preceding words, “and they that escape of them shall escape to the mountains”; barren and desert places, where they shall find no subsistence, nor have any agreeable company and conversation, but live in solitude and distress:

like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, everyone for his iniquity: like doves that live in valleys, or gather together there, and hide themselves in the holes of the rocks, on the sides of the valleys, from birds of prey; or are so called, to distinguish them from wild doves, which, when they have lost their mates, make a very mournful noise, though not loud and clamorous. So those Jews that escaped, being in such an uncomfortable condition, turned out of house and home, and deprived of their substance, should lament their fate; not in loud cries, lest they should be heard by the

enemy and taken, but in secret sighs, and in a mournful tone; acknowledging to God, and to one another, their sins; they now became sensible of, which brought these calamities upon them. So God's people, the remnant according to the election of grace, who "escape" the general ruin sin has brought on mankind, are for the most part "upon the mountains", in an afflicted and persecuted state; they are like "doves" for their harmlessness, amiableness, cleanness, modesty chastity, sociableness, and timorous disposition; and like doves "of the valleys", in a low estate, through corruption, temptation, desertion, affliction, and persecution; and "mourn" over their own "iniquity", the sin of their nature, their unbelief and various transgressions being committed against a God of love, contrary to his grace, grieving to his Spirit, and dishonourable to his Gospel; and being what break their bereave them of comfort, and deprive them of communion with God.

Ver. 17. *All hands shall be feeble*, &c.] No strength in them, to lay hold on weapons of war to defend themselves, or fight the enemy; no heart nor courage in them, to go forth and meet him; and even afraid to lift up their voice in mourning, lest they should be heard, and pursued, and taken:

and all knees shall be weak [as] water; tremble and beat one against another, for fear of the enemy; or,

"shall flow with water,"

as the Targum; either with sweat or urine, which are sometimes both caused by fear.

Ver. 18. *They shall also gird [themselves] with sackcloth*, &c.] As a token of mourning, (^{<013734>}Genesis 37:34);

and horror shall cover them: either the horror of a guilty conscience, or the perpetual dread and terror of the enemy:

and shame [shall be] upon all faces; because of their sins and transgressions, which they shall now be convinced of; or because of their desolate condition, their sins had brought them into:

and baldness upon all their heads; through the plucking off of the hair of their heads in their distress; for to make baldness as a token of mourning for the dead was forbidden the Jews, (^{<015401>}Deuteronomy 14:1).

Ver. 19. *They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed, &c.*] As being of no use unto them to preserve them from famine and pestilence, and as being an hinderance to them in their flight from the enemy. Kimchi observes that this may be interpreted of their idols of gold and silver, which shall now be had in contempt by them, and cast away, when they shall find they cannot save them from ruin; (see ^{<2420>}Isaiah 2:20);

their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord; these can neither deliver from temporal judgments nor from wrath to come; (see ^{<2400>}Proverbs 10:2 11:4); nor idols made of them:

they shall not satisfy their souls, nor fill their bowels; gold and silver cannot be eaten; these will not satisfy the craving appetite, nor fill the hungry belly: the words show that the famine would be so great, that bread could not be got for any money; and therefore gold and silver would be of no avail; since they could not be fed upon, or give any satisfaction to a famishing soul; nor could idols of gold and silver neither:

because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity; what was the occasion of their iniquity, covetousness, and idolatry, at which they stumbled, and fell into sin, and so into punishment for it.

Ver. 20. *As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty, &c.*] Or, “for pride”^{f104}. The gold, silver, jewels, riches, and treasure, which the Lord gave to this people, they made a bad use of; and instead of contributing to the support of his worship and interest, and of giving liberally to the poor, they converted it to their own pride and luxury: or rather the temple, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it, is meant; which was a beautiful structure, and adorned with gifts, and set for glory, majesty, and excellency by the Lord; yea, where his excellent Majesty dwelt himself:

but they made the images of their abominations [and] of their detestable things therein; or, “of it”^{f105}; that is, of their gold and silver, which is another bad use they put their riches to: or rather “in it”^{f106}; that is, the temple; where, having made their idols, they placed them; (see ^{<2400>}Jeremiah 7:30);

therefore have I set it far from them; that being destroyed, and they being carried away captive into a strange land, far from that.

Ver. 21. *And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, &c.]* The Babylonians, who lived in a foreign country, and were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel; the temple was suffered of the Lord to fall into their hands as a prey; who spoiled it of all its riches and glory, and carried away the vessels of gold, of silver, and of brass, and other valuable things; (see ^{<457>}Jeremiah 52:17-23);

and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; meaning the same persons, and the same thing, and the same use they should make of it; for not the wicked of the world in general are meant, but of the land, or this land; the land of Babylon, where the prophet was:

and they shall pollute it; by entering into it and spoiling it, by pillaging and burning it.

Ver. 22. *My face will one turn also from them, &c.]* Deny them his presence, and withdraw his protection from them; show them no favour, nor afford them any help and succour in their distress, when they cry unto him; so the Targum,

“I will cause my Shechinah to remove from them:”

unless the Chaldeans are meant, as some think, whose robberies and ravages the Lord would wink at, and not restrain, but suffer them to plunder and spoil at pleasure: since it follows,

and they shall pollute my secret [place]; the holy of holies, by going into it, which none but the high priest might do, and he but once a year; though the Targum understands this of the Jews, and makes it to be a reason of what is threatened in the preceding clause, rendering it thus,

“because they have profaned the land of the house of my Shechinah:”

for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it; as did the king of Babylon and his army; and afterwards, in the second temple, Antiochus, Pompey, and Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 23. *Make a chain, &c.]* To bind them; not the robbers, the Chaldeans, but the Jews; in order either to bring them to the bar to be tried for capital crimes hereafter mentioned, or to be led bound in chains into captivity; (see ^{<480>}Nehemiah 3:10);

for the land is full of bloody crimes; or, “judgment of bloods”^{f107}; capital crimes, such as are deserving of death, particularly murder, or shedding of innocent blood; so the Targum interprets it of sins of murder:

and the city is full of violence; rapine, oppression, and injury done to the poor, the widow, and the fatherless; meaning the city of Jerusalem, where was the great court of judicature, and where justice ought to have been administered.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore I will bring the worst of the Heathen*, &c.] The Chaldeans, notorious for their cruelty, savageness, and barbarity:

and they shall possess their houses; which they have built, and thought to have lived and died in, and left them to their children for an inheritance; but the Chaldeans, and not their children, became their heirs, and inherited their houses and lands:

I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; or, “the pride of the mighty ones”^{f108}; the noble and the rich; their wealth and substance, by which their pride and grandeur were supported, being taken away from them:

and their holy places shall be defiled; the temple, in which were the holy place, and the holy of holies: or, “they that sanctify them”; the priests that offered sacrifices, which only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; even these holy persons and things, as well as holy places, would be defiled.

Ver. 25. *Destruction cometh*, &c.] Upon the temple, city, nation, and people; the king of Babylon, the destroyer of the Gentiles, and now of the Jews, being on his way, (²⁰⁰⁷Jeremiah 4:7);

and they shall seek peace, and [there shall be] none; that is, the Jews will seek to make peace with the Chaldeans; but the latter will not hearken to them, but go on with the siege, till they have taken the city, put part to the sword, and carried the other captive.

Ver. 26. *Mischief shall come upon mischief*, &c.] One misfortune or calamity after another; first one unhappy event, and then another, as was Job’s case. The Targum is,

“breach upon breach shall come”^{f109};

and rumour shall be upon rumour; that the Chaldean army is in such a place; and then that it is in another place still nearer; and then that it is but a few miles off, and, will be here immediately: rumours of wars, as well as wars, themselves, are very distressing; (see ^{<4106>}Matthew 24:6);

then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; apply to him for a prophecy, to know the event of things, whether and when they might expect a deliverance:

but the law shall perish from the priest; whose lips should keep knowledge, and from whose mouth the law, the doctrine and interpretation of it, might be expected; but now either there would be no priests at all; or such as were would be ignorant and unlearned, and incapable of instructing the people:

and counsel from the ancients; with whom it usually is; and which is of great service in a time of distress: this therefore adds greatly to the calamity, that there would be no prophet to tell them what should come to pass; no priest to instruct them; nor senator or wise man to give them counsel.

Ver. 27. *The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation*, &c.] Meaning one and the same person, Zedekiah not being able to save himself and his people; and who falling into the hands of the king of Babylon, his children were slain before him; then his own eyes put out, and he bound in chains, and carried captive to Babylon, (^{<2406>}Jeremiah 39:6,7);

and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled; weakened through fear and distress; incapable of business, and unable to help themselves and others; and the more so, when they found their case desperate; which was manifest by the mourning and desolation of their king, in whom their confidence had been placed:

I will do unto them after their way; or, “for their way”^{f110}; because of their evil ways and works:

and according to their deserts will I judge them; take vengeance on them, as the Targum: or, “in their judgments will I judge them”^{f111}; the same measure they have meted out to others shall be measured out to them, (^{<4101>}Matthew 7:1):

and they shall know that I [am] the Lord; the only Lord God, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, true and faithful, holy, just, and good.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 8

This chapter contains a vision the prophet had of the idolatry of the Jews, which was the cause of their destruction. The time when, place, where, and persons with whom he was, when the hand of the Lord came upon him, are mentioned, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:1); then follows a description of the divine Person that appeared to him, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:2); and an account is given how he was in a visionary way brought to Jerusalem, and to the temple, where he saw the glory of the God of Israel, and the idolatry of the people, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:3,4); which latter was gradually represented to him; first the image of jealousy in the entry at the gate of the altar northward, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:5); then greater abominations through a hole in the wall, by which he saw their idols, in the form of reptiles and four footed beasts, portrayed on the wall, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:6-10); next seventy of the ancients of Israel, among whom were one mentioned by name, offering incense to these idols, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:11,12); after this, greater abominations still are showed him, at the north of the temple, women weeping for Tammuz, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:13,14); and then again far greater ones, twenty five men, between the porch and the altar, with their backs to the temple, and their face to the east, worshipping the sun, and putting the branch to the nose, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:15-17); wherefore it is reasoned to deal with them in fury, without any mercy, pity, and compassion, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 8:18).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth [month], in the fifth [day] of the month, &c.* This was the sixth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin; the sixth month was the month Elul, which answers to part of August, and part of September. The Septuagint and Arabic versions wrongly render it, the fifth month. The fifth day of the month is thought to have been the sabbath day, which seems probable by what follows; this was just a year and two months from the first vision, (^{<ARB>}Ezekiel 1:1,2);

[as] I sat in mine house; in Chaldea, by the river Chebar; he was now sitting, the time of lying on his side, both right and left, being now up, even four hundred and thirty days. It was in the fifth year, and on the fifth of Tammuz, that the first vision was; seven days the prophet sat with them of

the captivity at Telabib; at the end of which he was ordered to lie on his side; first on his left side three hundred ninety days, and then on his right side forty days: now reckoning from the middle of Tammuz, to the fifth of Elul in the sixth year, were but, as Kimchi observes, four hundred days; but this being, as another Jewish writer says^{f112}, an intercalated year, by the intercalation of a month, which consisted of thirty days, the whole number was completed, and the prophet was now sitting: or it may be this position is observed, because he was now teaching and instructing the people, which was frequently done sitting; (see Gill on “~~40B~~ Matthew 5:1”); and this in his own private house, being now in captivity, and having neither temple nor synagogue to teach in;

and the elders of Judah sat before me; to hear the word of the Lord from his mouth, the law explained, or any fresh prophecy delivered by him; or to have his advice and counsel in their present circumstances. These were the elders of Judah that were carried captive along with Jehoiachin; though some think they were those that were at Jerusalem, and that all this was only in a visionary way; but the former sense seems most agreeable; seeing this was previous to the vision, and with what goes before describes the time, place, and witnesses of the vision;

that the hand of the Lord fell there upon me; which the Targum interprets of the spirit of prophecy, which came with power upon him: it denotes the energy and efficacy of the Spirit of God in throwing him into an ecstasy, and acting upon him, and revealing to him the things he did; which are related in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *And then one beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire, &c.*] The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “behold the likeness of a man”; reading *çya*, “a man”, for *ça*, “fire”; but without supposing such a reading, for which there is no foundation, this likeness may very well be understood of the likeness of a man; since mention is made of his joins in the next clause, and of his hand in (~~40B~~ Ezekiel 8:3); and the description agrees with the appearance of a man in (~~40D~~ Ezekiel 1:26,27); it was usual for the Son of God, who doubtless is here meant, to appear in a human form; and so Junius and Tremellius supply the words,

“and lo a likeness “of a man”, as in the appearance of fire:”

it was the form of a fiery man that was seen, as he is further described:

from the appearance of his loins, even downward, fire; his lower parts, thighs, legs, and feet; expressive either of the light of grace communicated from Christ to his people; or of his fervent love towards them, or flaming zeal for God and his house; or rather of his wrath against an idolatrous people; (see ^{<6015>}Revelation 1:15); a like description is in (^{<3012>}Ezekiel 1:27);

and from his loins, even upward, as the appearance of brightness; his upper parts, back, belly, breast, shoulders, arms, head, &c. which may denote his incomprehensible majesty and glory; his glory being the glory of the only begotten, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. The Targum renders both the one and the other part of the description thus,

“and I saw, and twelve a likeness as the look of fire, the look of glory, which the eye cannot see, nor is it possible to look upon it; and beneath the look of fire, and the look of glory, which the eye cannot behold, nor is it possible to contemplate it; and above, as the look of brightness:”

as the colour of amber: or “chasmal”: which some take to be the name of an angel. The Syriac version is, “as the look of God”; (see Gill on ^{<3104>}Ezekiel 1:4”); and (see Gill on ^{<3012>}Ezekiel 1:27”).

Ver. 3. *And he put forth the form of an hand, &c.]* That is, he that appeared in the likeness of a man, and with so much glory and splendour, out of the midst of the fire and brightness which were about him, put forth the form of a hand, that looked like a man's hand; for this appearance was not real, only visionary; and this seems to design the Spirit of God sent forth by Christ, sometimes called the finger of God, (^{<2121>}Luke 11:20); as appears by what follows:

and took me by a lock of mine head; without hurting him, showing his power over him; and by this means raising him from his seat, as it seemed to the prophet:

and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and heaven; took him off of his seat, and out of his house, lifted him up in the air, and carried him through it, as he thought; for this was not real and local; in like manner as the spirit caught away Philip, (^{<483>}Acts 8:39); but in vision, as follows:

and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem; so it was represented to him in a true vision, which was of God, and not of Satan, that he was

carried from Chaldea to Jerusalem; not that he really was, for he was still in Chaldea; and here in vision was he brought again, and found himself to be when that vision was over, (^{<24124>}Ezekiel 11:24,25); but things so appeared to him, as if he was actually brought to Jerusalem by the power of the Spirit of God:

to the door of the inner gate: not of Jerusalem, but the temple, or rather the court, the inner court; (see ^{<26108>}Ezekiel 10:3); and so it should be rendered “to the door of the gate of the inner court”^{f113}; and thus it is explained by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech:

that looketh toward the north; for there were gates on every side:

where [was] the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy; some graven image, perhaps the image of Baal; so called, because it provoked the Lord to jealousy, (^{<47221>}Deuteronomy 32:21). Gussetius^{f114} suggests, that **I ms**, “Semel”, here may be the same with Semele; who, in the opinion of the Heathens, made Juno jealous.

Ver. 4. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel [was] there, &c.*] In the temple, between the cherubim, where the Shechinah or the glory of the divine Majesty dwelt; for as yet he had not removed, though provoked to it, and as he afterwards did; or he was here to destroy the idols, and both city and temple, for the idolatry of the people; or this is here mentioned, to show the baseness and wickedness of the people, that they should place an idol where the Lord himself was:

according to the vision that I saw in the plain; it was the same glorious Person he saw in the temple whom he had before seen in the plain, (^{<24122>}Ezekiel 3:22,23); and that was the same he had seen in the vision by the river Chebar, (^{<24108>}Ezekiel 1:3,28).

Ver. 5. *Then said he unto me, son of man, &c.*] That is, the glorious Person described above in this vision, the glorious God of Israel, seen by the prophet in the temple, he spoke unto him, calling him son of man; a name by which he often goes in this prophecy:

lift up thine eyes now toward the north; of the mountain of the house without the court, as Jarchi interprets it:

so I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north: being obedient to the heavenly vision:

and behold northward at the gate of the altar; at the northern gate of the inner court, where was the altar of burnt offering, brought by Ahaz; to the north of the altar he built in imitation of that at Damascus, (^{<2160>}2 Kings 16:10-14); and here stood

this image of jealousy in the entry; or the image of this jealousy; the image before mentioned, which provoked the Lord to jealousy; this stood at the entry of the northern gate, which led into the inner court, and to the altar.

Ver. 6. *He said furthermore unto me, son of man, &c.*] He continued his speech to the prophet, saying

seest thou what they do? the idolatrous Jews, who had set up a graven image at the northern gate of the court, where the altar was, and were sacrificing to it:

[even] the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here; for to set up an idol where he was, and an altar by his altar, and to sacrifice to Baal, and not to him, or to Baal along with him, or besides him, or to any other idol, were very abominable to the Lord: even to such a degree,

that I should go far from my sanctuary? be obliged to leave it, not being able to bear such abominable idolatries: or, “that they should go far from my sanctuary”^{f115}; depart from the true worship and service of it, and fall into idolatry:

but turn thee yet again; from the north to the south it may be; however, to some other part of the temple:

[and] thou shalt see greater abominations; or, “great abominations”^{f116}; for there is no necessity of rendering it “greater”: but the meaning is, that he should see other great abominations besides what he had seen, than which there could not be anything well greater.

Ver. 7. *And he brought me to the door of the court, &c.*] Of the inner court, the court of the priests and Levites. Dr. Lightfoot^{f117} says this was the east gate, and most common way of entrance; and in that gate the sanhedrim used to sit in these times; and there the prophet sees their council chamber painted about with imagery:

and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall; of one of the chambers of the priests and Levites, where they lay.

Ver. 8. *Then said he unto me, son of man, dig now in the wall, &c.]* And so make the hole larger; that he might have a fuller view of what was to be seen within the wall:

and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door; an opening, by which he could go into the cell or chamber, and take a full view of what was to be seen there. All this was visionary, for in reality the prophet did not dig, nor could he, not having anything to dig with; but so things appeared to his mind in the vision: first a little hole, by which he could discern there was a room; then, by making use of some means, a large door appeared, at which there was an entrance into it.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me, go in, &c.]* Into the room or chamber the door opened into:

and behold the wicked abominations they do here; the idolatries there committed, wicked in themselves, and abominable to God.

Ver. 10. *So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, &c.]* As beetles and others, worshipped for gods:

and abominable beasts; unclean ones; not only oxen, but dogs and cats, and other impure creatures; for such were the gods of the Egyptians, from whom the Jews took their deities:

and all the idols of the house of Israel; which were many, even as numerous as their cities:

portrayed upon the wall round about; the pictures of them were drawn and placed around the wall of the room or chamber; and where they were worshipped by the priests and Levites, and members of the sanhedrim; and this was not in one chamber only, but in many, as appears from (³⁸⁸²Ezekiel 8:12).

Ver. 11. *And there stood before them, &c.]* Before the pictures, as the Vulgate Latin version expresses it, praying, sacrificing, and offering incense unto them:

seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel; the whole sanhedrim, or great court of judicature among the Jews, as Kimchi; or at least there is an allusion to that number, which were appointed in Moses' time to be officers over the people, and govern and direct them, (⁴¹¹⁶Numbers 11:16); which shows how sadly depraved and corrupted the state was, that not the

common people only, but the civil magistrates, the chief rulers and governors, were given to idolatry; and those that should have taught the people the right way led them wrong; and it is still a further aggravation of their crime that they should do this in the chambers of the priests and Levites, where they ought not to have been:

and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan; who was either the prince of the sanhedrim, or at least a person of great note and esteem; and shows the corruption to be general, from the least to the greatest: Shaphan was a scribe in Josiah's time, who had a son named Ahikam, perhaps the father of this, (^{221B}2 Kings 22:3,12); in (^{311D}Ezekiel 11:2); he is said to be the son of Azur, and one of the princes of the people:

with every man his censer in his hand; to offer incense to the idols portrayed on the wall; and which they did, for it follows:

and a thick cloud of incense went up; there were many that offered; and perhaps they offered a large quantity, being very liberal and profuse in this kind of devotion to their idols.

Ver. 12. *Then said he unto me, son of man, hast thou seen, &c.*] Here should be a stop, as the accent "segolta" shows; hast thou taken notice of, hast thou considered, what thou hast seen, the amazing shocking abominations committed by these men? it follows, and the question is to be repeated, "hast thou seen"

what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark? their deeds being evil, such as will not bear the light, of which they had reason to be ashamed before men; and which they imagined would not be seen by the Lord, though the darkness and the light are both alike to him:

every man in the chambers of his imagery? the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, "in his hidden" or "secret chamber"; and the Vulgate Latin version, "in the hidden place of his bedchamber". The Targum is,

"in the chamber of the house of his bed;"

in his bedchamber; that is, in those chambers of the temple, which belonged to the priests and Levites, on the walls of which were portrayed the images and pictures of their gods. Here they had their secret rites or

mysteries performed, in imitation of the Heathens; who had the several mysteries of their religion privately observed; to which none were admitted but those that were initiated into them; as those of Osiris among the Egyptians; of Ceres with the Grecians; and of Bona Dea among the Romans; as Junius observes. Though some interpret this of the imaginations of their minds, according to which they framed to themselves deities, and a form of worship;

for they say, the Lord seeth not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth; this they gave as a reason of their idolatry, because the Lord took no notice of them, did not help them when in distress; but, as they concluded, had forsaken them; therefore they betook themselves to the gods of the Egyptians, Syrians, and other nations, for their assistance and protection: for these words are not the language of Epicureans, or such who deny the providence of God in general; who think that God takes no notice of the lower world, only of the upper one, as Kimchi and others interpret them; for these elders of Israel were not so ignorant and stupid as to deny the general providence of God, only distrusted his particular care of them.

Ver. 13. *He said also unto me, turn thee yet again, &c.]* Towards the north, as before; (see Gill on “²¹⁸⁶Ezekiel 8:6”);

[and] thou shall see greater abominations that they do; or: “the great abominations”; for so the words may be strictly rendered; nor does it appear that what follows, though great abominations, were greater than the creeping things, four footed beasts, and other idols, or dunghill gods, portrayed upon the walls, which the elders of Israel burnt incense to.

Ver. 14. *Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord’s house, which [was] towards the north, &c.]* By “the Lord’s house” no doubt is meant the temple, which the Targum here calls the house of the sanctuary of the Lord; that gate of the temple (for the temple had several gates) which was to the north was the gate called Teri or Tedi, and was very little used^{f118}. In this part of the temple were the sacrifices offered; and therefore it was the greater abomination to commit idolatry where the Lord was more solemnly worshipped:

and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz; they were not in the court of the women, where they should have been; but at the northern gate, near the place of sacrifice; and they were sitting there, which none but the kings of the house of Judah, and of the family of David, were allowed in

the temple^{f119}; but, what was the greatest abomination, they were weeping for Tammuz. Jarchi says this was an image, which they heated inwardly, and its eyes were of lead; and these being melted with the heat, it seemed to weep; wherefore (the women) said, it asks for an offering: but not the idol, but the women, wept. Kimchi relates various interpretations of it;

“some (he says) expound it by an antiphrasis, “making Tammuz glad”; in the month of Tammuz they made a feast to the idol, and the women came to make him glad: others say, that with great diligence they brought water to the eyes of the idol called Tammuz, and it wept; signifying that it desired they would worship it: others interpret the word Tammuz as signifying “burnt”; (from the words in (זרבים) Daniel 3:19); **anwtal azml**, “to heat the furnace”;) as if should say, they wept for him, because he was for they burnt their sons and daughters in the fire, and the women wept for them. He further observes, that Maimonides^{f120} writes, that he found written in one of the books of the ancient idolaters, that there was a man of the idolatrous prophets, whose name was Tammuz; who called to a certain king, and commanded him to worship the seven stars, and the twelve signs of the zodiac, for which the king put him to a violent death; and, the same night he died, all the images from the ends of the earth gathered together to the temple of Babylon, to a golden image which was the image of the sun; and this image was hanging between the heavens and the earth, and it fell into the midst of the temple, and so all the images round about it; and it declared unto them what had happened to Tammuz the prophet; and all the images wept and lamented all that night; and when it was morning, they all fled to their temples at the ends of the earth; and this became an everlasting statute to them, that at the beginning of the first day of the month Tammuz, every year, they lament and weeps for Tammuz; and there are others that expound Tammuz the name of a beast which they worship;”

but, leaving these interpretations, Tammuz was either the Adonis of the Grecians; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it Adonis; who was a young man beloved by Venus, and, being killed by a boar, his death was lamented by her; and, in respect to the goddess, an anniversary solemnity was kept by men and women lamenting his death, especially by women. So Pausanias, speaking of a certain place, there (says he) the women of the Argives (a people in Greece) mourn for Adonis^{f121}. Lucian^{f122} gives a

particular account of this ceremony, as performed at Byblus, a city in Phoenicia, not far from Judea; from whence the Jews might have borrowed this custom.

“I have seen (says he), in Byblus, a large temple of Venus Byblia, where they performed the rites unto Adonis, and I was a spectator of them. The Byblians say the affair relating to Adonis (or his death) by a boar happened in their country; and, in memory of it, every year they beat themselves, lament and offer sacrifice, and great mourning goes through the whole country; and when they beat themselves and mourn, they sacrifice to Adonis as dead; but the day following they pretend he is alive; and they shave their heads, as the Egyptians do at the death of Apis;”

and indeed it is thought by some that this Tammuz is the Osiris of the Egyptians; the same with Mizraim, the first king of Egypt, who, being slain in battle, his wife his ordered that he should be worshipped as a god, and a yearly lamentation made for him; and indeed Osiris and Adonis seem to be one and the same, only in different nations called by different names. Mention is made in Plato^{f123} of Thamuz, a king that reigned at Thebes over all Egypt, and was the god called Ammon; no doubt the same with this Tammuz; and who is here called, in the Syriac and Arabic versions, Thamuz or Tamuz; he seems to be the same with Ham; and Egypt was called, the land of Ham, (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 105:27); and it is most probable the Jews borrowed this piece of idolatry from the Egyptians their neighbours; with whom they were now very familiar, and from whom they expected help against the Chaldeans; but as there were such shocking obscenities used in this idolatrous service, it is most amazing that the Jewish women, who had been instructed in the law and worship of God, should ever go into it. Gussetius^{f124} thinks that Bacchus, the god of wine, is meant; and gives several reasons for it; and among the rest observes, that in the fourth month, called Tammuz from him, the vine was forming in ripe grapes; near the beginning of a fifth month, it was pressed out, and tunned up; and by the next month, having done fermenting, it was stopped up, which represented him buried; and for which the weeping was in this month.

Ver. 15. *Then said he unto me, hast thou seen [this], O son of man? &c.]* This shocking piece of idolatry, women weeping for Tammuz:

turn thee yet again, [and] thou shalt see greater abominations than these; or, “great abominations besides these”^{f125}.

Ver. 16. *And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, &c.]* The court of the priests, where they offered sacrifice, and into which none might come but themselves:

and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar; the porch that led into the temple, and the brasen altar, the altar of burnt offerings, which was a very sacred place, and reckoned more holy than the court of the priests^{f126}

[were] about five and twenty men; the number, more or less, not being exactly known; who they were, whether the priests or princes of the people, is not certain; probably some of both:

with their backs towards the temple of the Lord; that is, the most holy place, which they were obliged to, in order to do what is afterwards affirmed of them; for the sanctuary was built to the west, that in their worship the Jews might not look to the east, as the Gentiles did; wherefore these men, that they might imitate the Gentiles in their idolatry, turned their backs to the most holy place; which is an aggravation of their impiety; casting the utmost contempt on God, his worship, and the place of it:

and their faces towards the east: when the sun rises:

and they worshipped the sun towards the east; as many nations did, though forbidden the Jews by an express law of God, (^{<RHB>}Deuteronomy 4:19 17:2, 3); yet this they fell into, and had horses and chariots devoted to this idolatry; (see ^{<ZKB>}2 Kings 21:3,5 23:5,11). The word rendered “worshipped” is compounded of two words; one signifying to “corrupt”, the other to “worship”: showing that, by worshipping the sun, they corrupted themselves, and the house of God; and so the Targum renders it,

“and, lo, they corrupted themselves, worshipping in the east the sun;”

and so it is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud,

“they corrupted the temple, and worshipped the sun;”

but Kimchi thinks the word^{f127} consists of the verb in the past tense, and of the participle; and that the sense is, when the prophet saw the men worshipping the sun to the east, as amazed at it, put this question to those that went in, “do ye worship also?”^{f128} so Ben Melech.

Ver. 17. *Then he said unto me, hast thou seen [this], O son of man? &c.]* Took notice of and considered this piece of idolatry, worshipping the sun toward the east:

is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? could these things, which are such dreadful abominations, committed here in the temple, be reckoned light things by them, as surely they cannot? yet these are not all that they have done:

for they have filled the land with violence; with rapine and oppression; doing injury to the poor and needy, the widow and the fatherless, in all places:

and have returned to provoke me to anger; by other instances of idolatry:

and, lo, they put the branch to their nose; a laurel, or olive, or vine branch, which idolaters carried in their hands, and put to their nose, in honour of the idol they worshipped; in like manner as they kissed their hand at the sight of the sun, (¹⁸¹²⁶Job 31:26,27); and which the Jews did in imitation of the Heathen. This is one of the eighteen places in which there is “tikun sopherim”, or a “correction of the scribes”; who, instead of “my nose”, direct to read “their nose”; hence the words are differently interpreted by the Jewish commentators; who, by *hrwmz*, rendered “branch”, think an ill smell is meant; arising either from their posteriors, their back being towards the temple; or from the incense which they offered up to their idols; so Kimchi and Menachem in Jarchi; agreeably to which Fortunatus Scacchus^{f129} understands this, not of any branch used by idolaters, which they put to the nose of their idol, or their own, for the honour of that; but of the censer which the Israelites used, contrary to the command of God, and which they put to their nose to enjoy a forbidden smell; (see ²⁹⁶¹⁸Ezekiel 16:18 23:41); but Gussetius^{f130} gives another sense of the words, rendering them, “they send forth a branch to their anger”; the Israelites are compared to a vine, as in (²⁹⁰⁰¹Isaiah 5:1); sending forth bad branches, idolatrous actions, as here in this chapter; and to these bad branches they sent forth or added another, even anger against God, the prophets, true believers, and right worshippers of God; and therefore he also would deal in fury and wrath, as in (²⁹⁰⁸⁸Ezekiel 8:18); so Dr. Lightfoot^{f131} renders it,

““they send the branch to my wrath”, or “to their own wrath”; that is, to what they have deserved; as if it was said, in the same manner that anyone puts wood to the fire, the branch of the wild vine, that

it may the more quickly be burnt; so do these put the branch to my wrath, that it may burn the more fiercely; hence it follows, “therefore will I also deal in fury”, &c.”

The Targum is,

“and, lo, they bring shame (or confusion) to their faces;”

what they do turns to their own ruin and destruction; as follows:

Ver. 18. *Therefore will I also deal in fury, &c.*] Being provoked by such abominable idolatries, and such horrid insolence, and most contemptuous treatment:

mine eye shall not spare: neither will I have pity: (see ^{<3151>}Ezekiel 5:11 7:4,9);

and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice; very pressingly and earnestly for help, being in great distress:

[yet] will I not hear them; as they turned their backs on him, he will turn a deaf ear to them, and not regard their cries. The Targum is,

“they shall pray before me, with a great voice, and I will not receive their prayer.”

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 9

In this chapter is contained a vision, representing the destruction of the idolatrous Jews, and the preservation of the godly that were among them, in which different persons were employed; they that were concerned in the destruction of the idolaters are described by their office; they had charge over the city; by their form and appearance, men; by their number, six; by the quarter from whence they came, the way of the higher gate northward; and by the weapons they had in their hands, slaughter ones; and by their place and posture, standing beside the brasen altar, (~~300~~Ezekiel 9:1,2); among these were one clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side; to whom the glorious God of Israel, who was removed from the cherub to the threshold of the house, gave orders to go through the city of Jerusalem, and mark those that mourned over the abominations of it, (~~300~~Ezekiel 9:3,4); and the rest he ordered to go through the city, and slay all of every age, and sex, and state, except those that had the mark; beginning at the sanctuary, and filling the courts with the slain; which orders were obeyed, (~~300~~Ezekiel 9:5-7); upon which the prophet expostulates with the Lord, and intercedes for the people; but is not heard, because of the abounding of iniquity among them; their frequent shedding of blood; their perversion of justice; and their abominable infidelity and atheism; for which reasons he was determined to show them no mercy, (~~300~~Ezekiel 9:8-10); and the chapter is closed with a report made by the man clothed with linen, that he had done as was commanded him, (~~301~~Ezekiel 9:11).

Ver. 1. *He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, &c.*] That is, the glory of the Lord God of Israel, whom the prophet saw in the temple, and who directed him from place to place, and showed him all the abominations committed there: this loud voice of the Lord was not so much to excite the attention of the prophet, as to call together the ministers of his vengeance; and to show the greatness of his indignation, and the vehemence of his wrath, which was stirred up by the sins of the people:

saying, cause them that have the charge over the city to draw near; or,

“who were appointed over the city,”

as the Targum; that is, the city of Jerusalem; by whom are meant either the ministering angels, who had been the guardians of it, but now were to be employed another way; or the princes of the Chaldean army, who had a charge against the city to destroy it; (see ^{<2306>}Isaiah 10:6 ^{<2421>}Jeremiah 34:21). The Syriac version is, “draw near, ye avengers of the city”; and the Septuagint and Arabic versions are “the vengeance of the city draws nigh”:

even every man [with] his destroying weapon in his hand; weapons of war, as bows and arrows, sword and spear; (see ^{<2462>}Jeremiah 6:22,23).

Ver. 2. *And, behold, six men,* &c.] Either angels the form of men; or the generals of Nebuchadnezzar’s army, as Kimchi interprets it; whose names are, Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, (^{<2498>}Jeremiah 39:3); these six executioners of God’s vengeance are, in the Talmud^{f132}, called

“wrath, anger, fury, destruction, breach, and consumption:”

came from the way of the higher gate, Kimchi observes, from the Rabbins, that this is the eastern gate called the higher or upper gate, because it was above the court of the Israelites. Maimonides^{f133} says, the upper gate is the gate Nicanor; and why is it called the upper gate? because it was above the court of the women; (see ^{<1255>}2 Kings 15:35);

which lieth toward the north: where were the image of jealousy, and the women weeping for Tammuz, and other idolatrous practices were committed; which were the cause of the coming of these destroyers: moreover, the Chaldean army with its generals came out of the north; for Babylon lay north or northeast of Jerusalem; and so this gate, as Kimchi says, was northeast; and he adds, and Babylon was northeast of the land of Israel; (see ^{<2013>}Jeremiah 1:13,14 4:6,7);

and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; as ordered, (^{<2800>}Ezekiel 9:1), a different word is here used; it signifies a hammer, with which rocks are broken in pieces, as the above mentioned Jewish writer observes. The Septuagint render it an axe or hatchet:

and one man among them; not one of the six, but who made a seventh. The Jews say this was Gabriel^{f134}; but this was not a created angel, as they; nor the Holy Spirit as Cocceius; but the Son of God, in a human form; he

was among the six, at the head of them, as their leader and commander; he was but one, they six; one Saviour, and six destroyers:

[was] clothed with linen; not in the habit of a warrior, but of a priest; who, as such, had made atonement for the sins of his people, and intercession for them; and this may also denote the purity of his human nature, and his unspotted righteousness, the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints: and

with a writer's inkhorn by his side; or "at his loins"^{f135}; nor a slaughter weapon, as the rest; but a writer's inkhorn; hence Kimchi takes him to be the king of Babylon's scribe; but a greater is here meant; even he who took down the names of God's elect in the book of life; and who takes an account, and keeps a book of the words, and even thoughts, of his people and also of their sighs, groans, and tears; (see ^{<3016>}Malachi 3:16 ^{<3708>}Psalms 56:8); but now his business was to mark his people, and distinguish them from others, in a providential way; and keep and preserve them from the general ruin and destruction that was coming upon Jerusalem: or, "a girdle on his loins", as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it; and so was prepared and fit for business; which sense of the word is approved of by Castel^{f136}; and he asks, what has an inkhorn to do at a man's loins? but it should be observed, that it was the custom of the eastern people to carry inkhorns at their sides, and particularly in their girdles, as the Turks do now; who not only fix their knives and poniards in them, as Dr. Shaw^{f137} relates; but the "hojias", that is, the writers and secretaries, hang their inkhorns in them; and by whom it is observed, that that part of these inkhorns which passes between the girdle and the tunic, and holds their pens, is long and flat; but the vessel for the ink, which rests upon the girdle, is square, with a lid to clasp over it:

and they went in; to the temple, all seven:

and stood beside the brasen altar; the altar of burnt offering, so called to distinguish it from the altar of incense, which was of gold; here they stood not to offer sacrifice, but waiting for their orders, to take vengeance for the sins committed in the temple, and at this altar; near to which stood the image of jealousy, (^{<3016>}Ezekiel 8:5).

Ver. 3. *And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, &c.]* That is, the glorious God of Israel; or the glorious Shechinah, and divine Majesty, which dwelt between the cherubim over the

mercy seat in the most holy place, removed from thence, as a token of his being about to depart from the temple, which in a short time would be destroyed. The Targum is,

“the glory of the God of Israel departed in the cherub on which he dwelt, in the house of the holy of holies;”

the cherubim removed with him, and were his chariot in which he rode; (see ³⁰⁰⁸Ezekiel 10:18 11:22);

to the threshold of the house; of the holy of holies, as Jarchi interprets it; and so was nearer to the brasen altar, where the seven men stood, to give them their orders; of which an account follows:

and he called to the man clothed with linen, which [had] the writer’s inkhorn by his side; he, being the principal person, is called first; and his business being to preserve the Lord’s people shows that this was the first care of God.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto him, &c.*] This shows that a divine Person is meant by the glory of the God of Israel:

go through the midst of the city; that is, as it is next explained,

through the midst of Jerusalem; the city the six men had the charge over or against, (³⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 9:1);

and set a mark upon the foreheads; not the Hebrew letter **ט**, as some say, because in the form of a cross, and so signifying salvation by the cross of Christ; for this letter has no such form, neither in the characters used by the Jews, nor by the Samaritans, at least in the present character; though Origen and Jerom on the place say that the letter “tau” had the form of a cross in the letters the Samaritans used in their time; and this is defended by Walton ^{f138}, who observes, that Azariah in his Hebrew alphabet gives a double figure, one like that which is in present use, and another in the form of a cross, called St. Andrew’s cross, and as it appears in some shekels; and in the Vatican alphabet, which Angelus E Roccha published, the last letter has the form of a cross; as have the Ethiopic and Coptic alphabets, which, it is certain, sprung from the ancient Hebrew; and so Montfaucon says ^{f139}, in some Samaritan coins, the letter “thau” has the form of a cross; which, if Scaliger had met with, he says he would never have opposed the testimonies of Origen and Jerom; though, after all, it seems to be no other

than the form of the Greek “x”; and so the Talmudists say^{f140} the high priest, was anointed on his forehead in the same form: some think this letter was the mark, because it is the first letter of the word **hrwt**, “the law”; as if it pointed out such who were obedient to it; or of the word **hyj t** “thou shall live”. It is a Rabbinical fancy, mentioned by Kimchi^{f141}, that Gabriel had orders to write the letter **t** in ink upon the foreheads of the righteous, and in blood upon the foreheads of the wicked; in the one it signified **hyj t**, “thou shall live”, and in the other **twmt**, “thou shall die”; but, as Calvin observes, rather, if this letter could be thought to be meant, the reason of it was, because it is the last letter of the alphabet; and so may signify, that the Lord’s people marked with it are the last among men, or the faith of the world; or that such who persevere to the end shall be saved: but the word signifies, not a letter, but a mark or sign; and so it is interpreted in the Septuagint version, and by the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and others; and denotes the distinction the Lord had made by his grace between them and others; and now by his power and providence in the protection of them; for the, Lord knows them that are his, and will preserve them. The allusion is either to the marking of servants in their foreheads, by which they were known who they belonged to, (⁽⁴⁰¹⁸⁾Revelation 7:3); or to the sprinkling of the posts of the Israelites’ houses with blood, when the firstborn of Egypt were destroyed, (⁽⁴⁰²²⁾Exodus 12:22, 23);

of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof; the abominations were those abominable idolatries mentioned in the preceding chapter, and those dreadful immoralities hinted at in (⁽⁴⁰⁰⁹⁾Ezekiel 9:9); all which were grieving and distressing to godly minds, because they were contrary to the nature and will of God; transgressions, of his righteous law; and on account of which his name was dishonoured, and his ways blasphemed and evil spoken of; for these they sighed and groaned in private, and mourned and lamented in public; bearing their testimony against them with bitter expressions of grief and sorrow, by groans, words, and tears; and such as these are taken notice of by the Lord; he comforts those that mourn in Zion, and preserves them.

Ver. 5. *And, to the others he said in mine hearing, &c.]* To the other six men that had the slaughter weapons in their hands:

go ye after him through the city; that is, after the man clothed with linen; for he was sent out first to take care of the righteous, and preserve them; and the rest were not suffered to stir till he was gone; and then they are bid to go after him. The Syriac version is,

“to them that were with him he said to them before me, go through the city after me;”

as if these were the words of the man clothed with linen to the other six; and so the Arabic version; of it the other is the true reading, and gives the right sense, as the following words show:

and smite; the inhabitants of the city:

let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; not that the Chaldeans were inclined to mercy and pity, for they were a cruel and barbarous people; but this is said to show the resentment of God against the sins of the Jews; and that it was his will they should act the severe part they did.

Ver. 6. *Slay utterly old [and] young, both maids, and little children, and women, &c.*] All, of them objects of compassion, because of their age and sex; and yet none to be spared; and which orders were exactly obeyed; (see ^{<4837>}2 Chronicles 36:17);

but come not near any man on whom [is] the mark; these were not to be slain; and though some were carried captive, as Daniel, and others; yet it was for their good and God’s glory; (see ^{<6018>}Revelation 7:3,4 9:3,4);

and begin at my sanctuary; the temple, the house of God, and the priests and Levites that dwelt there. The Septuagint version is, “begin at my saints”; those who professed themselves to be the saints of the Lord, and were separated and devoted to his service; and so the Rabbins say^{f142}, do not read *yçdqmm*, “at my sanctuary”; but *yçdwqmm*, “at those that sanctify me”, or “my sanctified ones”; which they interpret of those that keep the whole law, from “aleph” to “tau”; (see ^{<6017>}1 Peter 4:17);

then they began at the ancient men which [were] before the house; the seventy elders of Israel, who offered incense to the idols portrayed upon the walls of the chambers of the temple, (^{<3180>}Ezekiel 8:10,11); these they slew first.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto them, defile the house, &c.*] The temple; do not be afraid of slaying any person in it, for fear of defiling it; they have defiled it with their abominations, and now do you defile it with their blood:

and fill the courts with the slain; the court of the priests, and the court of the Israelites, and the court of the women, and all the chambers where the priests and Levites were, and had their images portrayed:

go ye forth; from the brasen altar by which they stood, and out of the temple, after they had done their business there, and had slain all they should:

and they went forth, and slew in the city; they went out of the temple, and slew in the city all but those that had the mark.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, &c.*] That were in the city:

and I was left; in the temple; and the only one that was left there, the rest were slain; for there were none marked in the temple, only in the city, (²⁰⁰⁴Ezekiel 9:4);

that I fell upon my face; as a suppliant, with great humility:

and cried, and said; being greatly distressed with this awful providence:

ah, Lord God! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel; the ten tribes had been carried captive before; there only remained the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and these were now threatened with an utter destruction:

in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem? shown in the destruction of men, both in the city and temple, by famine, pestilence, and sword.

Ver. 9. *Then he said unto me, &c.*] In order to satisfy the prophet, and make him easy, and show the equity and justice of the divine proceedings:

the iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah [is] exceeding great; it cannot be well conceived or expressed how great it is; it abounded and superabounded: this is the answer in general, but in particular it follows:

and the land is full of blood; of murders, as the Targum interprets it; of shedding of innocent blood; and even of all atrocious and capital crimes:

and the city full of perverseness; or of perversion of judgment, as the Targum; the city of Jerusalem, where was the highest court of judicature,

where the sanhedrim of seventy one sat to do justice and judgment, have nothing but perversion and injustice:

for they say, the Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not; does not concern himself with human affairs, and takes no notice of what is done below; and, having imbibed such atheistical principles, were hardened in sin, and gave themselves over to all iniquity; having no restraints upon them from the consideration of the providence of God, and his government of the world: or else the sense is, that the Lord had withheld his mercy and favours from them; and therefore they showed no regard to him, and looked upon all their evils and calamities as fortuitous events, and not as ordered by him as punishments for their sins.

Ver. 10. *And as for me also, &c.*] As they have not spared the poor and the needy, the widow and the fatherless, but have perverted their judgment, and shed innocent blood:

mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, [but] I will recompence their way upon their head; deal with them by the law of retaliation, and reward them according to their deserts; (see ^{<2004>}Ezekiel 7:4).

Ver. 11. *And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which [had] the inkhorn by his side, &c.*] (^{<2002>}Ezekiel 9:2); to whom the orders were given to mark the mourners in the city, (^{<2004>}Ezekiel 9:4). The Syriac version is, “then I saw the man”, &c. which must direct him to observe and call to mind the distinguishing goodness of God to his own people:

reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me; meaning that the righteous were marked, and had been preserved, while the others were slain. Christ, as man and Mediator, sustains the character of a servant; as such he has commands enjoined him, which he has obeyed; he has done all he was to do; he has fulfilled the whole will of God, and wrought out the complete salvation of his people; a report of which he made when here on earth, (^{<2007>}John 17:4); and will do again at the last day; when all his people will be gathered in, and he shall deliver the kingdom to the Father, and present them all to him, having been kept by his power, saying, “lo, I and the children thou hast given me”, (^{<2008>}Isaiah 8:18); when all will be done as was commanded, and he undertook, and the report made accordingly. Ben Melech observes, that the “Keri”, or marginal reading is,

“according to all which thou hast commanded me;”

as if he should say, there is nothing wanting of all that was commanded.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 10

In this chapter is a vision, very much like that in the first chapter, with some difference, and with a different view, the design of it being to represent the wrath of God against Jerusalem, and his departure from the city and temple. A throne much like that in (^{2302b}Ezekiel 1:26) is described, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:1); orders are given from it to scatter coals over the city, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:2); the situation of the cherubim when these orders were given, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:3); the removal of the glory of the Lord from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the consequences of it; the house filled with smoke; the court with the brightness of the Lord's glory; and the sound of the cherubim's wings heard to the outer court, as the voice of God, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:4,5); the orders of taking and scattering fire over the city executed, and the manner in which they were, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:6,7); a description of the cherubim and the wheels, much like that in the first chapter, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:8-17); the departure of the glory of God from the threshold to the east gate of the Lord's house, with the motion of the cherubim and wheels along with him, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:18,19); and the chapter is concluded with observing, that the cherubim are the same with the living creatures seen in the vision of the first chapter, and had the same form, likeness, and motion, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 10:20-22).

Ver. 1. *Then I looked, and, behold,* &c.] After the vision of the destruction of the greater part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem by the six men with slaughter weapons, and of the preservation of a few by the man clothed with linen; another vision is seen by the prophet, in some things like to that he saw, of which there is an account in the first chapter; though in some circumstances different, and exhibited with a different view; partly to represent the destruction of Jerusalem by fire, and partly the Lord's removal from it, before or at that time:

in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim; the same with the living creatures, (^{2302b}Ezekiel 1:22,26); where the firmament or expanse of heaven is said to be over their heads, as here; (see Gill on "^{2302b}Ezekiel 1:22"):

there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne; (see Gill on “^{<3026>}Ezekiel 1:26”).

Ver. 2. *And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, &c.]* That is, the God of Israel, or the glory of the Lord, that sat upon the throne before described; he gave orders to the man clothed in linen, who appears in another character, and represents the Chaldean or Roman army:

and said, go in between the wheels, [even] under the cherub; the singular for the plural, the “cherubim”; the wheels were under these; the churches are under their ministers, their pastors, guides, and governors; or rather, since the wheels were by the cherubim, it should be rendered, as by some, “unto the cherub”, or “cherubim”^{f143}:

and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter [them] over the city; these “coals of fire” were an emblem of the wrath of God against Jerusalem, and of the destruction of it by fire; and these being fetched from between the cherubim, show that the cause of this wrath and ruin was the ill treatment of the prophets of the Lord; (see ^{<4865>}2 Chronicles 36:15-19); as the destruction of the same city afterwards by the Romans was owing, as to the rejection and killing of the Messiah, so to the prosecution of his apostles, (^{<3125>}1 Thessalonians 2:15,16);

and he went in my sight; in the sight of the prophet, as it appeared to him in vision he saw him go in, as he was ordered, between the wheels, and under the cherubim; but as yet he did not see him take the coals of fire, and much less scatter them; these were afterwards done, as related in the other part of the vision.

Ver. 3. *Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, &c.]* According to the Targum, it was the south side of the house; and so Jarchi interprets it opposite to the north, where the gross idolatries were committed, (^{<3108>}Ezekiel 8:3,5,14); standing at the greatest distance from them, and bearing their testimony against them:

when the man went in; they stood as it were in a levee, through which the man passed, waiting upon him; paying a respect to him; assenting to what he did; and approving of it: this circumstance is mentioned, because they were not always in this position, only at this time; nor did they continue so; we afterwards hear of their motion:

and the cloud filled the inner court; the court of the priests, not as a token of God's presence, as at the dedication of the temple; but rather of judicial blindness and darkness, which the people of the Jews were left unto.

Ver. 4. *Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, &c.*] Or, "cherubim"; those that were upon the mercy seat, between which the Shechinah or glorious majesty of God dwelt, in the most holy place: this is a token and intimation of the Lord's leaving of the temple; and a little before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, to which this vision chiefly, if not together, refers, a voice was heard in the temple,

"let us go hence^{f144}:"

[and stood] over the threshold of the house; either of the holy of holies, from whence he was removing; or rather of the holy place, the court of the priests, the inward court, and so open to the outward court, and view of the people in it:

and the house was filled with the cloud; the temple, being forsaken of God, was filled with darkness; as an emblem of that blindness which is come upon the Jews, and will continue on them till the fulness of the Gentiles brought in:

and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory; either the inward court, as the glory of the Lord passed through it, from the holy of holies; or rather the outward court, of which mention is made in (²³⁰⁰Ezekiel 10:4); the glory of the Lord being on the threshold Of the house, which looked towards that, and so enlightened it. This outward court signifies the Gentiles; who, when the Lord removed from the Jewish nation and people, were favoured with the glorious light of the Gospel, and ordinances of Christ; whereby they were enlightened, and filled with the knowledge of the Lord; with the knowledge of him, who is the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person; so through the fall of the Jews salvation came to the Gentiles, (⁴⁵¹¹Romans 11:11,12).

Ver. 5. *And the sound of the cherubim's wings was heard [even] to the outer court, &c.*] Or outward court. The sound of the Gospel, which is a joyful sound; a sound of love, grace, and mercy; of life, liberty, peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; the sound of this in the swift ministry of the apostles, signified by the "cherubim's wings", went into all the earth, and throughout the whole Gentile world; by which many souls were quickened and enlightened; many churches were formed; and

the glory of the Lord, being revealed, was seen by all flesh; and the whole world was filled with the brightness of the Lord's glory, as it will be again, and more abundantly, in the latter day: and this sound was

as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh; the Gospel is as thunder, which is the voice of God; and the ministers of it are "Boanergeses", "sons of thunder", (⁴⁰⁶⁷Mark 3:17): it shakes the conscience; shows men their danger; and points at the Saviour: it is not the word of man, but in deed and in truth the word of God: it is the voice of Christ, who is the Almighty; and it appears to be so, by its powerful effects, when attended with a divine energy, in quickening dead sinners; enlightening dark minds; unstopping deaf ears; softening hard hearts; and turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; it is so when God speaks in it, and by it; when it comes not in word only, but in the Holy Ghost, and in power.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, [that] when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, &c.]* After the orders were given by him that was upon the throne to the man thus described:

saying, take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubim; as in (³⁹⁰²Ezekiel 10:2);

then he went in; immediately, into the place where the wheels and cherubim were; even under the firmament of heaven, and the throne that was in it:

and stood beside the wheels, or "wheel"; to see what it was, as Kimchi thinks; or rather in order to go in between them, as he was bid to do, (³⁹⁰²Ezekiel 10:2).

Ver. 7. *And [one] cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim, &c.]* One of the four living creatures, or cherubim, put out his hand from among the rest:

unto the fire that [was] between the cherubim; so fire is said to go up and down among them, (²⁹¹³Ezekiel 1:13); to which the reference is here:

and took [thereof], and put [it] into the hands of [him that was] clothed with linen: denoting, as before observed, that it was for the ill usage of the ministers of God's word that wrath came upon the people of the Jews, and the destruction of their city by fire; so wrath will come upon antichrist, and the antichristian states, for their usage of the ministers and churches of

Christ, and in consequence of the prayers, and by the instigation of such persons; (see ^{<668>}Revelation 6:9-11 18:4-7); so one of the four beasts or living creatures, the same with the cherubim here, is said to give to the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, (^{<657>}Revelation 15:7);

who took [it], and went out; took the fire, and went out of the temple, and scattered it upon the city of Jerusalem; so representing the Chaldean, or rather the Roman army, burning it with fire; (see ^{<427>}Matthew 22:7); where they are called the armies of the King of kings.

Ver. 8. *And there appeared in the cherubim, &c.*] The Septuagint version is, “I saw the cherubim”; and so the Syriac version, “I saw in the cherubim”; what follows:

the form of a man’s hand under their wings; one of them put forth his hand, which was seen by the prophet, as declared in (^{<207>}Ezekiel 10:7); but this was only the “form” of one; which is observed to show that it is not to be taken literally, but as seen in the vision of prophecy; and being under their wings denotes secrecy and privacy: and the whole being applied to the ministers of the word is expressive of their activity and diligence in the work of the Lord, both in private and in public; and that they make no boast nor show of their works and labours, and ascribe nothing to themselves, but all to the grace of God that is with them, (^{<650>}1 Corinthians 15:10); (see Gill on ^{<208>}Ezekiel 1:8”).

Ver. 9. *And when I looked, behold, the four wheels by the cherubim, &c.*] The churches by the ministers: of these “wheels”, and why the churches are so called, and of their number “four”, and their situation “by” the cherubim, (see Gill on ^{<205>}Ezekiel 1:15”);

one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: a minister to a church; every church has its own pastor, elder, or overseer, by it, and over it:

and the appearance of the wheels [was] as the colour of a beryl stone; a precious stone of a sea green; (see Gill on ^{<206>}Ezekiel 1:16”). The Targum renders it in general, “a precious stone”; the Septuagint version, “a carbuncle”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “a chrysolite”.

Ver. 10. *And [as for] their appearances, they four had one likeness, &c.*] They were exactly like one another; they were all composed of the same

matter, had all the colour of a beryl stone, were all in the same form of a wheel; and in matter, form, and shape, entirely tallied and agreed one with another, as true Gospel churches do: (see Gill on “⁻²⁰¹⁶Ezekiel 1:16”);

as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel: not included in one another, but were formed in a cross or transverse way; (see Gill on “⁻²⁰¹⁶Ezekiel 1:16”).

Ver. 11. *When they went, they went upon their four sides*, &c.] Which four sides they had, by being made in the transverse way before mentioned; just as the New Jerusalem church state is said to be foursquare, (⁻⁶²¹⁶Revelation 21:16); and this may denote the uniformity of Gospel churches in every state and condition, prosperous and adverse; and the constancy of their walk, conduct, and conversation:

they turned not as they went: neither to the right hand or the left, but went on in the path of faith and duty, keeping close to the word of God, and keeping up a conversation, discipline, and worship, according to it:

but to the place where the head looked they, followed it; meaning either the rulers, guides, and governors of churches, pastors and elders; whose faith and conversation are followed by the members: or rather Christ himself, the head of the church, who is to be followed whithersoever he goes or directs: unless by the head is meant the same as the spirit, (⁻²⁰¹³Ezekiel 1:20); the Spirit of God, by whom the true members of Gospel churches are led, and after whom they walk. The Targum is,

“the place to which the first turned (or looked), after it they went;”

that is, the first of the wheels; and so may signify that the primitive churches are the pattern after which all the churches in after ages are to go;

they turned not as they went; this is repeated partly for the confirmation of it; and partly to excite attention to it, as being worthy of observation; (see Gill on “⁻²⁰¹⁷Ezekiel 1:17”).

Ver. 12. *And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings*, &c.] This is to be understood not of the wheels, to whom body or flesh, backs, hands, and wings, do not belong, but of the cherubim; and the sense is, that as the wheels were alike, and had one and the same form and appearance, so had the cherubim; they were exactly alike in their body,

backs, hands, and wings; denoting the agreement between Gospel ministers, in their doctrine, work, and conversation:

and the wheels [were] full of eyes round about; that is, the rings or circles of the wheels, as in (²⁰¹⁸Ezekiel 1:18); signifying that churches consisted of enlightened persons, who had a sight of their sin and danger, and looked to Christ for salvation, and walked circumspectly, and watched over one another:

[even] the wheels that they four had: the wheels that belonged to the four living creatures or cherubim.

Ver. 13. *As for the wheels, it was cried to them in my hearing, &c.*] Or they were called, as the prophet heard in the vision, by the following name:

O wheel, or, “the wheel”: for though there are several particular churches, yet they make up but one general assembly and Church of the firstborn, written in heaven; and will be all together in their perfect state, signified by the round form of the wheel; (see Gill on “²⁰¹⁵Ezekiel 1:15”).

Ver. 14. *And everyone had four faces, &c.*] That is, everyone of the wheels, for of these the words are continued; and which agrees with (²⁰¹⁵Ezekiel 1:15);

the first face [was] the face of a cherub; this being in the room of the ox’s face, (²⁰¹⁰Ezekiel 1:10), shows that the face of an ox and a cherub are the same; and that the living creatures have the general name of cherubim, from the face of an ox; and are so called from *brk*, which in the Syriac and Chaldee languages signifies to “plough”, that creature being made use of in such service:

and the second face [was] the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle; how these are applicable to Gospel churches, and the true members of them, (see Gill on “²⁰¹⁵Ezekiel 1:15”).

Ver. 15. *And the cherubim were lifted up, &c.*] From the earth; (see Gill on “²⁰¹⁹Ezekiel 1:19”);

this [is] the living creature that I saw by the river Chebar: a river in Chaldea, where the prophet was when he had the vision of the living creatures recorded in the “first” chapter; and hence it is out of doubt that the living creatures and the cherubim are the same.

Ver. 16. *And when the cherubim went, the wheels went by them, &c.]*

Ministers being guides to the churches in doctrine, worship, devotion, and conversation; (see Gill on “^{<3019>}Ezekiel 1:19”);

and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them; ministers and churches go together; if the one remove, the other do also; they cannot long subsist without each other; and, generally speaking, as are the light, knowledge, zeal, affection, and devotion of the one, such are those of the other; (see Gill on “^{<3019>}Ezekiel 1:19”).

Ver. 17. *When they stood, [these] stood, &c.]* When the one were inactive, lifeless, and without motion, making no progress in knowledge, experience, and practice, the other were so likewise; (see Gill on “^{<3021>}Ezekiel 1:21”);

and when they were lifted up, [these] lifted up themselves [also]; like people, like priest, whether in things commendable or not, (^{<3019>}Hosea 4:9);

for the spirit of the living creature [was] in them; the same spirit that was in the cherubim was in the wheels; and the same Spirit of God, who is a “spirit of life”^{f145}, as the words may be rendered, is in the churches, as in the ministers; generally speaking, if the one are lively, the other are also, and both move as they are acted by the Spirit; and also their motion from place to place, which is spoken of in (^{<3008>}Ezekiel 10:18), is directed by the Spirit; (see ^{<4016>}Acts 16:6,7).

Ver. 18. *Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, &c.]* Whither he had removed from the cherub or the cherubim, between the mercy seat, (^{<3004>}Ezekiel 10:4); taking another step towards a general departure from the temple and city, of which this was another signal and warning:

and stood over the cherubim: not on the mercy seat from whence he came, for hither he returned not; but over the cherubim or living creatures seen in the vision, which were under the throne in the firmament of heaven; an emblem, as we have seen, of Gospel ministers: and this may denote the exaltation of Christ, who is the glory of the Lord, the brightness of his Father’s glory, above sheen; his protection of them, and presence with them; for, let him move where he will, he will not depart from his faithful ministers; he will be with them to the end of the world.

Ver. 19. *And the cherubim lifted up their wings, &c.]* As birds do, when they are about to remove and fly away; these being upon the motion, ready to depart, as well as the glory of the Lord:

and mounted up from the earth in my sight: the land of Judea, where the Gospel was first preached; but this being slighted and despised, the apostles and first ministers of the Gospel took their flight from thence, and turned to the Gentiles:

when they went out, the wheels also [were] beside them: wherever they went in the Gentile world, their ministry was successful, souls were converted, and churches formed; when the glory of the God of Israel departed from the temple, and from the city of Jerusalem, and from the land of Judea, the Gospel ministry and the Gospel church state were removed likewise, and carried and fixed elsewhere:

and [everyone] stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house; that is, the glory of the God of Israel, and the cherubim, and the wheels, they stood together in one place, the eastern gate of the temple, one of the outward gates: the gate of the court of the Israelites, or outward court, which looked to the east; which shows that they were just going, and leaving the house or temple desolate, no more to return to it; (see ^{<4238>}Matthew 23:38,39); the next remove was into the city, and then to a mountain on the east side of it; (see ^{<26123>}Ezekiel 11:23); it was in the eastern part of the world that the Gospel was first preached, after it was carried from Judea:

and the glory of the God of Israel [was] over them above; both over the cherubim and the wheels; great gifts were bestowed upon the ministers, and great grace was upon the churches; and the presence of God was with both, and a glory on them, and on that glory a defence.

Ver. 20. *This [is] the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar, &c.]* This is repeated from (^{<2605>}Ezekiel 10:15); not only for the confirmation of it; but with an addition, to show that the appearance of the man upon the throne, (^{<26126>}Ezekiel 1:26), is no other than the God of Israel; and inasmuch as Christ is there meant, for the Father never appeared in a human form, it follows that Christ is the God of Israel, under whose power, protection, and influence, the cherubim, his ministers, are; and so this is a proof of the true and proper deity of Christ:

and I knew that they [were] the cherubim; not by having seen the cherubim on the mercy seat, and comparing these forms with them, which none but a high priest could ever see; for, though Ezekiel was a priest, it does not appear that he was a high priest; but by the forms of them he had seen carved on the doors and walls of the temple, (^{<4163>}1 Kings 6:29,35).

Ver. 21. *Every one had four faces apiece*, &c.] Every one of the four living creatures, or cherubim, had four faces; which were the face of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle, (^{<3010>}Ezekiel 1:10);

and everyone four wings: the Septuagint version reads eight wings; and the Syriac version “six”; so many in all indeed they had, (see Gill on ^{<3023>}Ezekiel 1:23”);

and the likeness of the hands of a man [was] under their wings; (see Gill on ^{<3018>}Ezekiel 10:8”).

Ver. 22. *And the likeness of their faces [was] the same faces*, &c.] Or their faces were like the same,

which I saw by the river of Chebar; which prove that the living creatures and the cherubim must be the same:

their appearance and themselves; were exactly the same there was no difference in their faces or in their bodies:

they went everyone straight forward; their motion as well as their form were alike; they kept one even course, looking right on, and their eyes right before them.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 11

This chapter contains an account of the sins of the princes of Judah; a prophecy of their destruction; some comfortable, promises respecting those of the captivity; and the chapter is closed with the finishing of the vision of the Lord's removing from Jerusalem; and the whole being ended, the prophet related it to the men of the captivity. In (^{2910b}Ezekiel 11:1); the prophet, is shown five and twenty men, among whom were two he knew, and are mentioned by name, and were princes of the people; and he is told that these men devised mischief, and gave bad advice to the people, (^{2910c}Ezekiel 11:2,3); wherefore he is bid to prophesy against them, (^{2910d}Ezekiel 11:4); which he accordingly did, the Spirit of the Lord falling upon him, (^{2910e}Ezekiel 11:5); declaring that their secret evils were known, as well as their public ones; and that, seeing they had multiplied their slain, and had feared the sword, the sword should come upon them; some should fall by it, and others should be carried captive; the consequence of which would be, that God would be known, and his justice acknowledged, it being what their sins deserved, (^{2910f}Ezekiel 11:6-12); upon this prophecy being delivered out, one of the princes before named died immediately; which filled the prophet with great concern, and put him upon expostulating with God, (^{2911a}Ezekiel 11:13); wherefore, for his comfort, he is told, that though the inhabitants of Jerusalem had insulted their brethren that were carried captive, and looked upon the land of Israel as their own possession, that God would be a little sanctuary to them; that he would gather them out of all lands, and give them the land of Israel; that they should come thither, and remove all idolatry from it, and should have regenerating and renewing grace given them, to walk in the statutes and ordinances of the Lord, by which they should appear to be his people, and he to be their God, (^{2911b}Ezekiel 11:14-20); but as for such that continued in their abominable idolatries, these should receive a just recompence of reward, (^{2911c}Ezekiel 11:21); after which follows an account of the entire removal of the glory of the Lord from the city of Jerusalem, (^{2911d}Ezekiel 11:22,23); and the prophet being, in vision, brought again to Chaldea,

reports the whole he had seen to them of the captivity, (²⁹¹²⁴Ezekiel 11:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Moreover, the spirit lifted me up, &c.*] From the inner court of the temple, where the prophet was, according to the last account of him, (²⁹¹⁸⁶Ezekiel 8:16); it was the same Spirit that took him by the lock of his head, and lifted him up, as in (²⁹¹⁸⁸Ezekiel 8:3); and perhaps in the same manner:

and brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house, which looketh eastward; where were the cherubim, and the wheels, and the glory of God above them, (²⁹¹⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:19);

and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; not the same as in (²⁹¹⁸⁶Ezekiel 8:16); for they were in a different place, between the porch and the altar; and about different service, they were worshipping there; and seem to be men of a different order, priests; whereas these were at the door of the eastern gate, sitting as a court of judicature, and were civil magistrates; though Jarchi and Kimchi take them to be the same. Some say Jerusalem was divided into twenty four parishes, districts, or wards, and everyone had its own head, ruler, and governor; and that there was one who was the president over them all, like the mayor and aldermen of a city;

among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur; not the same that is mentioned in (²⁹¹⁸¹Ezekiel 8:11); he was the son of Shaphan, this of Azur; he was one of the seventy of the ancients of Israel, this one of the twenty five heads or rulers of the people; he seems to have been a prince; by having a censer in his hand, this was a priest: the Septuagint and Arabic versions call him Jechoniah:

and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah; these two are mentioned by name, as being principal men, and well known by the prophet; and the latter is observed more especially for what befell him, hereafter related:

princes of the people; men who were entrusted with power and authority to exercise the laws of the nation; and who should have been reformers of the people, and ought to have given them good advice, and set them good examples; whereas they were the reverse, as follows:

Ver. 2. *Then said he unto me, son of man, &c.*] That is, the Lord, or, the Spirit of the Lord, that lifted him up:

these [are] the men that devise mischief; or “vanity”^{f146}; this is to be understood not of the two only that are named, though it may of them chiefly; but of all the twenty five, who formed schemes for the holding out of the siege, and for the security of the city, and of themselves in it, which was all folly and vanity:

and give wicked counsel in this city; either in ecclesiastical affairs, to forsake the worship of God, and cleave to the idols of the nations; or in civil things, as follows:

Ver. 3. *Which say [it is] not near, let us build houses, &c.*] Meaning that the destruction of the city was not near, as the prophet had foretold, (^{201B}Ezekiel 7:3,6,7,10,12); and therefore encourage the people to build houses, and rest themselves secure, as being safe from all danger, and having nothing to fear from the Chaldean army; and so putting away the evil day far from them, which was just at hand: though the words may be rendered, “it is not [proper] to build houses near”^{f147}; near the city of Jerusalem, in the suburbs of it, since they would be liable to be destroyed by the enemy; but this would not be condemned as wicked counsel, but must be judged very prudent and advisable: and the same may be objected to another rendering of the word, which might be offered, “not in the midst to build houses”; or it is not proper to build houses in the midst of the city, in order to receive the multitude that flock out of the country, through fear of the enemy, to Jerusalem for safety; since by this means, as the number of the inhabitants would be increased, so provisions in time would become scarce, and a famine must ensue, which would oblige to deliver up the city into the hands of the besiegers; wherefore the first sense seems best. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render them, “are not the houses lately built?” and so not easily demolished, and are like to continue long, and we in them;

this [city is] the cauldron, and we [be] the flesh; referring to, and laughing at, what one of the prophets, namely Jeremiah, had said of them, comparing them to a boiling pot, (^{201B}Jeremiah 1:13); and it is as if they should say, be it so, that this city is as a cauldron or boiling pot, then we are the flesh in it; and as flesh is not taken out of a pot until it is boiled, no more shall we be removed from hence till we die; we shall live and die in this city; and as it is difficult and dangerous to take hot boiling meat out of a cauldron, so it, is unlikely we should be taken out of this city, and carried captive; what a cauldron or brasen pot is to the flesh, it holds and keeps it

from falling into the fire; that the walls of Jerusalem are to us, our safety and preservation; nor need we fear captivity.

Ver. 4. *Therefore prophecy against them, &c.*] Evil things against them, things that are disagreeable to them; since they flatter themselves with good things, and cry peace and safety, let them know that destruction is coming upon them: or, “concerning them”^{f148}; what will befall them, and that it will be otherwise with them than they imagine:

prophecy, O son of man; this is repeated, not only to stir up the prophet to the performance of his work and office, not fearing the faces, and revilings, and mockings of men; but to show the indignation of the Lord at their scoffs and jeers, and the certain accomplishment of what should be predicted.

Ver. 5. *And the spirit of the Lord fell upon me, &c.*] In an extraordinary manner, and afresh, and enlightened his mind, and showed him things that should come to pass; and filled him with boldness and courage to declare them. The Targum interprets it of the spirit of prophecy:

and said unto me, speak; what I shall show and put into thy mouth, that speak out; be not afraid, but boldly declare all that I give thee in commission to say:

thus saith the Lord, thus have ye said, O house of Israel; as in (^{311B}Ezekiel 11:3); which perhaps was said in secret, and spoken privately, but known by the Lord; and it was not only the princes that said it, but the whole body of the people joined in with it, and agreed to it; though it is very probable they were influenced by the former:

for I know the things that come into your mind, [everyone of] them; not only their scoffing words, but the thoughts of their hearts; not one of them escaped the knowledge of God; the consideration of which should command an awe on men, and engage them to a watchfulness over their thoughts, words, and actions.

Ver. 6. *Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, &c.*] Had killed many of the prophets of the Lord that had been sent unto them, and had shed much innocent blood; and not only had unjustly condemned many to die, and had put them to death without a cause; but also the death of all those that were slain while the city was besieging, and when it was taken, were owing to their advice and counsel, in encouraging them to hold out, and not deliver

up the city; fancying they should be able to defend it, contrary to the declarations of the Lord by the prophet; wherefore their death is laid to such advisers, and they are called their slain:

and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain; such numbers of innocent persons being put to death, as in the times of Manasseh, (²2 Kings 21:16); or so many dying of the famine, pestilence, and sword, during the siege, and at the taking of Jerusalem.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Applying the parabolical expressions they had derided, and explaining them, in a different sense from what they had put upon them:

your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they [are] the flesh; the prophets they had killed; the persons, who had died innocently for crimes laid to their charge they had not been guilty of; and such who had fallen by one judgment or another since the siege, they were the persons intended by “the flesh”, and not such as were alive; and therefore could promise themselves nothing from this proverb they had taken up, and scoffed at:

and this [city is] the cauldron; that holds the slain, and in which they will lie and continue, and not the living:

but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it: where they promised themselves safety, and a long continuance; yet should not abide, but be carried captive.

Ver. 8. *Ye have feared the sword, &c.*] Of the Chaldeans; and therefore they sent to the Egyptians for help. The Targum is,

“ye have been afraid of them that kill with the sword;”

and not afraid of the Lord; (see ¹⁰⁰⁸Matthew 10:28);

and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord God; or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; meaning the Chaldeans, who were sent by the Lord, and, when they took the city, put many to death by the sword, and carried captive others.

Ver. 9. *And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, &c.*] Jerusalem, the cauldron, as they said it was, and where they thought they should be safe; this is repeated, to express the certainty of it, and to excite their attention to it, and remove their vain confidence:

and deliver you into the hands of strangers; the Chaldeans:

and will execute judgments among you; punishments for sin, such as famine, pestilence, sword, and captivity.

Ver. 10. *Ye shall fall by the sword, &c.*] Of the Chaldeans; not in the city of Jerusalem, but out of it, when it was broken up, and they fled:

I will judge you in the border of Israel; that is, inflict punishment on them, particularly by the sword; which was done at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where the sons of Zedekiah were slain, and all the princes of Judah, (²³¹⁰Jeremiah 52:9,10); and this was on the border of the land of Israel, (²³⁴⁸Numbers 34:8,11);

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; who knows things, and foretells them before they are; and am able to accomplish all that is threatened; and am just and righteous in all my ways and works; and who am known by the judgments executed by me.

Ver. 11. *This [city] shall not be your cauldron, &c.*] It was one, as in (²³¹⁰Ezekiel 11:7); but not theirs; it was the cauldron for the slain, for the dead, but not the living:

neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst of it; or, “and ye shall be”^{f149} or, “but ye shall be”; the negative is understood, and rightly supplied by us; though the Targum renders it without it,

“but ye shall be in the midst of it, as flesh that is boiled in the midst of a pot:”

[but] I will judge you in the border of Israel; this is repeated, that they might take notice of it, and to assure them that so it would be.

Ver. 12. *And ye shall know that I [am] the Lord, &c.*] (See Gill on ²³¹⁰Ezekiel 11:10”);

for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments; which is the reason why the Lord would judge them on the border of Israel, and deliver them up into the hands of strangers; nor can he be thought to act the severe and cruel part to them, when this their disobedience is observed; since they had his statutes and his judgments made known to them, which were not known to other nations, and yet they regarded them not; wherefore it was but righteous in him to inflict his

judgments upon them; and which is the more aggravated by what follows, and which still more clearly shows the justice of the divine proceedings against them:

but have done after the manners of the Heathens that [are] round about you; or, “the judgments of the Heathens”^{f150}; regarded them, and acted according to them, when they slighted and disobeyed the judgments of the Lord; instead of worshipping of him according to his revealed will, they served the idols of the nations round about them, and gave into all their superstitious rites and ceremonies.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass when I prophesied, &c.]* Or, “as I prophesied”^{f151}; that is, while he was prophesying, or declaring the above things from the mouth of the Lord, concerning the slaughter of the Jews by the sword, and the captivity of the rest:

that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died; one of the princes of the people, and was among the five and twenty men the prophet saw at the door of the east gate of the temple, (²³¹⁰Ezekiel 11:1); this man dropped down dead on a sudden, just as Ananias and Sapphira at the feet of Peter, (⁴⁸⁸Acts 5:5,10). It was in a vision Ezekiel saw this, and in the temple; but no doubt at the same time this prince died at his own house, whose death was notified to the prophet in this way;

then fell I down upon my face; as greatly surprised at the event, and filled with concern at what would be the issue of this providence; looking upon it as a pledge and earnest, a token and forerunner, of the utter destruction of the people:

and cried with a loud voice; expressing the vehemency of his affection, and the earnestness of his supplication:

and said, ah, Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel? or, “art thou making?”^{f152} the ten tribes had been carried captive many years ago, and a large number of the other two tribes in Jeconiah’s captivity, so that there were but a remnant left in the land; and, upon the sudden and awful death of this prince, the prophet feared the Lord was going to make an utter end of them at once; which he deprecates.

Ver. 14. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, &c.]* In answer to his prayer. The Targum calls it,

“the word of prophecy from the Lord;”

this was by way of comfort to the captives in Babylon, as the former was by way of threatening to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ver. 15. *Son of man, thy brethren, [even] thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, &c.*] Or, “of thy redemption”^{f153}; to whom the right of redemption of his lands and possessions belonged, as it did to those that were next akin. The Septuagint, by a mistake of the word, render it, “the men of thy captivity”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions, following them. It is true those were his fellow captives who are here meant; some of them that were carried captive were his brethren by blood, and all by nation and religion; and these phrases, and the repetition, of them, are designed not only to excite the prophet’s attention to, and to assure them of what is after declared; but to take off his concern for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who had used his brethren ill, and to turn his thoughts and affections towards his friends in Chaldea. Kimchi thinks that these three expressions refer to three captivities; the captivity of the children of Gad and Reuben; the captivity of Samaria, or the ten tribes; and the captivity of Jehoiachin. It follows,

and all the house of Israel wholly [are] they; or,

“all the house of Israel, all of them,”

as the Targum; that is, all the whole house of Israel. The Septuagint render it, “all the house of Israel is made an end of”; the Syriac version, “shall be blotted out”; and the Arabic version, “shall be cut off”; all wrong; since these words are not a threatening to the ten tribes, or those of the Jews in captivity, for all that follows is in favour of them; but only point at the persons the prophet is turned unto, and who are the subject of the following discourse. A colon, or at least a semicolon, should be here put; since the accent “athnach” is upon the last word;

unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, get ye far from the Lord; Kimchi interprets it, from the land of the Lord, the holy land; they being carried captive into a foreign country. The Targum is,

“from the fear of the Lord;”

the worship of the Lord; they being at a distance from the temple, and the service of it. These words are an insult of the inhabitants of Jerusalem upon

the captives, suggesting that they were great sinners, and for their sins were taken away from their own land, and carried to Babylon; and that they deserved to be excommunicated from the house and people of God, and were so; and indeed this is a kind of a form of excommunication of them:

unto us is this land given in possession; you have forfeited your right to it, and are disinherited; we are sole heirs, and in the possession of it, and shall ever continue in it. The Syriac version reads this and the preceding clause as if they were the word of the Israelites to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, thus;

“because they said to them, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, depart from the Lord, for unto us is given this land for an inheritance.”

The Arabic version indeed makes them to be the words of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but render the last clause thus; “to you” (that is, “the Israelites”) “is given the land for an inheritance”.

Ver. 16. *Therefore say, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Since they were so insulted and ill treated by their brethren the Jews:

although I have cast them afar off among the Heathen; both the ten tribes, even all the house of Israel, who were carried into Assyria, and placed in the cities of the Medes, in Halath and Habor, by the river Gozan, (²⁷⁶2 Kings 17:6); and those of the Jews in Jeconiah’s captivity, among whom were Ezekiel, and his brethren, and his kindred:

and although I have scattered them among the countries; and therefore, what with the distance of the place where they were, and the dispersion of them among the people where they resided, their case might seem to be desperate; and that there was no probability, and scarce any possibility, of their being preserved as a people, and of their restoration to their own land:

yet will I be to them a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come; their dwelling place, as he has been to his people in all generations their protection from all their enemies, in whom, and by whose power, they should be safe; and whose presence they should enjoy, though deprived of public ordinances, of temple worship and service; though they were at a distance from the great sanctuary, the temple, the inhabitants of Jerusalem boasted of, yet the Lord would make up the want of that to them with

himself. The Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi^{f154} interpret this of the synagogues, which were second to the temple, the Israelites had in foreign countries, where they prayed to the Lord, and worshipped him, and enjoyed his presence. It may be rendered, “the sanctuary of a few”^{f155}; they being but few, especially that were truly godly, that were carried captive: or, “a sanctuary for a little while”^{f156}; that is, during seventy years, and then they should be returned, as follows. The Targum is,

“I have given them synagogues, second to my sanctuary, and they are as few in the provinces where they are carried captive.”

Ver. 17. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, I will even gather you from the people, &c.*] The Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, where they had been carried captive:

and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered; that is, out of Chaldea and Media, out of which they should come in a body, and not singly, or in small numbers, as they did when Cyrus issued out his proclamation:

and I will give you the land of Israel; not only the Jews of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but many of the ten tribes came out of Babylon with Zerubbabel, and settled in the land of Israel; and hither they came also in later times, even those that settled in other countries; at their several festivals, and about such time more especially that the Messiah was expected, and continued there; and this will have a fuller completion at the restoration of the Jews in the latter days.

Ver. 18. *And they shall come thither, &c.*] That those of the captivity shall come to the land of Israel, they or their posterity:

and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof; the idols of the nations, that had been there introduced, detestable to God and all good men:

and all the abominations thereof from thence; idols, as before, even all of them, so that idolatry should be wholly rooted out; this had its accomplishment under Zerubbabel, Ezra, Haggai, &c. when the worship of God was restored, and there was a reformation of many abuses in religion; and again in the times of the Maccabees; and will have a greater fulfilment at the time of the conversion of the Jews; when everything that is

detestable and abominable among that people will be removed; of which conversion the following words are a prophecy.

Ver. 19. *And I will give them one heart, &c.*] In opposition to a divided heart, (³⁸⁰²Hosea 10:2); divided between the true God and idols, wavering and halting between two opinions, sometimes serving God, and sometimes Baal; a heart to pursue one way of worship, and to serve the Lord with one shoulder or consent, (³⁸³⁰Jeremiah 32:40 ³⁸³⁹Zephaniah 3:9); a heart sincere to God and man, in opposition to a double or hypocritical one, (³⁹¹²Psalms 12:2); a heart single to the honour and glory of God, and firmly attached to his word and worship: also concord, harmony, an unity of affections to one another, so as to be of one heart and one soul, as the first Christians were, who were Jews, (⁴⁰⁴²Acts 4:32); and an unity of judgment, an oneness of principle and practice, as there ought to be, (⁴⁰¹⁰1 Corinthians 1:10); and all this is the gift of God, and flows from his grace and favour. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “another heart”; different from what they had before;

and I will put a new spirit within you; meaning either the Holy Spirit of God, the author of, regeneration and renovation: this is represented by the ancient Jews^{f157} as the same with the Spirit of the Messiah that moved upon the face of the waters, (⁰⁰⁰²Genesis 1:2); or the spirit of man, the seat of this renewing work; or rather the work itself, called “a new man”, “a new creature”, (⁴⁰²⁴Ephesians 4:24 ⁴⁰⁵⁷2 Corinthians 5:17); and this is a new frame and disposition of mind, in which are new principles of light and life, grace and holiness; a new understanding of themselves and state, of God and of Christ, of divine things and Gospel truths; new affections for God, and all that is good; new desires after grace and righteousness, after God and communion with him, after his word and ordinances, and conformity to Christ; new purposes and resolutions to serve the Lord, and glorify him; new delights and joys, and in short all things become new. Instead of “within you”, the Septuagint, and all the Oriental versions, read, “in them”; and to this the Targum agrees;

and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh; a heart hardened by sin, and confirmed in it; destitute of spiritual life, senseless and stupid as to spiritual things; stubborn and inflexible, on which no impressions are made by corrections, admonitions, and instructions of superiors; and so an impenitent one: this God only can remove; men cannot soften their own hearts; nor can ministers work upon them; nor will judgments themselves

bring men to repentance: it is the work of God only; who does it by his word, with which he breaks the rock in pieces; by the discoveries of his love, with which he melts the heart that is harder than the nether millstone; by giving repentance to them, by working faith in them, to look to a crucified Christ and mourn, and all this by “his” Spirit: this is said to be taken “out of their flesh”; not their body, but their nature corrupted by sin, (²⁴¹¹⁵John 3:6); which shows that this hardness is natural to men, and rooted in them, and that it requires omnipotence to remove it;

and will give them an heart of flesh; a sensible and penitent one; a soft and tender one; a sanctified and spiritual one; one flexible and obsequious to the will of God; on which impressions are made; on which the laws of God are written; into which the doctrines of the Gospel are transcribed, Christ is formed, and the fear of God is implanted, with every other grace, all which are the gifts of God, and owing to his efficacious grace. The Targum of the whole is,

“and I will give them a fearing heart, and a spirit of fear I will put in their bowels (or in the midst of them); and I will break the heart of wickedness, which is as hard as a stone, out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart fearing before me to do my will.”

Ver. 20. *That they may walk in my statutes, &c.*] Have their conversation ordered according to the will and word of God; to which there is neither will nor power, till God gives a new heart and spirit, or works in them both to will and to do:

and keep mine ordinances, and do them; all things appertaining to religion and worship, both in public and private:

and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; it will appear by walking in the statutes of the Lord, and by keeping his ordinances, that they are his people, made willing in the day of his power to serve him; and by having covenant blessings bestowed on them, the grace of God wrought in them, his fear upon them, and new hearts and spirits given them, that he is their covenant God and Father; by this means, what under the prevalence of idolatry was hid, will now be made manifest.

Ver. 21. *But [as for them], &c.*] Who remained in Jerusalem, and were not carried captive, but continued in their, own land, and worshipped idols, the same as in (²⁴¹¹⁵Ezekiel 11:15);

whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations; not images of gold and silver, which cannot be said to have a heart; but devils and evil spirits worshipped in them, who are well pleased and delighted with the worship given them; so that the hearts of the devils worshipped, and the hearts of the idolatrous worshippers, were alike and agreed; wherefore their hearts were very different from those before mentioned; so far from having one heart, that their hearts were double and divided, partly after God, and partly after their idols; and so far from walking in the statutes of the Lord, that they were walking after the will of their idols, and in the worship of them; which were abominable and detestable to God, and all good men. The Targum is,

“and after the worship of their idols, and of their abominations, their heart wanders.”

I will recompense their ways upon their own heads, saith the Lord God, that is, punish them according to their deserts, by the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity.

Ver. 22. *Then did the cherubim lift up their wings, &c.*] In order to remove, as in (³⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:19);

and the wheels beside them; which were lifted up also along with the cherubim:

and the glory of the God of Israel [was] over them above; both cherubim and wheels.

Ver. 23. *And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, &c.*] Of Jerusalem, whither it was removed from the door of the east gate of the temple, (³⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 10:19); though no mention is made of such removal; and now, having left the temple, it leaves the city:

and stood upon the mountain, which [is] on the east side of the city; either waiting for the repentance of the inhabitants of it, leaving them with reluctance; or in order to bring down his judgments upon it, and behold its destruction and ruin: this mountain was the mountain of Olives, as the Targum interprets it: and so Jarchi and Kimchi; (see ³⁸⁴⁵Zechariah 14:5). Christ stood on this mountain and wept over Jerusalem, and from hence he ascended to heaven. This Jarchi calls the third remove of the Shechinah or glory of the God of Israel. The Rabbins say^{f158} it removed ten times, and reckon them thus,

“from the mercy seat to the cherub; from the cherub to the cherub; from the cherub to the threshold; from the threshold to the court; from the court to the altar; from the altar to the roof; from the roof to the wall; from the wall to the city; from the city to the mountain; from the mountain to the wilderness; and from the wilderness it ascended and sat in its own place, according to (^{<315>}Hosea 5:15).”

Ver. 24. *Afterwards the spirit took me up*, &c.] From the east gate of the temple, whither he had brought him; when he had been shown, and everything had been told him, necessary for the reproof of the Jews in Jerusalem, and for the comfort of the captives:

and brought me in vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity; all this was done in vision; so it appeared to the prophet, under the influence of the divine Spirit of God, as if he was carried to Jerusalem, and there saw and heard all he did, and then was brought back again to Chaldea; whereas this was only mental, not corporeal; he was all the while in Chaldea, though things were so represented to his mind as if he had been removed from place to place:

so the vision that I had seen went up from me; he returned to himself, and became as another man, or as he was before; and found himself in his own house, and among the elders of Judah This shows that the vision was from heaven, and therefore it is said to go up from him; and that prophecy was not of the will of men, but of God; and that the prophets were not always under the influence of a prophetic spirit; but this came and went, and was only with them at certain times.

Ver. 25. *Then I spake unto them of the captivity*, &c.] The elders of Judah, and others with them, at Telabib, where the prophet had a house:

all the things the Lord had showed me; all the visions contained in the preceding chapters, from the beginning of the fourth chapter to the end of this: as the portraying Jerusalem on a tile, and lying on his side for a long time, as an emblem of the siege of that city; the barley cakes, denoting a famine; the sharp knife with which he cut off his hair, signifying the destruction of its inhabitants; how he was brought to Jerusalem, what idolatries he saw in the temple; the vision of the six men with slaughter weapons, and of another with a writer's inkhorn by his side; and also the vision of the cherubim and wheels, and the glory of the God of Israel, and their departure from the city and temple, together with what was

threatened to the Jews in Jerusalem, and was promised to them in Chaldea; all which the prophet faithfully related, and kept back nothing that the Lord had made known unto him by words or signs.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 12

In this chapter, under the sign of the prophet's removing household goods, is represented the removal of the king of Judah and his people from their own land into captivity; and under another sign, of the prophet's eating and drinking with quaking, and trembling, and carefulness, is set forth, either the famine that should be during the siege of Jerusalem, or the desolations following the taking of it; and the chapter is concluded with a reproof of the Jews flattering themselves that these prophecies respected times a great way off, and therefore hoped they would never be accomplished. The preface to the first sign is in (³⁵²¹Ezekiel 12:1,2); which describes the people of the Jews as rebellious, and given up to judicial blindness and hardness; and suggests the cause of all their calamities: the order to prepare goods for removing, to show to the people; for digging a wall; carrying the stuff out in their sight, on his shoulders, at twilight; and covering his face when he did it, is in (³⁵²³Ezekiel 12:3-6); the execution of this order, which is declared in part for the whole, is in (³⁵²⁷Ezekiel 12:7); then follows the explication of this sign, (³⁵²⁸Ezekiel 12:8-11); and the application of it, first to King Zedekiah, in whom should be fulfilled several of the particulars mentioned, (³⁵²²Ezekiel 12:12,13); and to the people about him, and his army that should be scattered and fall by the sword, (³⁵²⁴Ezekiel 12:14); the end of which should be, that the Lord should be known, his power, truth, and righteousness, by a few that should escape the famine, pestilence, and sword, (³⁵²⁵Ezekiel 12:15,16). The second sign, with the explication and application of it, is in (³⁵²⁷Ezekiel 12:17-20); and the chapter is closed with a reproof of the Jews; the proverbial expression they used, and which the Lord resented, is cited (³⁵²¹Ezekiel 12:21,22); and the prophet is bid to assure them that it should cease, or there should be no room for it; and also every vain vision and flattering divination, (³⁵²³Ezekiel 12:23,24); and that the word of the Lord should not be prolonged, but should quickly and certainly be accomplished; and that their hopes of the contrary were in vain, (³⁵²⁵Ezekiel 12:25-28).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The word of prophecy, as the Targum; the vision of the cherubim being over, this, very likely, immediately followed upon the former; though the exact time of the prophecy cannot be fixed, because the date is not given; it must be between the sixth month of the sixth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, (^{<A00>}Ezekiel 8:1); and the fifth month of the seventh year, (^{<A00>}Ezekiel 20:1).

Ver. 2. *Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, &c.*] The captives in Babylon, who murmured at their present condition and circumstances, and looked upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be in happy ones, and believed they would continue in them, as the false prophets persuaded them; not believing the prophets of the Lord; and encouraged them to stand out against the king of Babylon, repenting that they had surrendered to him, and hoped they should by their means be delivered see the same character of them, (^{<A00>}Ezekiel 2:3,5-7 3:9,26);

which have eyes to see, and see not: they have ears to hear, and hear not; they had natural sense and understanding, and means and opportunities of being better informed, and of knowing the true state of things, and how they were, and would be; but they wilfully shut their eyes against all light and evidence, and stopped their ears, and would not hearken to the words of the prophets:

for they [are] a rebellious house; stubborn, obstinate, and self-willed: or, "a house of rebellion"^{f159}.

Ver. 3. *Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee stuff for removing, &c.*] Or, "vessels of captivity"^{f160}, such as persons take along with them when they go a journey, or into a far country; such as a staff, scrip, purse, shoes, &c. or household goods; such as tables, chairs, and the like, which are removed when a person goes from one house to another; by which sign they of the captivity were to be taught that Zedekiah and the people of the Jews should in like manner be carried captive into Babylon; which they were not willing to believe, and the false prophets had told them the contrary:

and remove by day in their sight; be carrying the stuff out, day by day, several days running, as Jarchi from Menachem interprets it; that they may see and take notice of it, and ask the reason of it; which, when known, they might send to their correspondents at Jerusalem, and acquaint them with it:

and thou shall remove from thy place to another place in their sight; from the house in which he dwelt, to another house at some distance; yet so as to be seen by them, both from whence and whither he moved:

it may be they will consider; or “see”^{f161}; make use of their eyes, and of their understandings, and think better of things. The Targum is,

“perhaps they will fear;”

the Lord, and regard his prophets, and be afraid of his judgments:

though they [be] a rebellious house; such who are the most obstinate may be reclaimed.

Ver. 4. *Then shall thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight*, &c.] Bring it forth, that they may be spectators of it; and “by day”, that it might be manifest to them what was carried out; and this day by day, till all was removed:

as stuff for removing; that is intended to be removed from one place to another, and is carried away in the daytime, in the view of everyone:

and thou shall go forth at even in their sight; as a man, having removed his goods in the daytime, goes forth himself at evening: this denotes the flight of Zedekiah from Jerusalem in the night, (²³⁰⁴Jeremiah 39:4);

as they that go forth into captivity: with a sorrowful countenance, in a mournful habit, and with airs and gestures showing anger, anxiety, and distress; with a bundle on their shoulders, and a staff in their hands.

Ver. 5. *Dig thou through the wall in their sight*, &c.] The wall of the house where he was, as an emblem of the city of Jerusalem closely besieged, from whence there was no escape but by digging through the wall this showed the manner in which Zedekiah made his escape, by the way of the gate, between the two walls which was by the king’s garden, (²³¹⁷Jeremiah 52:7);

and carry out thereby; not his stuff, as before; but provisions for himself, necessary for his journey or flight; as no doubt Zedekiah and those with him did.

Ver. 6. *In their sight shall thou bear [it] upon [thy] shoulders*, &c.] The bundle, packed up for his use and service, carried out through the wall dug by him. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, as if he

himself was to be carried out upon the shoulders of another, thus: “in their sight, upon the shoulders, thou shall be carried”; but the former sense is best:

[and] carry [it] forth in the twilight; signifying the same as before:

thou shall cover thy face, that thou see not the ground; or “land”; not the land of Israel, but the land of Chaldea, where the prophet was: this shows that great shame and confusion which should attend the king of Judah when he fled, and great fear and terror also; and likewise his regard to his eyes being put out by the king of Babylon; so that he saw not the land into which he was carried captive, (²⁴²¹Jeremiah 52:11);

for I have set thee [for] a sign unto the house of Israel; to show unto them by deeds, as well as by words, what should befall them; (see ²¹⁸⁸Isaiah 8:18 20:2-4).

Ver. 7. *And I did so as I was commanded, &c.*] Though it might seem ridiculous in the sight of men, and he be bantered and despised for it; yet, it being the will of God, he was obedient to it; as it becomes the servants of the Lord to be with all readiness and cheerfulness; even in things for which they may be laughed at by others:

I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity; brought his goods out of his house, in order to be had to another place, as a type of the captivity of his countrymen the Jews:

and in the even I digged through the wall with mine hand; not with an iron instrument, with which walls are dug; but with his hand, he having no such instrument with him, and being in haste, and also that it might be done without noise; denoting the suddenness of Zedekiah’s flight, and the haste he was in; not having time and leisure to take proper instruments with him, he and his men pulled out the stones of the wall with their own hands, and silently made their way through and escaped; (see ³⁴²²Ezekiel 12:12);

I brought [it] forth in the twilight, [and] I bare [it] upon [my] shoulder in their sight: that it might be a sign and emblem of the above things to them, and they might learn some instructions from it.

Ver. 8. *And in the morning came the word of the Lord unto me, saying.*] That is, in the morning after he had done all the above things commanded him; explaining the meaning of them, and showing to whom they belonged.

Ver. 9. *Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, &c.*] The Jews that were in captivity; for with these the prophet was, and before their eyes he had done the above things; and they only could put the following question to him, who were “the rebellious house”; (³¹¹Ezekiel 12:2);

what dost thou? this they put not seriously, as desirous of being informed what was meant by all this; but as deriding the prophet for acting such a weak and silly part: this the Lord knew they had done, and therefore directs the prophet to make a proper answer; though some think the sense is, “hath not the house of Israel said unto thee, what dost thou?” no, they have not; they take no notice of it; never say one word about it, or inquire into the meaning of it; quite careless, thoughtless, and stupid; wherefore, though they will not ask anything concerning it, yet begin with them, and show them the design of it.

Ver. 10. *Say thou unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] In answer to their sneering question; or notwithstanding their stupidity and indolence, and in order to awaken them out of it:

this burden [concerneth] the prince in Jerusalem; the present reigning prince in Jerusalem, King Zedekiah. The sense is, either that that burden of goods the prophet carried out on his shoulders had a regard to the king of Judah and his captivity, and was an emblem of it; or rather that the burden of prophecy, or that sorrowful calamity predicted by the above sign or type, had relation to that prince, and would be fulfilled in him; and so the Targum,

“upon the prince is the burden of this prophecy;”

in like manner Jarchi interprets it of prophecy:

and all the house of Israel which [are] among them; they were also concerned in it, and would be carried captive with their prince.

Ver. 11. *Say, I [am] your sign, &c.*] Which represents you, and shows what will befall you:

like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them; as he had carried out his stuff, and had removed it from one place to another, so they should be carried away out of their own land into a foreign country, as follows:

they shall remove, [and] go into captivity; the Babylonish captivity.

Ver. 12. *And the prince that [is] among them, &c.*] Zedekiah their king that reigned over them, in whom they trusted, and under whose government they thought themselves safe and secure:

shall bear upon [his] shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth; out of Jerusalem, where his palace and throne were, leaving the main of his riches behind him; only should carry away what he could on his shoulder, a bundle of his most valuable effects, or provisions for his flight: or, as Kimchi and Ben Melech think, his clothes, for lighter march, and more speedy haste:

they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby; it seems by this, that when the king, and his nobles and servants, made their escape, they not only went forth between two walls, but broke through one, in order to get away; which was done, not by the king himself, but by his servants; so the Targum,

“in a wall shall they dig to bring him out by it;”

and therefore the number is changed, not “he”, but “they, shall dig”, &c. though in the following words the singular is again used:

he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with [his] eyes; either through shame at leaving the city, his palace, and all his grandeur. The Targum is,

“he shall cover his face because he hath sinned:”

or that he might not be known and be discovered who he was; and so it was through fear of being betrayed by a false friend, or taken by the enemy: or else this may respect his having his eyes put out at Riblah, so that he could not see with them the land he was carried into; though it rather seems to refer to his first escape out of Jerusalem with a mask or vizard on him, which might hinder his seeing the ground he went upon; and which, in his fright, he could not attend to, looking out here and there, not being able to keep his eye long upon any place. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it, “that he may not be seen with the eye, and he shall not see the land”.

Ver. 13. *My net also will I spread upon him, &c.*] Meaning the Chaldean army, which the Lord raised up, and brought against him, and gave success unto:

and he shall be taken in my snare; as a bird is taken in the snare of the fowler; or a wild beast by the hunter. The Jews have a tradition, which is mentioned both by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana on the place, that there was a cave which reached from Zedekiah's house to the plains of Jericho, by the way of which he fled; and that God prepared a deer, which went upon the top of the cave; and the Chaldeans pursued it; and when it came to the mouth of the cave, Zedekiah was coming out, and they took him:

and I will bring him to Babylon [to] the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it; his eyes being put out at Riblah, (^{2481b}Jeremiah 39:7). The Prophet Jeremiah says that his eyes should behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, (^{2481b}Jeremiah 34:3); and yet here Ezekiel says that he should not see the land of the Chaldeans. Josephus^{f162} observes, that Zedekiah thought these two prophecies contradicted each other, and therefore gave credit to neither; but they both proved true; he saw the king of Babylon at Riblah; but his eyes being there put out, he saw not Babylon, whither he was carried captive:

though he shall die there; as he did, (^{2481b}Jeremiah 52:11).

Ver. 14. *And I will scatter to every wind all that [are] about him to help him, &c.*] Either his bodyguards, the men of war that were with him when he fled, (^{2481b}Jeremiah 52:7); or his auxiliary troops, the Egyptians, whom he had taken into his pay for his assistance:

and all his bands: or "wings"^{f163}; the wings of his army. The Targum interprets it his army; these were all scattered from him when he was taken, (^{2481b}Jeremiah 52:8);

and I will draw out the sword after them: which fled into Egypt, and other countries; so that they did not escape, though they went not into captivity; (see ^{2481b}Ezekiel 5:12).

Ver. 15. *And they shall know that I [am] the Lord, &c.*] God omniscient, and can and do foresee and foretell future events, when the above things shall come to pass; and omnipotent, able to do what he purposed and declared he would; and true and faithful to his word, and holy and righteous in all his ways and works:

when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries; of Egypt, Babylon, Media, and other places.

Ver. 16. *But I will leave a few men of them, &c.*] Or, “men of number”^{f164}; of a small number, such as are easily reckoned up; which will require no great skill in numbers, nor trouble to count them:

from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; during the siege of Jerusalem, and at the breaking of it up; but then they should be carried captive into other countries:

that they may declare all their abominations among the Heathen whither they come; who, observing their calamities, and distresses, would read their sin in their punishment; and conclude they must have been guilty of great enormities, who were punished in such a manner; so that their punishment was a visible and standing declaration to the Heathens of the abominable sins they had been guilty of: or else the end of reserving a few of them from the above capital judgments was, that they being brought to a sense of their sins by their afflictions, might freely confess them, express their repentance for them, and justify God in his proceedings towards them:

and they shall know that I [am] the Lord; not the Heathens, among whom this declaration would be made; but the Jews, brought under a conviction of their sin, and of the justice of God in his dealings with them.

Ver. 17. *Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying.*] Here follows another sign of the desolation of the Jews, which the prophet was unto them; as the former signified their going into captivity, this their famine and distress at the siege of Jerusalem, and the dreadful calamities attending and following that.

Ver. 18. *Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, &c.*] As one in surprise or fear, or that has got an ague upon him:

and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness; fearing want of it, or as apprehensive of danger of its being taken away; (see ²⁰¹⁶Ezekiel 4:16).

Ver. 19. *And say unto the people of the land, &c.*] Of Chaldea, where the prophet now was; not the natives of the land, but the Israelites, who were captives in it; who were ready to murmur and repine at their own case, as miserable; and at that of the Jews at Jerusalem, as happy; and therefore they are taught by this sign, as well as by the following prophecy, that they were mistaken:

thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; or to them, or “concerning” them^{f165}; whom the captives in Chaldea thought lived so happily, and would continue so:

[and] of the land of Israel; or, “upon the land of Israel”^{f166}; inhabitants on it; to this sense the Targum and Septuagint Version interpret it, and also Kimchi:

they shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment; meaning at the siege of Jerusalem, when they could not eat and drink in peace; but, while they were eating and drinking, were disturbed and put into fear and surprise by the besiegers; and also, hearing that their provisions would not hold out, were careful how they ate and drank, and were frightened with the thoughts of being reduced to extreme want:

that her land may be desolate from all that is therein; or, “from its fulness”^{f167}; men and cattle, cities, towns, houses, vineyards, fields, fruits, and plenty of all good things. Jarchi expounds it of riches:

because of the violence of all them that dwell therein; not the violence of the Chaldeans, making a prey of all they met with, plundering cities and towns, and making forage of the fruits of the earth, by which means the land was desolate; but the rapine, oppression, and injustice of the Jews, which were the cause of all these calamities which came upon their country.

Ver. 20. *And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, &c.*] Not only the city of Jerusalem, but the other cities of Judea; as they were by the Chaldeans, which were then full of inhabitants:

and the land shall be desolate; the whole land of Judea be destitute of men and cattle, and lie uncultivated, and become barren and unfruitful:

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; who were then captives in Babylon, as well as those who should be dispersed among the nations would; (see ³⁴²⁵Ezekiel 12:15,16).

Ver. 21. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] After he had been a sign unto the people, in the two instances above mentioned; and they had hardened themselves against the belief of the things signified by them, because the time of their accomplishment was not yet.

Ver. 22. *Son of man, what [is] that proverb [that] ye have in the land of Israel, &c.*] Which question is put, as ignorant of it, but as filled with indignation at the impiety and boldness of those that used it, and in order to expose the wickedness and folly of it:

saying, the days are prolonged; the days of affliction and distress; the time of Jerusalem's destruction, and of the Babylonish captivity, these were not to be of a long time; and therefore they were ready to flatter themselves they would never be, at least in their days; and hence, because judgment was not immediately executed, their hearts were set in them to do evil; and thus they abused the patience and long suffering of God, and they used this and the following expression so often, and so long, that they became proverbial to them:

and every vision faileth? or "perishes"^{f168}; every prophecy comes to nothing; no one is fulfilled; at least because not at, once, therefore they concluded it never would, or, however, hoped it never would; and so pleased themselves, and continued in their impenitence and unbelief, and contempt of prophecy.

Ver. 23. *Tell them therefore, &c.*] Plainly and boldly, with the greatest assurance and confidence, as from God himself:

thus saith the Lord God, I will make this proverb to cease; by quickly accomplishing the things which they, by this proverb, represented as at a great distance, and what would never be brought about:

and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; when the things predicted shall take place:

but say unto them, the days are at hand, and the effect of every vision; the time is hastening on, and will quickly come, when every prophecy shall be fulfilled: it was in the sixth year of Jehoiachin's captivity that these prophecies were delivered out; and in the ninth year Nebuchadnezzar came with his army, and besieged Jerusalem; so that the days were at hand; in three years' time there began an accomplishment of the above predictions, which were scoffed at in the proverb used.

Ver. 24. *For there shall be no more any vain vision, &c.*] Or prophecy; such as the false prophets had given out, that the people should be in peace and safety, and not be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon; which they gave heed to, and so encouraged the lying prophets to go on

prophesying smooth things; when the prophecies of the true prophets were accomplished, then the false ones were rejected, and their prophecies no more regarded; nor could there be any more a place for them, or a reception of them:

nor flattering divination within the house of Israel; the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “in the midst of the children of Israel”; and so the Targum; but Kimchi says, that copies that so read are wrong; and which is confirmed by the Masora, which observes, that the reading is so in all places but in this. The Syriac version renders it “doubtful prediction”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “ambiguous divination”; like the prophecies and answers of the Heathen oracles, which were delivered in terms of doubtful signification, and might be taken in more senses than one. The Septuagint version is, “he that divines for grace”; in order to ingratiate himself into the people, to gain their good will, or their money, or both; and therefore divines smooth things, and flatters them with that which is most agreeable to their inclination; but when they shall see the city taken, and themselves carried captive, they will no more regard such soothing diviners, who pretended from the stars to tell what shall come to pass, as the Arabic version suggests.

Ver. 25. *For I [am] the Lord: I will speak, &c.*] A sovereign Being, immutable and eternal; who will speak by his prophets what is his mind and will shall be done:

and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; the word of prophecy delivered out in his nature by the true prophets never fails, but is always accomplished; as that was which respected the siege or Jerusalem, and captivity of the Jews:

it shall be no more prolonged: the judgment threatened shall be inflicted, and that in a very short time:

for in your days, O rebellious house; while they were living; which they hoped would never be, at least not till after their death; whereas, within live or six years after this, all came to pass:

will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord God of hosts; not only the prophecy of their ruin should be given out in their days, but accomplished in that time; which they might depend upon, since he who said it is the mighty God, the Lord of armies in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 26. *Again, the word of the Lord came to me, saying.*] This is repeated to confirm what was before spoken, and that they might assure themselves that there would be a certain and speedy accomplishment of what the Lord had said by his prophet.

Ver. 27. *Son of man, behold, [they of] the house of Israel say, &c.*] Either they of the ten tribes in Babylon, or the Jews in Judea, who were also Israelites: these the Lord directs the prophet to take notice of, and be a witness of what they said; since he himself, as a prophet, was concerned in it:

the vision that he seeth [is] for many days [to come], and he prophesieth of the times [that are] afar off; that is, according to them, the vision that Ezekiel the prophet saw concerning their ruin; and the prophecy which he delivered out relating to that was not to be fulfilled as yet; there were many days and years still to come; it was at a great distance, and so they put away this evil day far from them; they own that he had a vision and prophecy, but it respected future times, and distant ages; and therefore they did not trouble themselves with it; it gave them no great concern, because they considered it as afar off.

Ver. 28. *Therefore say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Carry this message to them from me, whether they will hear it or not; so shall it be:

there shall none of my words be prolonged any more; the fulfilment of prophecies delivered in the name of the Lord by the prophets shall be no longer deferred, but shall quickly be:

but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God: one jot and tittle of it shall not pass away till all be fulfilled; sooner may heaven and earth pass away than that shall; it is for ever settled in heaven, and shall be fulfilled on earth; he that has said it is of one mind, and none can turn him; and is able to do whatsoever he pleases.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 13

It being said in (^{<3524>}Ezekiel 12:24); that there should be no more a vain vision, nor a flattering divination; the prophet is ordered to prophesy against the false prophets and prophetesses, (^{<3530>}Ezekiel 13:1,2,17); the former are described as prophesying out of their own hearts, (^{<3530>}Ezekiel 13:2); as foolish ones, following their own spirit, and seeing nothing, (^{<3530>}Ezekiel 13:3); they are compared to foxes in the deserts, (^{<3534>}Ezekiel 13:4); and are represented as unconcerned to stand in the gap for the people, (^{<3535>}Ezekiel 13:5); and as seeing vanity and lying divination; wherefore the Lord was against them, (^{<3536>}Ezekiel 13:6-8); what they are threatened with are, that they should not be in the assembly of God's people; nor written in the writing of the house of Israel; nor enter into the land of Israel, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:9); the reason of which was, because they seduced the Lord's people, by speaking peace to them when there was none; which is figuratively expressed by building a wall, and daubing it with untempered mortar, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:10); upon which the wall is threatened to be rent, and caused to fall with a stormy wind; signifying the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army; and the false prophets to have the wrath of God poured on them who doubted it, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:11-16); and then follows the order to the prophet to prophesy against the false prophetesses, and set his face against them, and pronounce woe upon them in the name of the Lord; who are described as prophesying out of their own hearts; sowing pillows to all armholes; and making kerchiefs on the head of all sorts of persons; and which they did for poor small gain, and to the detriment of immortal souls, good and bad, (^{<3537>}Ezekiel 13:17-19); wherefore the Lord threatens to tear off their pillows and kerchiefs, and deliver his people out of their hands, no more to be hunted by them, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:20,21); the reason of which was, because they saddened the hearts of the righteous, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:22); and the chapter is concluded with a resolution that they should see no more vanity nor divine divinations; and that the Lord's people should be delivered from them, and they should know that he was the Lord, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:23).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Giving orders to prophesy against the false prophets and prophetesses, which were either in the land of Israel, of whom the prophet had notice; or rather who were among the captives in Babylon, where Ezekiel now was.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, &c.*] Who called themselves so, and were accounted such by others; though they were not true, but false prophets; and so the Targum calls them:

that prophesy; that is, smooth things to the people; promising a speedy return from the captivity; or that Jerusalem should not be taken by the Chaldeans, and the inhabitants of it, and of the land, be carried captive:

and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts; who were not sent of God, nor spake from him; but of themselves, what came into their heads, and was agreeable to their fancies, imaginations, and carnal hearts; such are false teachers, that go forth without being sent, and teach not according to the word of God, but according to their own carnal reasonings; so the Targum,

“according to the will of their hearts;”

what they pleased themselves:

hear ye the word of the Lord; which came from the Lord himself, and not from man, meaning the following prophecy; so the written word of God should be attended to, both by teachers and hearers, as the only rule of faith and practice; (see ^{צרכו} Isaiah 8:20).

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God, woe unto the foolish prophets, &c.*] The false prophets, as the Targum; who are foolish, as all are who are not sent of God, and furnished by him with wisdom and knowledge, and who prophesy out of their own hearts; for what else but folly can proceed from thence? this must be a great mortification to these prophets to be called foolish, when they reckoned themselves wise men, being vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, and were accounted so by others; but what is wisdom with men is foolishness with God:

that follow their own spirit; or “walk after it”^{f169}; and not the Spirit of God, who leads into all truth; they pretended to a spirit of prophecy, but it was their own spirit and the dictates of it they followed, and not the Spirit of the Lord; and therefore it is no wonder that they prophesied false things,

and led the people wrong; as all such teachers do, who give way to their own fancies and imaginations, and forsake the word of God, and do not implore the assistance and teachings of the blessed Spirit:

and have seen nothing; no vision, as the Syriac version renders it; they pretended to have revelations of things future from the Lord, but they had none; what they saw were vain visions and lying divinations, and were as nothing, and worse than nothing; yea, they said what they never saw.

Ver. 4. *O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes of the deserts.*] The false prophets, as the Targum; these are called Israel's prophets, because received, embraced, and encouraged by them; not the Lord's, for they were not sent by him, nor had any messages from him; and such are comparable to foxes, for their craftiness and cunning, and lying in wait to deceive, as these seduced the Lord's people, (²⁶³⁰Ezekiel 13:10); and such are false teachers, who walk in craftiness, and handle the word of God deceitfully, and are deceitful workers; and to foxes in the deserts, which are hungry and ravenous, and make a prey of whatsoever comes within their reach, as these prophets did of the people, (²⁶³⁹Ezekiel 13:19). Kimchi interprets "deserts" of breaches and ruinous places in the walls of a vineyard, where the foxes lie, or through which they enter into the vineyard and spoil it; as these false prophets entered in among the Israelites, like to a vineyard, and did them much hurt and damage, by insinuating themselves among the weak, and those of little faith, which the above writer compares to breaches in vineyards; (see ²⁶¹⁵Song of Solomon 2:15). It may be the deserts may have respect to the land of Chaldea, where Israel was carried captive, and where these foxes, the false prophets, could play their part to advantage; not being under the notice and restraints of the sanhedrim at Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *Ye have not gone up into the gaps, &c.*] Or "breaches"^{f170}; so the Targum. The allusion is to breaches made in the walls of a city when besieged; at which time those within gather together in great numbers to meet the enemy, and prevent his entrance by the breaches. These words are either spoken to the princes of Israel, the civil magistrates; or to the prophets, who seeing the sins of the people, like a mighty torrent, opening a breach for the wrath and judgments of God to pour in upon them, should have called them, and importunately pressed them to repentance and reformation, and to have put up their prayers, and made intercession to

God for them; neither of which they did, and therefore are here blamed; (see ^{<3221>}Ezekiel 22:30 ^{<3473>}Psalms 107:23);

neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel; or a “fence”, a fortification. The Vulgate Latin renders it, “a wall”; a new wall, which is generally made by the besieged within, when a breach is made upon them: it signifies the same as before. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of repentance and good works; and so the Targum, which paraphrases the words thus,

“neither have ye done for yourselves good works, to deprecate for the house of Israel, to stand to pray for them:”

to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord: when he came forth in battle array against them, with great wrath and indignation, in the way of his righteous judgments. The Targum is,

“when warriors come up against them in the day of the wrath of the Lord;”

when the Chaldeans came against them by the will of God, he being angry with them.

Ver. 6. *They have seen vanity, and lying divination*, &c.] The visions the false prophets pretended to see were nothing but the fruit of their own fancies and imaginations, and had nothing real in them; and what they divined or foretold should be were all lies, and never came to pass, and never would:

saying the Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them; they came to the people with a lie in their mouths, giving out that the Lord spoke by them; when they had no mission from him; nor any commission to say what they did; or any warrant from him for their prophecies:

and they have made [others] to hope that they would confirm the word; or, “that the word would be confirmed”^{f171}; that what was said by them would have its accomplishment; and that their prophecies would be fulfilled. By their solemn way of speaking; by the use they made of the name of the Lord; by the strong assurances they gave, and by their frequent repetition of their predictions, the people were brought to hope and believe that the event would answer to what they said; wherefore, instead of bringing them to a sense of their sins, and repentance for them, whereby the judgments of

God would have been prevented, they hardened them in them, and hastened their ruin.

Ver. 7. *Have ye not seen a vain vision, &c.*] A vision only in pretence, and not in reality; the effect of their own fancy, and not anything shown them by the Lord:

and have ye not spoken a lying divination; delivered out a known lie, saying they had it from the Lord, when they had it not; or a prophecy that will deceive, and be without effect, and in the issue prove a falsehood:

whereas ye say, the Lord saith [it]; albeit I have not spoken? this is a proof that what they gave out for a vision and prophecy was a vain and false one; seeing they pretended they had it from the Lord, when he never spoke a word to them, or by them.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] This is what he says, and it may be depended on will come to pass; though the other he said not, they said he did, but was a lying divination:

because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies; which will in the issue prove so, lying and deceitful; what never came from God, but from themselves and the father of lies, and would never be accomplished:

therefore, behold, I [am] against you, saith the Lord God; or, “I unto you”; which may be supplied thus, “I come”, or “will come, unto you”^{f172}; in a way of providence, and chastise and punish you; (see ⁴⁰⁰⁶ Revelation 2:16); or I will be your adversary; and a sad thing it is for any to have God to be against them; there is no contending with him; none ever hardened themselves against him, and prospered; men are but with him as stubble, or as thorns and briars to a consuming fire.

Ver. 9. *And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies, &c.*] Meaning, by his hand, not the true spirit of prophecy, attended with a divine power and energy, as in (³⁰⁰⁸ Ezekiel 1:3 3:14); but the wrath and power of God seizing on them and punishing them. So the Targum,

“and the stroke of my power shall be upon the false prophets, &c.”

The sense is, that they should feel the weight of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his wrath, by inflicting punishment upon them:

they shall not be in the assembly of my people; shall have no place in the church of God, nor fellowship with the saints; they shall not join with them in religious worship here; but either shall be left by the righteous judgment of God to separate themselves from them, or shall be excluded their communion; and much less shall they stand in the congregation of the righteous hereafter: or, “they shall not be in the secret”, or “council of my people”^{f173}; shall not be consulted by them on any account, civil or religious; or not be let into the secret counsels of the Lord, as the Lord’s people be, who are his favourites and his friends; (see ~~1254~~ Psalm 25:14). The Targum is,

“in the good secret which is hidden for my people they shall not be:”

neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel; their names shall not be in the roll or register of those that return from captivity, as in Ezra it but shall die in their exile; they shall not be in the list and catalogue of the citizens of any city in the land of Israel, particularly of Jerusalem, the chief city; (see ~~2048~~ Isaiah 4:3); and it should appear that their names were never written in the Lamb’s book of life; or that they ever were among the number of God’s elect, the true and spiritual Israel of God. So the Targum,

“and in the writing of eternal life, which is written for the righteous of the house of Israel, they shall not be written;”

(see ~~1918~~ Psalm 69:28);

neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; should not return to the land of Israel, when the captives should at the end of the captivity; nor enter into the land of Canaan, the heavenly rest, which remains for the people of God; for into the New Jerusalem state shall nothing enter that makes an abomination, or a lie, as these prophets had done; (see ~~1617~~ Revelation 21:27 22:15);

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord God; omniscient, omnipotent, true and faithful, holy, just, and good.

Ver. 10. *Because, even because they have seduced my people, &c.]* Who were so by profession; otherwise such who are truly the people of God, though they may be deceived in civil things, yet not in religious matters, at least not totally and finally; in this sense it is impossible to deceive the elect

of God; but as false teachers are deceivers, they lie in wait, and use all means to deceive them, and do deceive nominal professors, which is resented by the Lord; and this is given as a reason of their punishment; and which is doubled, as in (~~1386~~ Leviticus 26:43); to show the heinousness of their sin, and the certainty of their punishment:

saying, peace, and [there was] no peace; giving out that peace would be made with the king of Babylon; that the captives would return to their own land, where, with those that were in it, they would enjoy great prosperity; when no such thing came to pass, nor would; but the contrary was certain, by the predictions of the true prophets sent by the Lord:

and one built up a wall; one of the false prophets, and of the chief of them, gave out that Jerusalem would continue a walled city, and abide firm and impregnable against the Chaldean army, and would never be taken:

and, lo, others daubed it with untempered [mortar]; others of the false prophets, observing that what the first had delivered out was pleasing to the people, not only assented to it, but strongly affirmed it; and, with colourings and specious arguments, made it look more plausible and probable; when, alas! the whole was no other than like putting a parcel of loose stones or bricks together, and throwing some slushy stuff upon them, as, moistened sand without lime, or clay without straw, as the Targum and Vulgate Latin versions render it; which would never cement the bricks or stones together. R. Joseph Kimchi interprets it of bricks not burnt: so false teachers imitate the true ministers of the word, in preaching peace; but then they do not direct aright where it is to be had, which is only in Christ; or the proper persons, sinners pressed with the guilt of sin, and seeking for ease and peace in a right way; but publish it to those to whom it does not belong, for there is no peace to the wicked; and put them upon making peace themselves by their own works of righteousness, and their legal repentance, and outward humiliation; or promise it to them, though they have no faith in Christ, and are not sensible of their sin and danger: these men are builders, but not wise master builders; they do not build upon the foundation Christ, but build up a wall without him; leaving him out of the building who is the chief corner stone; deliver out some loose and unconnected doctrines, that are not according to the Scriptures, nor consistent with each other; and encourage the people to perform some loose duties and cold services, without the cement of faith and love; and which is no other than building upon the sand, or with it; though they fancy

it to be a wall, a shelter, and protection to them, from the wrath and justice of God, and by which they shall climb up to heaven; which will prove a bowing wall, and a tottering fence; and in these mistakes they are buoyed up by false teachers, and are flattered as being in a fair way for eternal happiness.

Ver. 11. *Say unto them which daub [it] with untempered [mortar], &c.]* The false prophets, that flattered the people with peace, prosperity, and safety:

that it shall fall; the wall they have built and daubed over; the city of Jerusalem shall be taken and destroyed; the predictions of the prophets shall prove lies; and the vain hopes and expectations of the people fail:

there shall be an overflowing shower; that shall wash away the wall with its untempered mortar; meaning the Chaldean army, compared to an overflowing shower of rain, for the multitude of men it, and the force, power, and noise, with which it should come, bearing down all before it; (see ^{238B}Isaiah 8:7,8);

and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; upon the wall, and break it down: or, “ye, O great hailstones, shall cause [it] to fall”^{f174}; or, “I will give great hailstones, [and] it shall fall”^{f175}. The word “elgabish”, which in some copies is one word, and in others two, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, is either the same with “gabish”, which signifies a precious stone, and is rendered pearl in (^{338B}Job 28:18); or it may be, as it seems to be, an Arabic word; and Hottinger^{f176} takes it to be “gypsus”, or lime, or the “lapis laminosus”, or slate; so the Lord threatens to rain down lime or slate upon them from heaven, which should destroy the wall built with untempered mortar:

and a stormy wind shall rend [it]; this seems to signify the same as the overflowing shower, the Chaldean army, compared to a strong tempestuous wind; (see ^{304B}Jeremiah 4:11-13); as the hailstones, may signify the king of Babylon, with his princes, nobles, and generals.

Ver. 12. *Lo, when the wall is fallen, &c.]* Jerusalem is taken:

shall it not be said unto you; the false prophets, by the people who had been deceived by them:

where [is] the daubing wherewith ye have daubed [it]? what is become of all your promises of peace, and assurance of safety and prosperity; your smooth words and plausible arguments; your specious pretences, and flattering prophecies? thus would they be insulted by those they had deceived, as well as laughed at by such who disregarded their predictions, and believed the prophets of the Lord.

Ver. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Confirming what he had before bid the prophet say, (^{<1191>}Ezekiel 13:11);

I will even rend [it] with a stormy wind in my fury; stormy winds sometimes rend rocks asunder, (^{<1191>}1 Kings 19:11); and much more feeble tottering walls; what is before ascribed to the stormy wind is said to be done here by the Lord himself, making use of that as an instrument; stormy winds fulfil his word, (^{<1191>}Psalms 148:8); the cause of which is his wrath, which made the dispensation, or the invasion of the Chaldean army, the more terrible; and this is mentioned in all the following clauses:

and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in [my] fury to consume [it]; which, coming from the Lord, and attended with his wrath and fury, must needs bring on utter ruin and destruction. The whole is paraphrased by the Targum thus,

“and I will bring a mighty king with the force of tempests; and a destroying people as a prevailing rain in my fury shall come; and kings, who were powerful as hailstones, in wrath to consume.”

Ver. 14. *So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered [mortar], &c.*] Which is repeated and expressed in these words, both for the sake of confirmation and explanation of what is before said:

and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered; meaning the city of Jerusalem, and by these phrases declaring the utter destruction of it; whereby also would be discovered the vain assurances and lying predictions of the false prophets, and which would appear to be entirely groundless: so the Targum,

“and I will destroy the city in which ye have prophesied false prophecies; and I will cause it to fall to the ground, and its foundations shall be discovered.”

and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst of it; the false prophets perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, and not one of them escaped:

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; who is true to his word, and able to accomplish it, whether of punishment or of threatening.

Ver. 15. *Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, &c.]* Or upon the city, as the Targum; pour out all his indignation, and inflict just punishment upon the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants:

and upon them that have daubed it with untempered [mortar]; the false prophets: so the Targum,

“and the false prophets that prophesy in it false prophecies:”

and will say unto you, the wall [is] no [more], neither they that daubed it; neither the city of Jerusalem, nor the prophets that prophesied of its safety; nor their false prophecies; nor the vain hopes of the people they fed them with: so the Targum,

“there is no city, nor false prophets.”

Ver. 16. *[To wit], the prophets of Israel, which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, &c.]* This explains who are meant by those that daubed with untempered mortar:

and which see visions of peace for her; not in reality, but in pretence; they boasted that they had visions and revelations from the Lord, and assured the people they should enjoy great peace and prosperity; but these, as they are before called, were vain visions and lying divinations: there seems to be in this an allusion to the name of Jerusalem, which, according to some, signifies,

“they shall see peace:”

and [there is] no peace, saith the Lord God; not to the wicked; nor to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who listened to the false prophets; nor to the false prophets themselves.

Ver. 17. *Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, &c.]* The false prophetesses; for as there were women in some ages, who had the true spirit of prophecy, as Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah, (^{<1253>}Exodus 15:20 ^{<1004>}Judges 4:4 ^{<1224>}2 Kings 22:14); so there were

some that pretended to it, who had it not, as Noadiah in the times of Nehemiah, (^{f1664}Nehemiah 6:14); and such there were in the times of Ezekiel; against whom he is bid to set his face, and look them out of countenance, and make them ashamed; who, contrary to the modesty of the sex, had impudently taken upon them to prophesy to the people; and such have been since in the times of the Gospel, as Jezebel, (^{f1621}Revelation 2:20); and Prisca, Maximilia, Quintilia, and others:

who prophesy out of their own heart; as the men did, (^{f1630}Ezekiel 13:2); what their own hearts suggested to them; what came into their minds, and their own fancies and imaginations led them to; what was according to their carnal affections and desires, and agreeable to those that heard them:

and prophesy thou against them; declare their prophecies false; warn the people from giving heed to them; and foretell what shall befall them for deceiving the people.

Ver. 18. *And say, thus saith the Lord God, woe to the [women] that sew pillows to all armholes, &c.*] Or, “put pillows to all elbows”^{f177}; thereby signifying that they might be at ease, and rest secure, and look upon themselves as in the utmost safety, and not fear any enemy, the invasion of the Chaldeans; or that their city would be destroyed, and they carried captive, as the prophets of the Lord had foretold:

and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature; whether taller or lower; the word stature, according to Kimchi, is used, because the people stood when they inquired of these prophetesses whether they should have peace or not, or good or evil should befall them: or, “of every age”, as the Septuagint version; young or old; they put these kerchiefs, or “veils”^{f178}, as some render the word, upon all sorts of persons (for they refused none that came to them they could get any thing by), upon their heads, either as a token of victory and triumph, signifying that they should have the better of their enemies, and rejoice over them; or to make them proud, and suggest to them that they should never be stripped of their ornaments; or else, as the former sign shows that they lulled them asleep upon pillows, and led them on in a carnal security, so they kept them in blindness and ignorance: and this they did,

to hunt souls; to bring them into their nets and snares; to catch them with their false prophecies, and deceive them by their fallacious signs, and superstitious rites and ceremonies, and so ruin and destroy them^{f179};

will ye hunt the souls of my people; that cleave to me, and regard my prophets; will ye endeavour to ensnare those, and seek to destroy their peace and comfort, and even their souls? ye shall not be able to do it:

and will ye save the souls alive [that come] unto you? and inquire of you how things will be, and listen to your lying divinations; can you save them from the ruin and destruction that is coming upon them? no, you will not be able to do it; and what wickedness is it in you to attempt the one or the other? The Targum is,

“the souls of my people can ye destroy or quicken? your souls, which are yours, can you quicken?”

the sense is they could neither do the one nor the other; and yet such was their iniquity, that they sought to do both.

Ver. 19. *And will ye pollute me among my people*, &c.] Defile the name of the Lord, by abusing it, to cover their wicked designs and practices, pretending they were sent by him, when they were not; that what they said came from him, though he spoke not by them; and that it was his will they declared, when it was their own, and what came out of their own hearts and heads: so the Targum, “will ye pollute my will among my people”; to profane his name among the Gentiles was a great sin, but to pollute it among his own people was greater; attempting to draw them aside from his fear and worship, and that for gain, for small gain too:

for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread; which shows them to be abandoned creatures, that were ready to do or say anything for the meanest trifle; their consciences were seared; they gave up themselves to work wickedness with greediness, and for filthy lucre’s sake, and for a small portion of that; which exaggerates their sin and folly; (see ^{
}Proverbs 28:21 ^{
}Micah 3:5);

to slay the souls that should not die; by threatening the captives in Babylon, who had surrendered themselves in Jehoiachim’s time, with destruction and death; who ought to have been comforted in their exile, and whom the Lord in his own time would deliver:

and to save the souls alive that should not live; by promising the inhabitants of Jerusalem long life, safety, and prosperity; when they should either die by the sword, famine, and pestilence; or be carried captive, which

was as death; for so they did, or attempted to do, both the one and the other, by their false prophecies, as follows:

by your lying to my people that hear [your] lies? their false prophecies, which some hearkened to, and believed; and others were intimidated by, and feared that so it would be.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I [am] against your pillows, &c.*] Not only had an abhorrence of them, but was determined to destroy them, detect their fallacies, and expose the folly of such actions, and them to shame and contempt:

wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make [them] fly; to the places where they prophesied; into the toils and nets they spread for them, in order to catch them with their divinations and prophecies, and make a gain of them: or, “into the gardens”, or “groves”^{f180}; there to commit idolatry, (^{28B} Isaiah 65:3);

and I will tear them from your arms; by which it seems that those pillows were not only put under the arms of those that came to inquire of these female prophets or fortune tellers; but they put them under their own arms, and lay upon them as if they were asleep, and in a trance or ecstasy; and so the kerchiefs or veils were upon their heads, which covered their faces, to show that they were quite retired from the world, and wholly attentive to the visions and revelations they pretended were made them by the Lord; and which they gave out, in this superstitious way, to the credulous people that flocked about them:

and will let the souls go, [even] the souls that ye hunt to make [them] fly; which were captivated with their superstitions; drawn into their nets and snares; decoyed into the gardens, where they were prevailed upon to sacrifice to idols, and were taken with their soothsaying and lying divinations; these the Lord promises to break the snare for them, and set them at liberty, and preserve them from that ruin and destruction they were ready to come into; (see ^{84D} Psalm 124:7).

Ver. 21. *Your kerchiefs also will one tear, &c.*] From their heads; discover their tricks, and expose them to the contempt of the people, and destroy both them and their works:

and deliver my people out of your hand; from being hunted, ensnared, and deceived by them:

and they shall be no more in your land to be hunted; but should either flee into Egypt, and other countries, for shelter, or be carried captive into Babylon:

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; (see ²³³³Ezekiel 13:9,14).

Ver. 22. *Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad,* &c.] By polluting the name of the Lord; by hunting and decoying souls into their destructive nets; and by threatening such who would not give heed to their superstitious rites, lying divinations, and false prophecies: so false teachers make the hearts of such sad, who, having seen the insufficiency of their own righteousness, trust in the righteousness of Christ, and are justified by it; by teaching such doctrines as depreciate the love and grace of God the Father; making his love dependent on the creature; his covenant conditional, and salvation to be by works, and not by grace; as detract from the person, offices, and grace of Christ; denying his deity and divine sonship; making light of his blood, and setting up man's righteousness against his: and such as are injurious to the Spirit's work; ascribing regeneration and conversion to man's free will; giving such marks and signs of grace as are not to be found in any, and representing it as what may be entirely lost:

whom I have not made sad; nor would he have them made sad by others; neither by false prophets and their lies, nor by any other means; neither by anything within them, nor anything without them; not by any or all of their spiritual enemies: he would have them comforted; the covenant of grace, and the promises of it, are made for such a purpose; the Scriptures are written for this use; ordinances are designed for this end; ministers are appointed for this work; and this is the office of the divine Spirit; and the Son of God himself was sent on this account:

and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way; by repentance and reformation; and so far were the wicked from returning from it in this way, that they were emboldened in sin, and hardened in it; and were more frequent and open in the commission of it; and that through the prophecies of these false prophetesses; as wicked men are by the doctrines of false teachers: and particularly

by promising him life; or that he should live long, and enjoy much peace and prosperity in the land of Israel, and not be carried captive into Babylon; and so false teachers harden men in sin, by giving them hopes of

eternal life, though they continue in their evil ways; or upon the foot of universal redemption, and upon their repentance, as the fruit of their own free will; and therefore take their swing of sin, as believing that Christ died for all men, and so for them, and therefore shall be saved, live as they will; and that it is in their power to repent when they please, and therefore procrastinate it to the last.

Ver. 23. *Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations, &c.]* They should not be suffered any longer to impose upon the people; and they should be so sufficiently exposed, that the people would not give heed to their vain visions and lying divinations any more; and no gain coming to them hereby, they would not be disposed to make pretensions to them, as they had done: or the sense is, that they should perish in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem; and so they and their false prophecies would cease together:

for I will deliver my people out of your hand, and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; (see ^{עזקל}Ezekiel 13:21).

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 14

In this chapter are contained the displeasure of God at hypocritical idolaters that sought unto him, and at the false prophets; the judgments that should come upon them, and which should not be averted by the intercession of the best of men; and yet a promise that a remnant should be saved. The elders of Israel are said to sit before the prophet, (^{2644b}Ezekiel 14:1); to whom the Lord gives an account of them, (^{2644c}Ezekiel 14:2,3); and orders the prophet what he should say to them, that the Lord would answer them himself, (^{2644d}Ezekiel 14:4,5); and that he should bid the house of Israel repent and turn from their idols, or else the Lord would set his face against them, and cut them off, both them and the false prophets they sought unto; and this is threatened in order to reform them, and continue them his covenant people, (^{2644e}Ezekiel 14:6-11); and then the judgment of famine is particularly threatened; to avert which, the prayers of the best of men would be of no effect, (^{2644f}Ezekiel 14:12-14); and next the judgment of noisome beasts, with the same intimation, (^{2644g}Ezekiel 14:15,16); likewise the sword, (^{2644h}Ezekiel 14:17,18); and also the pestilence, (²⁶⁴⁴ⁱEzekiel 14:19,20); and much less when they should be all sent together, (^{2644j}Ezekiel 14:21); and the chapter is concluded with a promise that a remnant should be saved; which would be a comfort to the captives of Babylon, and accounts for what the Lord had done, or would do, in Jerusalem, (^{2644k}Ezekiel 14:22,23).

Ver. 1. *Then came certain, of the elders of Israel unto me*, &c.] The Syriac version adds, “to consult the Lord”; by the prophet. These, according to Kimchi, were the elders of the captivity, the heads of the captives that were now in Babylon with Ezekiel: but there are others that think they were some that came from Jerusalem to Babylon on some business or another; and having heard much of the prophet, came to visit him, and to hear his prophecies, and inquire of the Lord by him:

and sat before me; silent and pensive, as persons in anxiety and distress; or as hearers of him, for sitting is a hearing gesture; they sat and heard with great attention, gravity, and seriousness, with seeming affection and

reverence; and all this was not in a visionary way, but was a real fact; (see ~~Ami~~ Ezekiel 33:31,32).

Ver. 2. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] While the elders were sitting before him, and whispered secretly and powerfully the following things in his ears:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 3. *Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, &c.*] Though they look so grave and demure, seem so devout and religious, and hear with so much attention and reverence, and express such a desire of consulting me by thee, they are no other than idolaters; and though they are at such a distance from their native place, and have not their idols with them, yet they have them in their fancy and imagination, and their hearts are after them, and are set upon them; these engross their affections, they are near and dear unto them, notwithstanding all their pretensions: or, they “have caused their idols to ascend upon their heart”^{f181}; their hearts are the altars on which they worship them, and the throne on which they have placed them; they are held in the highest esteem by them, and have the greatest honours done them, and have the ascendant over them; even their “dunghill” gods, as the word^{f182} signifies; though they are but dung, filthy and abominable, these they lay upon their hearts; and what else is man’s righteousness, when made an idol of, trusted to, and depended on? it is no other, as the apostle says, than “loss” and “dung”, (~~Ami~~ Philippians 3:8); and so every carnal lust that is gratified and indulged is no other than an idol, or a dunghill god, set up in the heart:

and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face; whenever they had an opportunity of so doing; for their hearts were not only inwardly affected to idols, but they outwardly worshipped them; set them before them, and bowed the knee to them, and prayed: and these idols are called “the stumbling block of their iniquity”, because by worshipping these they fell into sin, and so into ruin; they were the occasion of their sin, and of their punishment; they stumbled at them, and fell, even though they were before their eyes; nay, they set them themselves before their face, which shows their obstinacy and resolution to continue in idolatry, though it would be their ruin:

should I be inquired of at all by them? suffer them to come near me, and put a question to me, or be consulted by them through thee? no, I will not:

or, “am I seriously inquired of by them?” so some^{f183} render the words; no, I am not; or, “being asked, shall I answer them?” so the Targum and Vulgate Latin version: or, “answering shall I answer them”^{f184}? no, I will not, they deserve no answer from me; they shall have none other of me than such an one as follows.

Ver. 4. *Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them,* &c.] That is, speak unto them as a prophet, and as from the Lord, and say what follows; so the Targum,

“prophesy unto them and say unto them;”

thus saith the Lord God, every man of the house of Israel, that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face; let him be who he will, one in public office, an elder of Israel, or a private person; no respect will be had, no distinction made, nor favour shown; being an idolater in heart and practice, secretly and openly, he shall bear the punishment of his sin:

and cometh to the prophet: the Prophet Ezekiel, as the elders of Israel now did, or any other prophet of the Lord: the Vulgate Latin version adds, “inquiring of me by him”; expecting to have an answer, and one according to their wishes:

I the Lord will answer him that cometh; that cometh to the prophet; or, as the Targum,

“that cometh to ask instruction of me:”

here is a various reading, a “Keri” and a “Cetib”; we follow the Keri, or marginal reading, **ab**, “that cometh”; and so does the Targum; but the “Cetib”, or written text, is **hb**, “in it”; thus; “I the Lord will answer him in it”^{f185}; in the question he puts to the prophet, or to the Lord by him; or in that time, immediately; but not with smooth things, as he expects, but with terrible things in righteousness; not in a way of grace and mercy, but in a way of judgment; not as he desires, but as he deserves:

according to the multitude of his idols; in proportion to the number of his gods, and his idolatrous actions, shall the answer or punishment be: or these words may be connected with the word cometh, and be read thus, “that cometh with the multitude of his idols”^{f186}; with his heart full of idols, set up there; which is an instance of his hypocrisy, seen and detected by the

Lord; and of his impudence, in daring to come unto him in such a manner; and of his folly, to expect a gracious answer from the Lord, this being his case. The Targum understands it quite otherwise, as if the answer the Lord would give would be a kind and agreeable one, paraphrasing this clause thus,

“although he is mixed (implicated or entangled) in the multitude of the worship of his idols.”

Ver. 5. *That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart,* &c.] By which they are ensnared, and drawn aside to their ruin; being given up to strong delusions, to believe a lie, and worship idols; God threatening to answer them by righteous judgments, and thereby take the wickedness, the hypocrisy, and idolatry, that were in their hearts, and expose and make it manifest unto others; or, by punishing them, to draw out the corruption and sin that were in them, that it might be seen what a wicked people they were. The Targum interprets the text in another way,

“that I may bring near the house of Israel, and put repentance into their hearts;”

because they are all estranged from me through their idols; they grew shy of God and his worship, when they fell into idolatry. Alienation from God, from the life of God, from the law of God, from the worship of God, and of the affections from him, is owing to some idol or another set up in the heart, or before the eye; whatever is worshipped besides God, or gains the ascendant in the heart, alienates from him; and God will not admit of a rival, he cannot and will not bear it; and for this reason he inflicts punishment, or answers in a terrible way.

Ver. 6. *Therefore say unto the house of Israel,* &c.] Deliver out the following exhortation to repentance unto them; for God’s end, in all his threatenings and judgments, is to bring men to repentance:

thus saith the Lord God, repent, and turn [yourselves] from your idols; or, “turn, and cause to be turned from your idols”^{f187}; turn yourselves from the worship of idols, as the Targum, and do all that in you lies to turn others from the same; particularly your wives and young men, as Kimchi: and the rather they were obliged to do this, since in all probability they had been the means of drawing them into idolatry:

and turn away your faces from all your abominations; their idols, detestable to God, and ought to have been so to them; these he would have them turn their faces from, not so much as look at them, much less worship them, that they might not be ensnared by them; this is said, in opposition to their setting of them before their face, (^{254B}Ezekiel 14:3,4).

Ver. 7. *For everyone of the house of Israel, &c.*] King and subjects, princes and people, high and low, rich and poor, of every rank, sex, and age:

or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel; the proselytes; whether of righteousness, such as were circumcised, and embraced the Jewish religion; or of the gate, who were only inhabitants with them; one as another were obliged to worship the God of Israel, and abstain from idolatry; there was but one law to the Israelite and to the stranger, respecting this matter:

which separateth himself from me; from the worship of God, and so from communion with him; turns his back on him, and becomes an apostate from him, by joining himself with idols:

and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face; these things are repeated, partly to observe the heinousness of the sin they were guilty of; and partly to show the stupidity of this people, which required things to be said over and over, before they could take them in, and be convinced of their evil:

and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; this explains what such persons would come to a prophet for, (^{254B}Ezekiel 14:4); and exposes their hypocrisy:

I the Lord will answer him by myself; not by the prophet to whom he comes, but by himself: or, “in my word”, as the Targum; yet not by words, but by blows; not in mercy, but in wrath; and in such manner, that it shall appear to come from the Lord, and to be according to truth and justice.

Ver. 8. *And I will set my face against that man, &c.*] And look him out of countenance, notwithstanding all his daring impudence and presumption in coming to a prophet of the Lord, and inquiring of him by him, when guilty of gross idolatry; which must needs be the case, when the face of God is set against a man. The Targum renders it, “my fury”, or “wrath”; and indeed that is what is meant; when God sets his face against a man, he

pours out his wrath, or inflicts punishment on him; (see ^{<3816>}Psalm 34:16). Jarchi's note is,

“as a man that says I am at leisure from all business, and I will attend to this;”

laying aside all other business, wholly giving himself up to one thing, on which he is set. Dreadful is a man's case, when the Lord thus sets himself against him!

and will make him a sign and a proverb; a spectacle of horror to look at, because of his misery; and a proverb, to be took up, and spoke of, as Zedekiah and Ahab were, (^{<2927>}Jeremiah 29:22);

and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; by a sudden death, which the Jews call death from heaven, or by the immediate hand of God; and which is answering by himself, as in (^{<3447>}Ezekiel 14:7);

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; that is, those that remain, are not cut off, but are reclaimed by these examples from idolatry, and are brought to repentance, the remnant among them that should be saved; these should know and acknowledge the Lord was omniscient, and knew the hypocrisy of those men above described; and was omnipotent, and could make good his threatenings, and inflict deserved punishment; and that he was holy, just, and true, in all his ways.

Ver. 9. *And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, &c.]* That is pleasing to men, and is not true, in hope of reward and applause, but it never comes to pass, and his expectations are not answered:

I the Lord have deceived that prophet; by sending a lying spirit to him, as to Ahab's prophets, (^{<1022>}1 Kings 22:22,23); by giving him up to strong delusions, to believe a lie, and publish it, (^{<3211>}2 Thessalonians 2:11); and to his own heart's lusts; being willing, for the sake of gain, to prophesy smooth things, though false to the people, promising them peace when there was none; and then by frustrating his predictions, and disappointing him of his ends and views. R. Saadiah interprets this, as Kimchi observes, of God revealing and making it manifest that he was deceived; but more is meant by it than this, or even a bare permission; for though God is not the author of sin, yet he wills it to be done for wise ends and purposes, and sometimes in a way of judgment, as a punishment for sin; and which was the case here; both with respect to the prophet that deceived, who as the

fruit of his sin, his covetousness, was given up in just judgment to a reprobate mind; and the people that were deceived, who, rejecting the true prophets of the Lord, were willing to have smooth things prophesied to them:

and I will stretch out my hand upon them; his avenging hand; the stroke of his power, as the Targum; a heavy one, and that for giving heed to a lying spirit; for uttering falsehood, and that with a wicked design, to gain the applause of the people, or for filthy lucre's sake:

and I will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel; by some sore judgment or sudden death, and so be made a public example of.

Ver. 10. *And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity*, &c.] Both the false prophet, and those that sought unto him, and were deceived by him; and which being laid according to the strictness of divine justice, is intolerable: sad is the case when a man is obliged to bear his own sins, and the punishment of them, and has no surety to undertake for him, and be a mediator between God and him, and make atonement for him:

the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seekest [unto him]; they being both alike culpable, each pursuing the desires of their own evil hearts; the one seeking for smooth things to be spoken to him; the other speaking them, in order to gratify him, and for the sake of gain; the one being a false prophet, and the other seeking to and inquiring of him, though he was such, slighting and rejecting the true prophets of the Lord; both being deceived, and both blind, and so should fall into the same ditch, being under the same judicial blindness and hardness of heart. The Targum is,

“according to the sin of him that comes to learn and learns not; according to the sin of the false prophet shall it be.”

Ver. 11. *That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me*, &c.] Or from his worship, as the Targum; from the law of God, and obedience to it: sin is a going astray from God, a deviation from his commandments; it leads men out of the way of their duty into wrong paths, which issue in ruin, if grace prevent not; and sometimes the means which God makes use of for the restoring of his own people, and bringing them back to himself, are the punishments which he inflicts upon others; and which is his end in so doing, as it was here; that the false prophets, and those that followed them, being made examples of, might be a warning unto others, and

caution them against falling into the same sins, that so they might not bear the same punishment; or be a means of reclaiming them from their errors, and for the future beware of going astray again:

neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; for every transgression, as it is an aberration from the law of God, so it is of a defiling nature: it defiles the mind and conscience, yea, the whole man, from which there is no cleansing but by the blood of Christ; it is loathsome in itself, contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, and abominable to a gracious mind, and therefore to be avoided; and which may be learnt from the punishment of it on others:

but that they may be my people and I may be their God, saith the Lord God; that is, that they may behave as such, and that it may appear that God is their God, and they are his people.

Ver. 12. *The word of the Lord came again unto saying.*] At the same time as before, continuing the prophecy, and a denunciation of judgments; for it does not seem to begin a new prophecy. The Targum renders it, the word of prophecy from the Lord.

Ver. 13. *Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, &c.*] That is, the inhabitants of the land, when they are in general become sinners against God and his law; and not merely sinners, as all men are, but grievous ones, notorious sinners, guilty of very gross enormities, of great prevarication, perfidy, and treachery; for God is a God longsuffering, and has great patience with a people; and does not usually come forth in his judgments against nation, until sin has universally prevailed among them, and they are guilty of grievous abominations, and those continued in: but when this is the case,

then will I stretch out mine hand upon it; his hand of vindictive wrath and justice, and cause it to fall heavily, and men to feel it:

and will break the staff of the bread thereof; take away bread corn from the nation, the support of human life; which is that unto it, and the stay of it, as a staff is to a decrepit old man, that cannot walk without one; or take away the virtue of it, so as though it might be had and eaten, yet not be nourishing; (see ²⁰¹⁶Ezekiel 4:16);

and will send famine upon it; by causing a drought, restraining rain, sending mildew, locusts, caterpillars, &c. to eat up the fruits of the earth:

and will cut off man and beast from it; the latter for the sake of the former, and both through want of food.

Ver. 14. *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, &c.]* In the sinning land, and made intercession for it, that the famine might be removed, and the inhabitants of it be saved alive, this would not be granted; though they were men that found favour in the sight of God, and were eminent for prayer, and successful in it, and the means of saving many; as Noah his family, by preparing an ark according to the will of God; and Daniel was an instrument of saving the lives of his companions, and of the wise men of Chaldea; and Job, by his prayer for his friends, prevented the wrath of God, that was kindled against them, coming upon them; and yet, if they had been upon the spot at this time, their intercession for this people would have been of no avail; the decree was gone forth, and was not to be called in; it was unalterable, and God was inexorable: nor could it have been depended upon, if this declaration had not been made, that their prayers would have been effectual, had they been upon the spot, and put them up for this nation; since it might be observed, that the old world was not saved from a deluge in Noah's time, only he and his family; nor were the people of the Jews preserved from captivity in Daniel's time, nor even he himself; nor were Job's children saved, though he was greatly concerned for them: it may be observed from hence, that there was such a man as Job, as well as Noah and Daniel; and that the latter, though a young man, not above thirty years of age, at this time, yet was become very famous, not only for his dignity and grandeur in Babylon, but for his religion and piety; and is placed between those two great men, Noah and Job; and being a person now living, precludes any argument being formed by the Papists, in favour of the intercession of departed saints; and which would not be conclusive from such a supposition as here made, had they been all such as had departed this life; (see ²⁴⁵¹Jeremiah 15:1); the design of the whole is only to show that the prayers of the best of men would not have prevailed with the Lord to avert his judgments from a people that had so grievously sinned against him:

they should deliver [but] their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord; as Noah was saved at the time of the flood; Daniel in the captivity; and Job midst his great afflictions: this is to be understood not of the eternal salvation of the souls of these men, which is not, nor can it be, by works of righteousness done by the best of men; by these men cannot be justified in the sight of God, and so not saved; but of temporal salvation, of

the salvation of their souls or lives from temporal calamities. Besides, these men had knowledge of another and better righteousness than their own, and believed in it, and trusted to it, even the righteousness of faith, the righteousness of Christ received by faith Noah was both an heir and a preacher of the righteousness which is by faith; and Daniel knew that it was one branch of the Messiah's work to bring in everlasting righteousness; and Job was fully persuaded that his Redeemer lived, by whom he should be justified, (^{<3107>}Hebrews 11:7 ^{<6076>}2 Peter 2:5 ^{<27024>}Daniel 9:24 ^{<48925>}Job 19:25 13:15,16,18).

Ver. 15. *If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, &c.*] Evil and hurtful ones; not so much those that are poisonous as pernicious; such, as lions, tigers, foxes, wolves, and bears, that are very ravenous and devouring, and especially in a time of famine before threatened; though sometimes God makes use of lesser creatures to do damage to a land, and the fruits of it, as locusts, caterpillars, &c. but the former seem to be intended here, which sometimes God threatens and sends to a people disobedient and rebellious; (see ^{<1832>}Leviticus 26:22) (^{<2175>}2 Kings 17:25);

and they spoil it; or, “make it childless”^{f188}; they or I bereave the inhabitants of it of their children; or bereave it of other cattle that are tame, as sheep and oxen, as well as of men and women also, and even destroy the fruits of the earth:

so that it be desolate; having neither men nor cattle, corn or tillage, or any other fruit; all being destroyed by the evil beasts, who have commission to pass through it, and lay it waste wherever they come, without control:

that no man may pass through because of the beasts; for fear of them: not only the inhabitants of the land should be destroyed by them, but even travellers, such as come from other countries, would not choose to pass through it because of the beasts; so that it would on this account be destitute both of inhabitants and of travellers; and must be a most desolate place, where only wild beasts were to be seen, ranging about at pleasure.

Ver. 16. *[Though] these three men [were] in it, &c.*] Above named, Noah, Daniel, and Job; as they were not, two of them not being in the land of the living, and the other in Babylon; but if all three had been in a land so threatened, and used all the interest they had with God, by fervent prayer and supplication, to have called in the wild beasts, and chained them up, and to preserve the people from being destroyed by them, it would have

been all in vain; the Lord was determined upon the destruction of them, and by means of these, as one of his sore judgments:

[as] I live, saith the Lord God; or by my life; for it is an oath with which God swears by himself, who has life in himself, and is the author and giver of life to others, and can take it away when, and in what manner, he pleases; and this oath is used, to show the unalterableness of the judgment threatened, it being decreed and sworn to: God's word or decree, and his oath, are two immutable things, in which he cannot lie, and from which he never departs:

they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; meaning not adult persons, but little ones, infant sons and daughters; such as had not been guilty of the actual sins and transgressions their parents were charged with; even these they should not deliver by their prayers and supplications from being destroyed by noisome beasts, God punishing the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; and much less should they deliver those that were adult, and had committed the same idolatries and other sins their parents had; no, not even their own sons and daughters; for no exception is made but of themselves, as follows:

they only shall be delivered: as Noah with his family was in the ark, when amidst wild beasts; and Daniel in the lions den; and Job, with whom the beasts of the field were at peace, (~~3123~~ Job 5:23);

but the land shall be desolate; (see ~~3120~~ Ezekiel 12:20).

Ver. 17. *Or [if] I bring a sword upon that land, &c.]* The land which had grievously sinned; the same land into which a famine should come, and through which evil beasts should pass; to which, if the Lord should add, as he would, a third judgment, the sword; suffer a foreign enemy to come in among them, and destroy them. So the Targum,

“or if those that slay with the sword I should bring upon that land;”

the Chaldean army, as he did; the sword has its commission from God; war is not by chance; the invasion of a foreign enemy is from the Lord; and all the mischiefs and ravages of a tumultuous army are all by divine order:

and say, sword, go through the land; not only enter the borders of it, or proceed far in it, but even go through it; which is terrible indeed! but if the Lord bids it go, it must go, and does; it is a servant of his, and punctually

obeys his commands; that is, such are those that use it, however profane and wicked they may be in themselves, as generally armies consist of dissolute persons; yet these are under a divine direction, and are obedient to the will of God, though they may know it not. So the Targum,

“and I say that they that kill with the sword pass through the land:”

so that I cut off man and beast from it; by the sword; the one being destroyed as an enemy, the other for food.

Ver. 18. *Though these three men [were] in it, &c.*] Before mentioned:

[as] I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters: believe me no more, or be it so and so, if they do; it is in the form of an oath, and in the same manner it is expressed in (²³⁴⁴⁶Ezekiel 14:16,20);

but they only shall be delivered themselves; their own souls or lives, and by their righteousness, as in (²³⁴⁴⁴Ezekiel 14:14).

Ver. 19. *Or [if] I send a pestilence into that land, &c.*] Or the plague, which is the destruction that wastes at noon day; this is from the Lord, and a sore judgment it is:

and pour out my fury upon it in blood; or, “by blood”^{f189}; by corrupting the blood, which is done when a man is seized with the pestilence. The Targum renders it, “with slaughter”; by slaying a great number of persons by that disease, as a token of fury and wrath, because of their transgressions. It may be rendered, “because of blood”^{f190}; and so express the cause and reason of the judgment, the shedding of innocent blood:

to cut off from it man and beast; man by the pestilence, and beast by some contagious distemper or another.

Ver. 20. *Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, [were] in it, &c.*] Who are again mentioned by name, as in (²³⁴⁴⁴Ezekiel 14:14); and are the three men referred to in (²³⁴⁴⁶Ezekiel 14:16,18);

[as] I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; not so much as an only son, or an only daughter, no, not even a single child: the plural number is used before, as in (²³⁴⁴⁶Ezekiel 14:16,18); here the singular, to show how resolutely determined the Lord was upon the destruction of the land; that even the prayers of the best of men among

them should not prevail with him to save a single person, no, not a single infant: they

shall [but] deliver their own souls by their righteousness; (see Gill on “^{<3544>}Ezekiel 14:14”).

Ver. 21. *For thus saith the Lord God, how much more, &c.]* If the Lord would not be entreated by such good men as those mentioned, for a land that had sinned against him, to whom he only sends some one of the above judgments, either famine, or noisome beasts, or the sword, or the pestilence, how much more inexorable and deaf to all entreaties must he be; or if anyone of those judgments makes so great a desolation in the land, then how much greater must that detraction be,

when I send my four sore judgments on Jerusalem: or “evil”^{f191} ones; as they are to men, though righteously inflicted by the Lord; when all these four are sent together, what a devastation must they make! namely,

the sword, and the famine, and the, noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast; three of them, it is evident, were sent upon Jerusalem at the time of its siege by Nebuchadnezzar, the sword, famine, and pestilence; and no doubt the other, even the noisome beasts; and if not literally, yet figuratively, for Nebuchadnezzar himself is compared to a lion, (^{<2047>}Jeremiah 4:7 50:17).

Ver. 22. *Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant, &c.]* That is, in Jerusalem, on which God’s four sore judgments should be sent: though in a sinful land, as before described, where only one judgment was sent, there was no escape, not so much as a son or a daughter were delivered; yet here, where four sore judgments came together, there is a remnant that are saved; and which being wonderful, and beyond all expectation, is introduced with a “behold”, not only as a note of attention, but of admiration:

that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters; that is, which should be brought forth out of Jerusalem when taken, and should not be destroyed either by famine, or by noisome beasts, or by the sword, or by the pestilence; and these, many of them, both sons and daughters; some of each sex, that should be the means of propagating a posterity, that should return again, and repeople the land, and continue for many ages, as they have done: this is said with respect to (^{<2546>}Ezekiel 14:16,18,20);

behold, they shall come forth unto you; come out of Jerusalem, and their own land, into Babylon, to the captives already there; with whom Ezekiel now was, and to whom he is speaking:

and ye shall see their way and their doings; their wicked course of life and evil actions; which now being convinced of, and humbled for, they shall ingenuously acknowledge and confess to their brethren in captivity: though some think this is to be understood of wicked and reprobate men, that should be not at all reformed by the judgments of God, but continue in their wicked course; which the godly captives seeing, would conclude from thence their manner of life before, and so the righteous judgment of God upon them; and their being a remnant preserved is thought not to be in a way of mercy, but judgment; who though they escaped each of the four sore judgments, yet had a worse inflicted on them, even captivity:

and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, [even] concerning all that I have brought upon it; that is, they should be satisfied with the justice of God, and be reconciled to the providence of God, in bringing destruction upon Jerusalem; which perhaps before they murmured at, or had hard thoughts of God concerning it; but now hearing the confessions of those that were brought from thence to them, or seeing their wicked lives and conversations, they would now be fully satisfied that God was righteous in all that he had done; and that, instead of being rigorous and severe, he had been kind and merciful.

Ver. 23. *And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings, &c.*] Not that their sinful ways and doings would be comfortable to them, but either their acknowledgments of them, and repentance for them; or, seeing their dissolute manner of life, it would be a means of composing their minds, and making them easy under the providence; being now satisfied that God was just in bringing upon them all the evils he had, and that they were punished according to their deserts, and less than their sins deserved:

and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God; that there was just reason for it; that he was sufficiently provoked to do it; and that it was necessary it should be done, for his own honour, and the good of others.

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 15

The destruction of Jerusalem is again prophesied of in this chapter, and is set forth under the simile of a vine tree, which, for its uselessness, is committed to the fire. The simile is in (Ezekiel 15:1-5); the application of it in (Ezekiel 15:6-8).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The destruction of Jerusalem had been represented under various types and similes before, as of a siege, and a sharp razor; and here of a fruitless and useless vine, only fit for the fire; which was delivered out by a spirit of prophecy. The Targum calls it the word of prophecy, as usual.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree, &c.*] Or, “the wood of the vine than any wood”^{f192}; it is not better than other wood; it is not so good as any other wood; nay, it is good for nothing. The fruit of the vine tree is good, but its wood is of no use: a vine tree, if it bears fruit, is valuable; but if it does not, it is of no account. The people of the Jews are often compared to a vine, who, while they brought forth good fruit, were in esteem; but, when they became like an empty and fruitless vine, were rejected as good for nothing, (~~808~~ Psalm 80:8 ~~211~~ Isaiah 5:1,2 ~~247~~ Jeremiah 2:22 ~~300~~ Hosea 10:1); they were originally no better than others; what they had were owing to the grace and goodness of God; and when they degenerated, they were the worst of all people:

[or than] a branch which is among the trees of the forest? a vine tree that bears fruit is better than a tree of the forest, or than a branch of one that is unfruitful; but a vine tree that does not bear fruit is not so good; because the wood of the one may be useful when the other is not; though the words may be better rendered, even “the branch [of a wild vine] which is among the trees of the forest”^{f193}; and so it explains what vine tree is spoken of; not a fruitful one in the vineyards, but a wild and barren one in the forest. So Jarchi paraphrases the words,

“not of the vine in the vineyards, which bears fruit, speak I unto thee; but of the branch of the vine which grows in the forests;”

and so Kimchi,

“I do not ask thee of the vine tree which beareth fruit, for that is valuable; but of the branch (of the wild vine) which is among the trees of the forest, and is as they that do not bear fruit, concerning that I ask thee; for even it is not as the trees of the forest; for the trees of the forest, though they do not bear fruit, they are fit to do work of them, to make vessels of them, and to floor houses with them; but the wood of this vine is not so.”

Ver. 3. *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work?* &c.] The carpenter and joiner, the house or ship builder, are employed in; as to build houses of, make beams, rafters, floors, &c. build ships with, make masts of, &c. or any vessel or utensil for the use of man? it never is; it is not fit for any such purpose. Pliny^{f194} speaks of some rarities made of the wood of vines, but not things of common use; and these not of any vines, but of some peculiar ones, favoured by the air and soil

or will [men] take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? it is not fit to make a peg of to hang a hat on; and much less for anything that requires more strength.

Ver. 4. *Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel,* That is; a vine tree when cut down, or a branch when cut off, it is good for nothing else; and that is the use it is generally put to; (see ^{<4856>}John 15:6); and this, it is suggested, would be the end of the Jewish nation; who were become by their sins like a wild vine, and were fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath:

the fire devoureth both the ends of it; the branch cast into it, and so quickly consumed. Kimchi explains this by (^{<2992>}Isaiah 9:12); “the Syrians before, and the Philistines behind, and they devour Israel with open mouth”; and Abendana of the ten tribes; but it seems only to design how soon the fire takes it; and how inevitable the consumption is when it is fired at both ends:

and the midst of it is burnt: presently; it being dried, and reduced to a brand by the heat of the fire at both ends: this Kimchi interprets of the city of Jerusalem, which was in the midst of the land:

is it meet for [any] work? no; for if it was not fit for any work when cut down, or cut off, much less when burnt in the fire.

Ver. 5. *Behold, when it was whole it was meet for no work, &c.*] Before it was cut into pieces, and east into the fire, it was not fit to make so much as a pin of to hang anything on; so Israel, when all together, before the ten tribes were carried captive, or the Jews before the captivity of Jeconiah, were useless and unfruitful, and to every good work reprobate:

how much less shall it be meet yet for [any] work when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned? as its wood is good for nothing before it is burned, its ashes are useless after.

Ver. 6. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Now follows the application of the simile:

as the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel; to be burnt, as other trees of the forest are, and along with them:

so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem; to be destroyed along with other nations by the Chaldeans; they being no better, but as bad, if not worse, like wild vines among forest trees; and therefore must fare no better: this was the decree and determination of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *And I will set my face against them, &c.*] In wrath to destroy them; (see ³⁴⁸Ezekiel 14:8); and

they shall go out from [one] fire, and [another] fire shall devour them: from one calamity to another; those that escaped the famine and pestilence in the city fell by the sword; and those that escaped famine, sword, and pestilence, were carried into captivity, and there passed from one hardship and affliction to another. The Targum is,

“I will execute my vengeance on them, because of the words of the law, which were given out of the midst of fire; they have transgressed, and people who are strong as fire shall consume them.”

Some, as Abendana observes, interpret the fire, out of which they went, of Sennacherib, out of whose hand the Lord delivered them; and the fire which devoured them, of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and it may be rendered, “they have gone out”^{f195}, &c.

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord, when I set my face against them; he is known by his judgments to be the Lord God omnipotent, holy, just, and true.

Ver. 8. *And I will make the land desolate, &c.]* The land of Judea uncultivated, men and beast being cut off; (see ^{<39415>}Ezekiel 14:15,21);

because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord God; acted a treacherous and perfidious part; apostatized from God, having committed idolatry, which was the cause of their ruin; and therefore it was not without a cause that the Lord did what he did, in it; (see ^{<39423>}Ezekiel 14:23).

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 16

In this chapter the Jewish nation is represented under the simile of a female infant, whose birth, breeding, marriage, grandeur, and conduct, are described, in order to show the wickedness and ingratitude of, his people; who, on account thereof, are threatened with judgments; though mercy is promised to a remnant that should repent. The prophet is directed to make known to Jerusalem her abominable sins, (²³⁶⁰Ezekiel 16:1,2); and, in order to this, is bid to take up the following parable of a female infant; whose descent, birth, and wretched condition, at the time of it, are pointed at, (²³⁶³Ezekiel 16:3-5); which are expressive of the low and forlorn estate of the Jews originally; and then follow the benefits and blessings of God bestowed upon them, both in their infant and adult state; the preserving them alive in Egypt, and their multiplication there; and afterwards the covenant made with them, when brought out from thence; and the Lord's espousal of them to himself, as his own people, having a strong affection for them, (²³⁶⁶Ezekiel 16:6-8); the large provision of good things he made for them, both in the wilderness, and especially in the land of Canaan; the riches he bestowed upon them, and the flourishing and prosperous kingdom he raised them to, which made them famous among all the nations round about them, (²³⁶⁹Ezekiel 16:9-14); and yet, after all this, such was the ingratitude of this people, as to commit spiritual whoredom, that is, idolatry, to a very great degree, (²³⁶⁵Ezekiel 16:15); which is aggravated by their converting and applying the good things which the Lord gave them to idolatrous uses, (²³⁶⁸Ezekiel 16:16-19); by sacrificing their sons and daughters to idols, which were the Lord's, (²³⁶¹Ezekiel 16:20,21); by not calling to mind the former wretched estate out of which they were brought, (²³⁶²Ezekiel 16:22); by building high places in every street and way, and there committing idolatries, (²³⁶³Ezekiel 16:23-25); by the various nations, whose examples they followed, and with whom they joined, as the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, (²³⁶⁵Ezekiel 16:26-29); and by the great difference between them and all other harlots, whom they exceeded, (²³⁶⁰Ezekiel 16:30-34); wherefore, on account of all this, they are threatened to be dealt with as an adulterous woman; made a spectacle of;

condemned to die, to be stripped, stoned, and burned, (²³⁶⁵Ezekiel 16:35-43); and, that the Lord might appear to be just in executing such judgments on them, they are declared to be as bad as the Hittites and Amorites their parents; and worse than their sisters Samaria and Sodom; and therefore could expect to fare no better than they; and should become proverb and a byword, and bear their sins, shame, and punishment, in the sight of their neighbours, and be despised by them, (²³⁶⁴Ezekiel 16:44-59); nevertheless, the covenant of grace made with his chosen people among them should stand firm; which being manifested to them, would be a means of bringing them to a sense of sin, shame for it, and an acknowledgment of the Lord's grace and goodness to them (²³⁶⁰Ezekiel 16:60-63).

Ver. 1. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum; the following representation was made to him under a spirit of prophecy.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations.*] That is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the Targum; these are mentioned instead of the whole body of the people, because that Jerusalem was the metropolis of the nation, whose sins were very many and heinous: called "abominations", because abominable to God, and rendered them so to him; particularly their idolatries are meant; which, though committed by them, and so must be known to them, yet were not owned, confessed, and repented of by them, they not being convinced of the evil of them; in order to which the prophet is bid to set them before them, and show them the evil nature of them; and which he might do by writing to them, for he himself was now in Chaldea with the captives there. The Targum is,

“son of man, reprove the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and show them their abominations.”

Ver. 3. *And say, thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem, &c.*] To the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the Targum:

thy birth and thy nativity [is] of the land of Canaan; here the Jewish ancestors for a time dwelt and sojourned, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and so the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret the first word, “thy habitation” or “sojourning”,^{f196}: but whereas it follows, “and thy nativity”, this does not solve the difficulty; which may be said to be of the land of Canaan, because their ancestors were born here; for though Abraham was a Chaldean he was called out of Chaldea into the land of

Canaan, where Isaac was born; and so was Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes; besides, the Israelites were the successors of the Canaanites in their land, and so seemed to descend from them; and it is not unusual for such to be reckoned the children of those whom they succeed; to which may be added, that they were like to the Canaanites in their manners, particularly in their idolatries; and so their children, as such, are said to be the offspring and descendants of those whose examples they follow, or whom they imitate; see the history of Susannah in the Apocrypha:

“So he put him aside, and commanded to bring the other, and said unto him, O thou seed of Chanaan, and not of Juda, beauty hath deceived thee, and lust hath perverted thine heart.” (Susannah 1:56)

thy father [was] an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite; Abraham and Sarah, who were, properly speaking, the one the father, the other the mother, of the Jewish nation, were Chaldeans; and neither Amorites nor Hittites; yet, because they dwelt among them; are so called; and especially since before their conversion they were idolaters, as those were; besides, the Jews who descended from Judah, and from whom they have their name, very probably sprung from ancestors who might be Amorites and Hittites: since Judah married the daughter of a Canaanite, and such an one seems to be Tamar, he took for his son Er, and by whom he himself had two sons, Pharez and Zarah, from the former of which the kings of Judah lineally descended, (^{<0130>}Genesis 37:2,6,29,30 ^{<0103>}Matthew 1:3); besides, the Jews were the successors of these people, and possessed their land, and imitated them in their wicked practices, (^{<0120>}Amos 2:10 9:7); and these two, the Amorite and Hittite, of all the seven nations, are mentioned, because they were the worst, and the most wicked, (^{<0156>}Genesis 15:16 27:46). The Jews^{f197} say Terah the father of Abraham, and his ancestors, came from Canaan.

Ver. 4. *And [as for] thy nativity, in the day thou wast born, &c.*] Which refers either to the time when Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldeans, who had before been an idolater; or rather to the time when the children of Israel were in Egypt, and there grew and multiplied, and became a numerous body of people; who, upon their coming out of it, were brought into some form, and became a nation or body politic, which may be called the day of their birth as a people; (see ^{<0103>}Hosea 2:3);

thy navel was not cut; alluding to what is done to a newborn infant, when the midwife immediately takes care to cut the navel string, by which the

child adheres to its mother, and takes in its breath and nourishment in the womb; but now, being of no longer use that way, it is cut and tied up, for the safety both of mother and child, who otherwise would be in great danger; and this denotes the desperate condition the Israelites were in when in Egypt, where they were greatly oppressed and afflicted, and in very imminent danger of being destroyed; to which the Targum refers it:

neither wast thou washed in water to supple [thee]: which also is done, to an infant as soon as born, to cleanse it from the menstruous blood, to make the flesh sleek, and smooth, and amiable; which, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, is done in hot water:

thou wast not salted at all; which was done, either by sprinkling salt upon it, or using salt and water^{f198}, as a detersive of uncleanness, to prevent putrefaction, to dry up the humours, and harden the flesh, and consolidate the parts:

nor swaddled at all; to bring the several members of the body into form and shape; (see ^{<III>}Luke 2:7); and these things being of necessity to be done immediately, were, as Kimchi observes, lawful to be done even on a sabbath day, according to the traditions of the elders^{f199}.

Ver. 5. *None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee, &c.]* Or, “one of these”^{f200}; not so much as one of them: sad must be the case of an infant, when it meets with no tender heart or kind hand from midwife, nurse, or mother, to do these things for it: this is expressive of the helpless, forlorn, and unpitied state of the Israelites in Egypt; who, when their lives were made bitter with hard bondage, had no mercy shown them by Pharaoh and his taskmasters, (^{<III>}Exodus 1:14 5:9,14,17). So the Targum,

“the eye of Pharaoh did not spare you to do one good thing for you, to give you rest from your bondage, to have mercy on you:”

but thou wast cast out in the open field; alluding to infants exposed by their unnatural parents, or unkind nurses, and left in an open field, or any desert place, to perish for want, unless some kind providence appears for them: this open field may design the land of Egypt, whither Jacob and his posterity were, being driven out of Canaan by a famine; and where, after the death of Joseph, they were exposed to the hardships and cruelties of the Egyptians; and who, commanding their male children to be slain,

doubtless occasioned the exposing of many of them, as well as Moses, to which some reference may be had; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“and he (Pharaoh) decreed a full decree to cast your male children into the river, to destroy you when you were in Egypt:”

to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born; the Israelites were loathsome to the Egyptians, as every shepherd was an abomination to them, and such were they, (^{<0463>}Genesis 46:34); and all this may be applied to the state and condition of men by nature, even of God’s elect, whose extraction is from fallen man; descend immediately from unclean parents; are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; can have no communication of grace from their parents, or others; by whom they cannot be washed from their sins, or sanctified, or clothed, or made righteous; but are in a hopeless and helpless condition; and are loathsome and abominable to God, and to themselves too, when they come to see the state they are in.

Ver. 6. *And when I passed by thee*, &c.] Alluding to a traveller passing by where an infant lies, exposed, and looks upon it, and takes it up; or it may be to Pharaoh’s daughter walking by the river side, when she spied the ark in which Moses was, and ordered it to be taken up, and so saved his life:

and saw thee in thine own blood; keeping up the simile of a newborn infant, that has nothing done to it, but is all over covered with menstruous blood; denoting the wretched and miserable estate the Jews were in when in Egypt; when they were not only loathsome and abominable to the Egyptians, and ill used and unpitied by them; but were in danger of being utterly destroyed, and ready to expire. The word rendered “polluted” signifies “trodden underfoot”^{<f201>}; like mire in the streets; and so denotes both pollution and distress; so the Israelites were trodden under foot by the Egyptians, when they made them to serve with rigour, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“for it was manifest before me that you were afflicted in your bondage;”

as they then sighed and cried because of their bondage, the Lord looked upon them with an eye of pity and compassion, and delivered them, (^{<0014>}Exodus 1:14 2:23-25 3:7,8);

I said unto thee, [when thou wast] in thy blood, live: yea, I said unto thee, [when thou wast] in thy blood, live; the Lord preserved them and saved them alive, when they were near to ruin, and delivered them by the hands of Moses, which was as life from the dead; and this he did of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, and not for any worth or merit, in them, any goodness or righteousness of theirs; for this he did when they were in their blood, pollution, and guilt; and which, that it might be observed, is repeated. The word for “blood”, which is thrice mentioned, is in the plural number, “bloods”; and denotes not the blood of circumcision, and the blood of the passover; for, or by which, the Lord had mercy upon them, and redeemed them, as the Targum and Jarchi interpret it; but the abundance of it, as upon a newborn infant; and the great pollution and distress in which the Israelites were, through the many murders committed on them by their enemies. The whole is an emblem of the state and condition the elect of God are in, when they are quickened by him; who are by their first birth unclean; under the pollution, power, and guilt of sin; wallowing and weltering in it; deserving of the wrath of God, and liable to punishment for it; trodden under foot, quite neglected and despised in all appearance; and are both hopeless and helpless: when the Lord “passes” by them, not by chance, but on purpose, knowing where they are; and this he often does by the ministry of the word, under which they are providentially cast; and where he “sees” them, and looks upon them, not merely with his eye of omniscience, much less with an eye of scorn, contempt, and abhorrence; but with an eye of pity and compassion, and even of complacency and delight in their persons, though not in their sins: and when he speaks life into them, a principle of spiritual life; or quickens them by his word, so that they live a life of faith and holiness, which issues in everlasting life: this flows from divine love, and is the effect of divine power; it is of pure rich grace, and not of man’s merit; as his case, being in his blood, and dead in sins, show; (see ~~1000~~ Ephesians 2:4,5).

Ver. 7. *I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, &c.]* Or, “made thee millions”^{f202}; like the spires of grass in the field. This refers to the multiplication of the children of Israel in Egypt, especially after the death of Joseph, and even while they were sorely afflicted, and likewise in later times. Jacob went down to Egypt with seventy five persons only, but when his posterity returned from thence, they were above six hundred thousand that were able to go forth to war, (~~0457~~ Genesis 46:27 ~~0046~~ Numbers 1:46); (see ~~1000~~ Exodus 1:7,12);

and thou hast increased and waxed great; and became large families, kindreds, and tribes, as the Targum interprets it; as a child grows up, and becomes adult:

and thou art come to excellent ornaments; or, “ornament of ornaments”^{f203}; as a young woman, when she is grown up, comes to wear better and finer clothes than in infancy; perhaps there is an allusion to the jewels the Israelites brought out of Egypt with them: this may be applied to the laws, statutes, and ordinances given them, which were an “ornament of grace” unto them, (²⁰⁰⁹Proverbs 1:9);

[thy] breasts are fashioned; swelled and stood out; were come to a proper size and shape, as in persons grown and marriageable; (see ²⁰⁸⁰Song of Solomon 8:10);

and thine hair is grown; an euphemism, expressive of puberty, which in females was at twelve years of age:

whereas thou [wast] naked and bare; in a state of infancy. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret this of the Israelites being without the commandments. The whole of what is here said, may be applied to quickened and converted persons, who grow in grace, and increase in spiritual knowledge; and are adorned with the ornaments of grace and good works; and attend to the word and ordinances, which are the church’s breasts; who, while in their nature state, were naked and destitute of righteousness and grace.

Ver. 8. *Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee*, &c.] Which the Targum refers to the Lord’s appearance to Moses in the bush; (see Gill on ²³⁰⁶Ezekiel 16:6”);

behold, thy time [was] the time of love; which the Targum explains of the time of redemption of the people of Israel out of Egypt, which was an instance of the great love of God unto that people; and which time was fixed by him; and when it was come, at the exact and precise time, the redemption was wrought; (see ⁰¹⁵³Genesis 15:13,14 ⁰²²⁰Exodus 12:40,41); and so there is a set time for the calling and conversion of God’s elect, who are therefore said to be called according to purpose; and, when that time comes, all means are made to concur to bring it about: and this is a time of love; for though the love of God to his people is before all time, yet it is manifested in time; and there are particular times in which it is expressed unto them; and the time of conversion is one of them; and indeed it is the first time that there is a manifestation and application of the love of God

made to the souls of his people: and this is a “time of loves”^{f204}; as it is in the original text; denoting the large abundance of it which is now shown forth; and the various acts of it now done; as bringing of them out of a most miserable condition, out of a horrible pit; plucking them as brands out of the burning; quickening them when dead in sin; speaking comfortably to them, and applying pardoning grace and mercy to their souls: and it may include both the love of God to his people, and their love to him; for now is the love of their espousals, and the kindness of their youth, (^{<3411>}Jeremiah 2:2); the grace of love is now implanted, to God and Christ, to his people, word, worship, and ordinances, which before had no place in them:

and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; the Lord espoused the people of Israel to himself in the wilderness, after he had brought them out of Egypt, and took them under the wings of his protection; both which this phrase may be expressive of; (see ^{<888>}Ruth 3:9). Some understand this of his giving them the spoils of the Egyptians, and also the law: it may very well be applied to the righteousness of Christ, which is often compared to a garment, for which the skirt, a part, is put; and this is put on as a garment, and answers all the purposes of one; and particularly covers the nakedness of men, which their own righteousness will not do; this the Lord spreads over his people, and covers them with; and being clothed with this, they shall not be found naked:

yea, I swear unto thee; to his love expressed to his people, and to his covenant he entered into with them, neither of which shall ever be removed; and this makes to their abundant comfort; (see ^{<888>}Psalm 89:3,35) (^{<2540>}Isaiah 54:9,10 ^{<863>}Hebrews 6:13-18);

and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God; as he did with the people of Israel at Horeb, and which was a sort of a marriage contract with them; (see ^{<630>}Deuteronomy 29:1 ^{<613>}Jeremiah 31:32); the covenant of grace was made from everlasting with Christ, and the elect in him; but is made manifest at conversion, when the Lord makes himself known unto them as their covenant God; leads them to Christ the Mediator of it; sends his Spirit down into their hearts, to make them partakers of the grace of it; and shows them their interest in the blessings and promises of it; all which may be meant by the phrase here used:

and thou becamest mine; as Israel did at the time before mentioned, became the Lord’s peculiar people, and were avouched as such by him, (^{<1295>}Exodus 19:5); so, in conversion, those who before were secretly the

Lord's by electing and redeeming grace, become openly his by calling and sanctifying grace.

Ver. 9. *Then washed I thee with water, &c.*] Brought the Israelites out of the mean, abject, servile, and sordid state in which they were, when among the mortar, bricks, and pots, into a state of liberty; so the Targum,

“and I redeemed you from the servitude of the Egyptians; and I removed the strength of dominion from you, and brought you into liberty;”

perhaps some reference may be had to the ceremonial ablutions enjoined them; they were washed before the covenant was made with them at Mount Sinai, just referred to; their priests, sacrifices, vessels, and all unclean persons, were to be washed, and purifications were prescribed them:

yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee: as with an inundation overflowing; so the word^{f205} signifies; very fitly is this mentioned, since in (^{340B}Ezekiel 16:6); they are said to be “polluted in their blood”, and now washed from it: all men are defiled with sin, originally, naturally, internally, and universally; nor can they cleanse themselves by anything they can do, God only can; and this he promises to do; and this he does, not with water baptism, which does not take away sin, original or actual; nor with the washing of regeneration, or by regenerating grace; though that is sometimes compared to water; which, among other things, is of a cleansing nature; and of which men are born again, and by it sanctified; and which is done by the Spirit, who is a spirit of judgment and burning, by whom the faith of the daughter of Zion is washed away; and because this is done by the word and ordinances as means, hence these are called waters; (see ^{345B}Ezekiel 36:25 ^{344B}Isaiah 44:3 4:4 55:1); yet hereby men are not “thoroughly” washed; though a clean heart is created in them, a new man is formed in righteousness and true holiness; yet the filthiness of the old man remains, which appears in thoughts, words, and actions; but the thorough washing is by the blood of Christ; that is the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness; with this men are washed by Christ from their sins; this has a purgative and cleansing nature; and it cleanses from all sin, and justifies from everyone; so that hereby a man thoroughly washed is clear of all sin, none to be found or seen in him; he is without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and has solid peace in his soul; his heart being sprinkled with this blood from an evil conscience, and, being purged, has no more conscience

of sin; so that this is expressive of the fulness of justifying and pardoning grace:

and I anointed thee with oil; alluding to the anointing oil, with which the priests, tabernacle, and vessels, were anointed; or to the land of Canaan, a land of oil olive, into which the Israelites were brought; or to the custom of washing and anointing women before marriage; (see ^{<RUB>}Ruth 3:3 ^{<TD>}Esther 2:10); and to the use of oil in baths, which was frequent: this may spiritually design the grace of the Spirit, which, like the oil on Aaron's head, is exceeding "precious", as are faith, hope, and love; and, like the "pure" oil for the candlestick, productive of purity of heart, lip, and life; of a delightful smell, as are the church's ointments she has from Christ, (^{<DUB>}Song of Solomon 1:3 4:10); and very cheering and refreshing, and therefore called oil of gladness, (^{<RUB>}Psalm 45:7) (^{<DUB>}Isaiah 61:3); and ornamental and beautifying, as all grace is; and oil will not mix with another liquor, as grace will not with sin and corruption, and is of an abiding nature: now it is God that anoints with this; this oil comes from the God of all grace; is fro, in Christ the Holy One, and out of his fulness; from him the head it descends to all his members, and is applied by the blessed Spirit; (see ^{<DUB>}2 Corinthians 1:21).

Ver. 10. *I clothed thee also, with broidered work*, &c.] Or, "with needle work"^{f206}; with garments of divers colours, like Joseph's coat; perhaps it may refer to the rich raiment borrowed of the Egyptians, when they came out from thence. So the Targum,

"and I clothed you with various garments, the desirable things of your enemies;"

and which, with their other clothes, waxed not old all the while they were in the wilderness; (see ^{<DUB>}Exodus 12:35 ^{<RUB>}Deuteronomy 8:4); this may be expressive, either of the various graces of the Spirit of God, with which the saints are clothed and adorned; and, when exercised by them, are said to be put on as a garment, (^{<DUB>}Colossians 3:12); or rather of the righteousness of Christ, called "raiment of needle work", (^{<RUB>}Psalm 45:14);

and shod thee with badgers' skin; the same the covering of the tabernacle was made of, (^{<DUB>}Exodus 26:14); and though the word here used may not design the creature we so call, yet may intend one whose skin was fit for shoe leather, and was very beautiful, and perhaps durable; reference may be had to the shoes of the Israelites in the wilderness, which waxed not old,

(^{f207}Deuteronomy 29:5). Some think only the hyacinth or purple colour is here meant; and so the Septuagint version renders the word; agreeably to which Bochart^{f207} gives this version of the words, "I shod thee with the purple"; that is, with shoes of a purple colour; and it is very probable that of this colour were the shoes wore by the Jewish women of the first rank; since, as the same writer has not only shown from Procopius that great personages in other nations used to wear such, as the Persian and Roman emperors; who, in their own countries only, might wear them; but this was the custom of neighbouring provinces, particularly the Tyrian women, as Virgil^{f208} plainly suggests. Bynaeus^{f209} is of opinion that they were of a red or scarlet colour; and that the words should be rendered, "I shod thee with scarlet"; that is, with scarlet coloured shoes; which he observes have been in great esteem and use among persons of figure and quality; and, be they of what colour they will, they were, no doubt, made of skins of value, fine, soft, and pliable; as the Targum paraphrases it,

"I put precious shoes (or shoes of value) upon your feet:"

and therefore cannot be well thought to be made of badgers' skins, of which it was never known that shoes were made; with those indeed quivers and shields have been covered, and of those the harness of horses and collars of dogs have been made; but not men's shoes, and much less the shoes of delicate women. This may denote the agreeable walk of the saints, having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; or a conversation agreeable to the Gospel of Christ; which is very beautiful, and in which they are enabled to continue by the power and grace of God; (see ^{<2152>}Luke 15:22 ^{<4065>}Ephesians 6:15 ^{<2170>}Song of Solomon 7:1);

and I girded thee about with fine linen; as the high priest was with the linen girdle of the ephod, (^{<1238>}Exodus 28:8). So the Targum,

"and I separated from you the priests, that they might minister before me with linen mitres, and the high priest in garments of divers colours;"

all the saints are made priests to God, and art girt about with the girdle of love, which constrains them to fear and serve the Lord with all readiness and cheerfulness: and with the girdle of truth, which they cause to cleave and keep close unto them; (see ^{<4064>}Ephesians 6:14 ^{<2135>}Luke 12:35);

and I covered thee with silk. The Targum interprets this of the clothing of the high priest; but, if respect is had to that, silk cannot be intended; for, as

the Jews themselves say^{f210}, the priests were not clothed for service, in the house of the sanctuary, but with wool and linen; and indeed, though the Jewish commentators in general, as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, and others^{f211}, as well as our version, take the word here used to signify silk; yet, as Braunius^{f212} observes, it does not appear that this was known among the Jews in the times of Ezekiel, nor even before the times of Christ; nor was it known among the Romans before the times of Augustus. The word seems to be derived from an Arabic word^{f213}, which signifies to colour or paint clothes; and may be rendered painted or coloured cloth, or garments; and so the Targum renders it died or coloured garments; and so Aquila translates it by *αψιλον*, a “flowered garment”, either painted or wrought with flowers; and so Jerom, and the Vulgate Latin, by “polymitium”, a garment of divers colours; and may signify; as before, the rich apparel of the Jews, and the plenty of good things enjoyed by them; (see ~~<169>~~ Luke 16:19); and, in a mystical sense, the beautiful clothing of the church, with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, and the graces of the Spirit.

Ver. 11. *And I decked thee also with ornaments*, &c.] The Targum interprets this of the ornament of the words of the law; (see ~~<108>~~ Proverbs 1:8,9); but may be as well understood of good works done in obedience to them, from a right principle, and to right ends; which adorn professors of religion, their profession, and the doctrines of Christ, which they profess, (~~<110>~~ 1 Timothy 2:9,10 ~~<120>~~ Titus 2:10); or rather the graces of the Spirit, which are all of them very ornamental to the saints, as faith, hope, love, humility, &c. and are in the sight of God of great price, (~~<113>~~ 1 Peter 3:3,4);

and I put bracelets upon thine hands; which the Targum also explains of the law, written on two tables of stone, and given by the hands of Moses; the words of which, as Jarchi says, were put one against another, five against five; “hands” being the instruments of action may denote good works, which the Lord enables his people to perform; and which appear beautiful, as hands with bracelets on them, when they spring from love, are done in faith, and with a view to the glory of God:

and a chain on thy neck; this the Targum understands of sanctification, paraphrasing it,

“and with the holiness of my great name I sanctified you;”

and may be applied to the graces of the Spirit, which are as a chain, whose links are inseparably joined together; for, where one grace is, there are all the rest, faith, hope, charity, &c. (see ^{<2010>}Song of Solomon 1:10 4:9); or else to the blessings of grace, which also are linked together, and cannot be parted; where the one is, the other are likewise, (^{<4003>}Ephesians 1:3) (^{<480>}Romans 8:30,32); and both graces and blessings make the saint very beautiful.

Ver. 12. *And I put a jewel on thy forehead,* &c.] The same with the nose jewel, which was hung upon the forehead, and reached down to the nose and mouth; and, however disagreeable it may seem to us, was reckoned very ornamental in the eastern countries, (^{<2382>}Isaiah 3:21 ^{<0242>}Genesis 24:22,47); and where now, as in Persia, as well as in all the Levant, the women put rings through their noses, which they pierce with needles, as Monsieur Thevenot^{f214} relates; so Dr. Shaw^{f215} says that nose jewels are used still by the Levant Arabs. The Targum applies it to the ark, thus,

“and I put the ark of my covenant among you;”

but may be better applied a public profession of religion, which every good man ought to make, and take up from principles of grace received; this is bearing the name of Christ and the name of his Father in their foreheads; which is very ornamental to the believer, and well pleasing to Christ, (^{<600>}Romans 10:9,10 ^{<640>}Revelation 14:1 ^{<0032>}Matthew 10:32);

and earrings in thine ears. The Targum is,

“and the clouds of my glory overshadowed you;”

but it may be better interpreted of the spiritual ears God gives his people in conversion; by which they hear his word, so as to understand it; hear the voice of Christ, so as to distinguish it from the voice of a stranger; and hear his Gospel, so as to believe and receive it, approve of it, and love it, and act in conformity to it:

and a beautiful crown upon thine head. The Targum paraphrases it thus,

“and an angel, sent from before me, led at the head of you:”

referring to (^{<0230>}Exodus 23:20); with which Jarchi compares (^{<3023>}Micah 2:13) but may be better illustrated by the beautiful crown of twelve stars, the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ, said to be upon the head of the church; and is upon the head of every believer that holds the mystery of

the faith in pure conscience; that holds fast the faithful word, and will not let it go, that so no man may take away his crown, (^{<617>}Revelation 12:1 3:11).

Ver. 13. *Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver, &c.*] The Targum interprets it of the tabernacle adorned with gold and silver, and linen curtains, of various dies and colours; but it refers to the ornaments, bracelets, chain, earrings, and crown before, mentioned; (see ^{<989>}Psalm 45:9,13);

and thy raiment [was of] fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; (see Gill on “^{<260>}Ezekiel 16:10”); with this compare (^{<698>}Revelation 19:8);

thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; which did not a little contribute to her beauty and comeliness; (see ^{<2015>}Daniel 1:15); this the Targum explains of the manna with which the Lord fed the Israelites in the wilderness, and was good, like fine flour, and honey, and oil; and had, as Jarchi says, the taste of them all: but may be better applied to spiritual provisions believers are fed with; to the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which are as nourishing and strengthening as bread of fine flour; as sweet as honey to the taste; and which make fat and plump, and cause the face to shine as oil:

and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom; the Targum is,

“and ye became rich, and were greatly strengthened, and prospered, and ruled over all kingdoms;”

and had its accomplishment, as Kimchi observes, when the time of the kingdom of the house of David came: land is true of all believers, who are a kingdom of priests, a royal priesthood, kings and priests unto God; have a kingdom of grace; now, which can never be moved, and lies in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost; and are heirs of a kingdom of glory hereafter.

Ver. 14. *And thy renown went forth among the Heathen for thy beauty, &c.*] Which consisted of the above things: with this compare (^{<804>}Deuteronomy 6:4) (^{<982>}Psalm 48:2 ^{<2015>}Lamentations 2:15); the church’s beauty lies in the righteousness of Christ imputed, to her; in the holiness of Christ reckoned unto her; in the blood of Christ being upon her, by which she is washed and cleansed, justified and pardoned; and in the

graces of the Spirit of Christ implanted in her; and in the salvation of Christ she is interested in; and in the presence of Christ, which is the beauty of the Lord upon her; and in being in Gospel order, and having Gospel ordinances; (see ^{<951>}Psalm 45:11,13 149:4 90:17 ^{<2001>}Song of Solomon 6:4,10);

for it [was] perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God; all the outward happiness and prosperity of the Israelites in the days of David and Solomon, or at other times, was not, as Kimchi observes, of themselves, but of the Lord: and so the comeliness of the saints and people of God is not of themselves; they are by nature black and deformed; they are defiled with original and actual sin; they are as an unclean, thing; they are corrupt, abominable, and loathsome; and as they have not their comeliness by nature, so not by art; as it is not native to them, it is not acquired by them; they do not obtain it by their humiliation, repentance, and services; these cannot remove their natural blackness and uncomeliness, or wash away their sins, and render them beautiful in the sight of God, (^{<2433>}Jeremiah 13:23) (^{<2422>}Jeremiah 2:22 ^{<8000>}Job 9:30,31); but they have their comeliness from another, from Christ, who is altogether lovely; and from his righteousness, which is put on them; and so they are in him, and, through that, perfectly comely, a perfection of beauty, all fair, and without spot, even the fairest in the whole creation, complete in Christ, and perfect in him, (^{<9512>}Psalm 50:2 ^{<2005>}Song of Solomon 1:5,8 4:7).

Ver. 15. *But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, &c.]* As the Jews did in external gifts bestowed upon them; in their outward prosperity and grandeur; in their riches, wealth, and wisdom; and in the extent of their dominions, as in the days of David and Solomon; and in such things men are apt to; put their trust and confidence, and to be elated with, and grow proud and haughty, as a woman because of her beauty: so some professors of religion trust in a form and profession of it; in speculative knowledge, and in outward duties and services; being unconcerned for inward purity and holiness; and not trusting in the righteousness of Christ, the real beauty of saints:

and playedst the harlot because of thy renown; or “name”^{f216}; which the Jews got among the nations round about them, for their wisdom, riches, and power; which was a snare unto them, as a woman’s beauty is to her; and they were admired and courted, and complimented by their neighbours, and so drawn into idolatrous practices, as women into fornication and

adultery by the admirers of them: idolatry, which is here meant, is frequently signified by playing the harlot, or by fornication and adultery: or “thou playedst the harlot in thy name”^{f217}; alluding to the custom of harlots, notorious infamous ones, who used to set their names over the apartments, to direct men unto them; and so it may denote how famous and notorious the Jews were for their idolatries, and how impudent in them. Jarchi interprets this of the calf of the wilderness, and other idolatries which the tribe of Daniel committed there; but it rather respects the idolatries committed from the times of Solomon to the captivity, which were many, and often repeated; and though sometimes a stop was put to them by pious princes, yet broke out again: so trusting in a man’s own righteousness, or in any outward thing, is idolatry; and also false worship and superstitious observances:

and pouredst out thy fornication on everyone that passed by: which expresses the multitude of their idolatries; the measure of them, which ran over; the fondness they had for every idol of their neighbours; like a common strumpet, that prostitutes herself to everyone, not only to the men of her own place and city, but to all strangers and travellers; so the Jews, not content with the idols they had, embraced all that offered or their neighbours could furnish them with:

his it was; or “to him it was”; her desire, her lust, her fornication; everyone that passed by, that would might enjoy her; so the Jews were reader to fall in with every idol and every idolatrous practice. The Targum renders this clause,

“and it is not right for thee to do so;”

to commit and multiply idolatry.

Ver. 16. *And of thy garments thou didst take*, &c.] Which were made of fine linen, silk, and brodered work; which God had given them, and they were richly clad with:

and deckedst thy high places with divers colours; that is, with garments of divers colours; either they erected tents on their high places, made with these; or they covered their altars with them, which were on their high places for the ornament of them, as harlots deck their beds to allure their lovers; (see ^{<1076>}Proverbs 7:16,17); or “thou hast made for thyself high places spotted”^{f218}; so the word is rendered in (^{<1032>}Genesis 30:32,33,35); alluding to garments spotted with the flesh by adulterers. The Targum is,

“thou hast made for thyself high places covered with idols”: and so the Septuagint version renders it, “idols sewed together”. The word, in the Talmudic language^{f219}, has the signification of sewing. These idols were decked as children’s babies are; and so the Syriac version, “thou hast made for thyself babies”; images like babies, richly dressed with their garments above described, such as the papists now have;

and playedst the harlot thereon; committed idolatry on the high places; or “with them”^{f220}; that is, with the images and idols decked with their garments, which were set on those high places:

[the like things] shall not come, neither shall it be [so]; the like idolatries shall set be committed any more; and after the Babylonish captivity worshipping of idols was not practised by the Jews; nor is it to this day: or such “things have not come yet”, and there “shall not be” the like^{f221}; the sense is, there never were such idolatries committed by this people before; and there hover shall be, or will be, the like afterwards. Kimchi’s note is,

“the high places shall not come as these; as if it was said these shall not be in futurity; and there shall not be a man or a people that shall make like these for multitudes;”

so Ben Melech; and *twmb*, “high places”, does agree with *twab*, “come”. The Targum joins this with the preceding clause,

““and playedst the harlot” with them, as is not right and fit”

Ver. 17. *Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold, and of my silver, which I had given thee, &c.]* Or “thy glorious vessels of gold and silver”^{f222}; meaning either the vessels of gold and silver in the temple, as Jerom thinks, which they converted to idolatrous uses; or rather their own household vessels of gold and silver which God had given them, as the bounties of his providence, and he had still a right unto, and which they made use of to the dishonour of his name; which argued great ingratitude in them:

and madest to thyself images of men; images in the shape of men; some were in the shape of women, others in the shape of men; here only male images are mentioned, because the idolatrous Jews are represented by an adulterous woman committing adultery, with men; and these were made by themselves, of their jewels of gold and silver; or of their golden and silver vessels, which they had to eat and drink out of; these, they melted down

and made idols of them in the form of men, just as the molten calf was made of the earrings of the women, (^{<123B>}Exodus 32:3,4); to which some refer this passage: and as it was a piece of egregious folly in themselves to part with their jewels and plate for such purposes, and of great ingratitude to God, their benefactor, so of the grossest stupidity and ignorance to worship images so made; which was equally as stupid, or more so, than if a woman should embrace the image of a man, instead of a man himself, as it follows:

and didst commit whoredom with them: the images: that is, idolatry, which is spiritual adultery.

Ver. 18. *And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them, &c.*] The images of men, the idols they worshipped; (see ^{<240B>}Jeremiah 10:4); so the Papists at this day cover their idols, the images of the Virgin Mary, and other saints, with rich apparel, to draw the attention, admiration, and reverence of the people to them:

and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them; the oil which the Lord gave them for food, the land of Canaan being a land of oil olive; or which was to light the lamps in the temple with; or was used in sacrifice to the Lord, particularly in the meat offerings; and the incense, which was offered unto him on the altar of incense; these were set upon the altars of idols, and before them, the male images before mentioned; (see ^{<XIB>}Hosea 2:8).

Ver. 19. *My meat also which I gave thee, &c.*] Or “my bread”^{f223}; a general name for all eatables. The Targum renders it,

“my good things.”

The Jews apply it to the manna, which, they say, descended the same day the molten calf was made, and they set it before it. This interpretation Jarchi and Kimchi make mention of; it includes what follows:

fine flour, and oil, and honey, [wherewith] I fed thee; for the land of Canaan was a land of wheat, of which fine flour was made; and of olives, from whence was the best oil; and a land flowing with milk and honey; and which was given by the Lord, and so he might be said to feed them with them: and instead of glorifying him, and being thankful for them, and using them in the manner they ought,

thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour; that is, they made a meat offering of their fine flour, oil, and honey, and set it before their idols; to gain their favour and good will; to appease them, and render them propitious; supposing it would be acceptable unto them; all these things were used in meat offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord, excepting honey, and that was forbid; but was in use among the Gentiles; (see ^{<RMT>}Leviticus 2:1,11);

and [thus] it was, saith the Lord God; all this idolatry, ingratitude, and folly, have been committed; it is most notorious, there is no denying it; I, who am the Lord God omniscient, affirm it. The Targum puts it by way of question, and even of astonishment and admiration,

“are not all these things done, saith the Lord God!”

Ver. 20. *Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, &c.*] Their own flesh and blood; which were more than to take their clothes, and cover their idols with them, and their food, and set it before them to part with them was much, but to part with these, and that in such a shocking manner as after mentioned, was so irrational and unnatural, as well as impious and wicked, as is not to be paralleled; and what increased their wickedness was, that these were not only their own, but the Lord’s:

whom thou hast borne unto me; for, though they were born of them, they were born unto the Lord, the Creator of them, the Father of their spirits, and God of their lives, and who had the sole right to dispose of them; nor was it in the power of their parents to take away their life at pleasure; for the Lord only has the sovereign power of life and death:

and these hast thou sacrificed unto them: the male images before mentioned; one of which was Molech, who is here particularly designed:

to be devoured; in the arms of that image; or to be consumed by fire, in which they were burnt, when sacrificed unto it. The Targum is,

“for oblation and worship;”

[is this] of thy whoredoms a small matter; which was so dreadfully heinous and inhuman, yet by some reckoned a small matter; this was not the least of their idolatries, but, of all, the most shocking, and the most aggravated: or the sense is, is it a small thing that thou shouldst play the harlot, or worship idols? is it not enough for thee to do so, but thou must sacrifice

thy children also to them? and which are not only thine, but mine, as follows:

Ver. 21. *That thou hast slain my children, &c.*] By creation, as all born into the world are; and by national adoption, as all the Jewish children were; and particularly the firstborn were eminently his, and which are here designed, as Jarchi interprets it; for they were the children that were slain and sacrificed to Molech; (see ²⁶¹⁶Ezekiel 20:26);

and delivered, them to cause them to pass through [the fire] for them? for the sake of idols, for the worship of them; this they did before they were slain; they first caused them to pass through between two fires, and so dedicated them to the idol, and then slew them; or slew them by burning them in the fire, or by putting them into the arms of the “idol”, made burning hot.

Ver. 22. *And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms, &c.*] Or idolatries, which were abominable to God, and were many; of which that just mentioned was not one of the least:

thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth; the destitute and forlorn condition then in, and what favours were then bestowed:

when thou wast naked and bare, [and] wast polluted in thy blood; (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁶Ezekiel 16:6-7”); which is mentioned to upbraid the Jews with their ingratitude; they forgetting the miserable condition they were in in Egypt, and what great things the Lord had done for them in bringing them out from thence, and the obligations they were laid under to him: and yet, after all this, to commit such abominable iniquities, and in the midst of them all never once call to mind what they had received from him; which might have been a check to their idolatries, but so it was not.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass after all thy wickedness, &c.*] This refers either to what goes before, so Kimchi; and the sense is, it shall be again as it was at first, after and because of all the above wickedness committed, thou shalt be left naked and bare, and destitute of all that is good: or rather to what follows in the next clause; and the meaning is, to all this wickedness before mentioned, which was so great that it might be thought nothing more could be added to it; and yet the following things were, as building an eminent place, and high places, in all streets and heads of ways:

woe, woe unto thee, saith the Lord of hosts; which is repeated, to show the indignation of the Lord against all this wickedness; to arouse their attention to their sin and punishment, and to show the certainty of it; and it may be it denotes both their misery in this world, and in that to come. The Targum of the whole is,

“what shall be in thine end for all thy wickedness? the prophet said unto her, woe unto thee, because thou hast sinned; woe unto thee, because thou art not converted, saith the Lord God.”

Ver. 24. [*That*] *thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place*, &c.] Or a “brothel”^{f224}; and so the Septuagint version, “a whoring house”; not content to commit idolatry privately, they built a public place for idolatrous worship. The Targum renders it, “altar”, The word has the signification of a pit or ditch; with which compare (³¹²¹⁴Proverbs 22:14 23:27);

and hast made thee an high place in every street; of Jerusalem, and other cities; it was usual to erect high places in streets, where altars were built, and idols set up to be worshipped: it denotes the public manner in which they committed idolatry, and the multitude of their idols; which shows their impudence and hardness of heart.

Ver. 25. *Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way*, &c.] Where two or more ways, or two or more streets, met; and so was most conspicuous, and was seen from different parts; which shows the same as before:

and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred; by the Lord himself, Who otherwise greatly desires and delights in the beauty of his people, when they worship him, (³⁹⁵¹¹Psalms 45:11); and by all good men, and such as fear the Lord, who cannot but abhor such idolatrous practices, and those that are guilty of them; and even by the Heathens themselves, to whom the Jews became mean and despicable, when they fell into idolatry, and under the displeasure of God, whom they forsook; as a common strumpet becomes, in process of time, loathsome to her quondam lovers:

and hast opened thy feet to everyone that passed by; an euphemism, signifying the exposing to view the privities or secret parts, in order to allure to impure embraces; and the meaning is, that the Jews were ready to receive any idol, and give into any idolatrous worship that offered to them, and even courted and solicited the Gentiles to join with them in all idolatrous practices:

and multiplied thy whoredoms; or idolatries; the number of their idols being answerable to their cities, and even were as many as the streets and heads of ways in them.

Ver. 26. *Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians, &c.*] By entering into leagues and alliances with them, and seeking to them for help and assistance against their enemies; from whose bondage they had formerly been delivered, and whose society they were cautioned against; and yet they forsook the Lord, and joined themselves to them by solemn covenant; and not only so, but fell into the worship of their idols, who were a people of all others the most superstitious, and given to idolatry; and many of their idolatrous rites and ceremonies were received and retained by the Jews, as the worshipping of Tammuz, and other idols:

thy neighbours, great of flesh: being their neighbours, and full of power and strength to assist them, they courted their friendship and alliance; and their idolatries being many and monstrous, were the more courted by them: the allusion is to women of shameless impudence and insatiable lust, who covet men, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and their issue as horses, (³²³⁰Ezekiel 23:20); flesh here signifies the privy parts of men; so Ben Melech;

and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke my anger; multiplied their idolatries, which they learned of the Egyptians, a people much given thereunto; and which were abominable and highly provoking to God, (⁴⁰⁴⁸1 Peter 4:3). The Targum is,

“thou hast increased thine idols.”

Ver. 27. *Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee, &c.*] His chastising and correcting hand, to show his resentment at their sins, and bring them to a sense of them, and repentance for them:

and have diminished thine ordinary [food]; their stated allowances, the common mercies and blessings of life they had been indulged with, but now were lessened; and particularly a famine was brought upon them, as well as they were deprived of other favours for their sins; God dealing with them as husbands with their wanton wives, who keep them to stricter allowance, and closer confinement, in order to check and tame them:

and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines; which perhaps may refer to the times of Ahaz, when the

Philistines invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and took many of their cities, and brought Judah low, (^{<438>}2 Chronicles 28:18,19);

which are ashamed of thy lewd way: of their inconstancy in changing their religion, relinquishing the worship of the true God, and embracing that of others, when they abode by their ancient religion and worship, (^{<310>}Jeremiah 2:10,11). The Targum is,

“to whom if I had sent my prophets, they would have been ashamed;”

(see ^{<412>}Matthew 11:21,23).

Ver. 28. *Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, &c.*] By entering into alliances with them, and worshipping their idols; which was done in the times of Ahaz, who sent to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria for help, and to Damascus for the fashion of the altar there, and built one according to it, (^{<170>}2 Kings 7:10, 11);

because thou wast unsatiable; not content with the alliance and idolatries of the Egyptians:

yea, thou hast played the harlot with them; with the Assyrians:

and yet couldst not be satisfied; with their idols, and the worship of them, but sought out for new gods, and new modes of worship; like a lewd woman, who having prostituted herself to one, and to another, yet remains insatiable, and seeks out for other lovers.

Ver. 29. *Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan, &c.*] Or, “with the land of Canaan”^{f225}; with the inhabitants of it, doing the same evils, committing the same idolatries, as the old inhabitants of Canaan did; and so the Targum,

“and thou hast multiplied thine idols, that thou mightest be joined to the people of Canaan:”

or, “to the land of Canaan”^{f226}; like to the land of Canaan; according to the abominations of the Canaanites, doing as they did. Jarchi takes the word Canaan to signify a “merchant”, as it does in (^{<310>}Hosea 12:7); and the land of Canaan to be the same with the land of Chaldea, called a land of traffic, and Babylon the city of merchants, (^{<370>}Ezekiel 17:4); since it follows,

unto Chaldea: but the sense is, that the Jews were not content with the idolatries in the land of Canaan, but sent even to Chaldea, a remote country, to fetch new idols from thence; (see ^{צבא}Ezekiel 23:14-16). The Targum is,

“to walk in the laws of the Chaldeans;”

their religious ones, their rites and ceremonies respecting idolatrous worship:

and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith; but still wanted other idols and modes of worship; not being content with the gods of the Egyptians, nor of the Assyrians, nor of the Canaanites, nor of the Chaldeans.

Ver. 30. *How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, &c.*] Through sin; and being destitute of the grace of God, and so unable to resist any temptation, or oppose any corruption or lust, but carried away with everyone that offers; indulging every lust, and yet not satisfied; weak as water, unstable, fickle, and inconstant, seeking after new gods, and new kinds of worship. The Targum is,

“how strong is the wickedness of thy heart!”

the stronger the wickedness of the heart, the weaker, the heart is:

seeing thou doest all these [things]; all the idolatries before mentioned; which was an argument not of her strength, but weakness, and yet of boldness, impudence, and resolution, to have her will:

the work of an imperious whorish woman; a whore, as she is impudent, is imperious, is one that rules and governs. The Targum is, who rules over herself; does what she pleases, will have her will and way, and cannot bear any contradiction; and who rules over others, such as are her gallants, obliging them to do as she commands. Jarchi’s note is,

“over whom her imagination (or corruption) rules.”

Ver. 31. *In that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, &c.*] Or brothel house, as before; (see Gill on “^{צבא}Ezekiel 16:24”); which showed her to be a whore, and an imperious one:

and makest thine high place in every street; (see Gill on “^{צבא}Ezekiel 16:24”);

and hast not been as an harlot: a common one, or as a harlot usually is:

in that thou scornest hire; which they do not; for it is for hire they prostitute themselves; and have their names, both in our language, and in the Latin tongue, from, thence.

Ver. 32. [*But as*] *a wife that committeth adultery*, &c.] Who has a husband, and is provided for with all the necessaries of life, with food and clothing; and so has no need to prostitute herself for a livelihood, as common strumpets do; but does it purely for the satiating of her lust: and such were the people of the Jews, they were married to the Lord, who took care of them, and provided everything for them, and acted the part of a husband to them; so that it was the weakness of their hearts, and the strength of their corruptions, which led them to depart from him, and commit idolatry; which in them was adultery, while the sin of the Gentiles was as simple fornication:

[*which*] *taketh strangers instead of her husband*; that takes other men into her bed instead of her husband, not for the sake of gain, but lust; and this was the case of the Jews, who were a wicked people, an idolatrous generation; who took strange gods to worship instead of the true God, who had been a husband to them, (²⁸¹³²Jeremiah 31:32).

Ver. 33. *They give gifts to all whores*, &c.] Gifts are usually given to whores, by those who commit whoredom with them; it is for the sake of these they prostitute their bodies, nor will they do this without gain; (see ¹²⁸¹⁶Genesis 38:16,17);

but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers; the Jews gave the Egyptians and Assyrians money, to gain their friendship, and procure alliances with them; (see ¹²⁶⁸2 Kings 16:8 ²³¹⁶Isaiah 30:6,7); and were at great expenses with their idols, and in support of their idolatrous worship:

and hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom; they courted the nations all around them for their favour and friendship, and bribed them into it, as the word ^{f227} signifies.

Ver. 34. *And the contrary is in thee from [other] women in thy whoredoms*, &c.] Of which an instance is given before, and another is added, with the repetition of the former:

whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms; the Jews followed the examples, customs, and practices of the Gentiles, in worshipping of their idols; but the Gentiles did not follow the Jews, they kept to their own gods, and did not worship the God of Israel; which with respect to their own gods would have been fornication; and whereas it is usual for men to follow after whorish women, and solicit them by gifts and presents, or promises, and not for them to follow the men, court and solicit them; on the other hand, the Jews, who are compared to a whorish woman, followed after their lovers, and not their lovers after them: or, “after thee there was not”, or “shall not be fornication”^{f228}; like to thine; it being such as never had been, nor never would be the like again:

and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary; to all other lewd women, who take, but give no reward.

Ver. 35. *Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord.*] The sentence about to be pronounced; adjudging to be slain with the sword, to be stoned and burned; the crime for which is to be read in the name of harlot, justly given to an apostate people; as it often is to the church of Rome in the book of the Revelation. The Targum is,

“whose works are as an harlots; O congregation of Israel, receive the words of the Lord;”

which follow:

Ver. 36. *Thus saith the Lord God, because thy filthiness was poured out, &c.*] Or, “thy brass”^{f229}. The word is used by the Rabbins^{f230} for the bottom of a thing; and is here accordingly, by Kimchi and Ben Melech, interpreted of a woman’s lower part; the same with her nakedness next mentioned; and from whence, by reason of her inordinate lust, and the frequent exercise of it, and that with many different persons, a gonorrhoea, as Jarchi explains it, or a filthy flux flowed, and was poured out on her lovers; from whence the filthy disease, the “lues venerea”:

and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers; which she discovered or exposed to view herself, in order to entice her lovers to lie with her, and for the sake thereof; (see ²¹⁶⁵Ezekiel 16:25);

and with all the idols of thine abominations; or abominable idols, which were so in themselves, were abominable to God, and made the worshippers

of them so likewise; these are distinguished from her lovers, the Egyptians and Assyrians, her confederates, and by means of whose alliance she fell into idolatry:

and by the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them; the idols, to whom they were dedicated and sacrificed; and for whose sake, and for the worship of them, they were caused to pass through the fire, and were burnt in it; and by such shocking murders, as well as idolatrous practices, the depravity of their nature, the wickedness of their hearts, their hypocrisy, treachery, and infidelity, were discovered and made known.

Ver. 37. *Behold, therefore I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, &c.]* Or, “with whom thou hast mixed”^{f231}; in unlawful embraces, joined in sinful alliances, or in idolatrous practices:

and all [them] that thou hast loved; the Egyptians and Assyrians, whose friendship and idolatrous customs they were fond of:

with all [them] that thou hast hated; as the Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites:

I will even gather them round about against thee; as they were in the Chaldean army, which consisted of many nations:

and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness; as a just retaliation for discovering it herself, as in (²⁶⁶⁶Ezekiel 16:36); than which nothing can be more disagreeable to the sex. The Milesian virgins were restrained from suicide by a law, which ordered that such should be drawn naked through the market place. This is to be understood of the spoiling of the city and temple.

Ver. 38. *And I will judge thee as women that break wedlock, &c.]* The marriage covenant, defile the marriage bed, and were adulteresses, who by the law of Moses were to be punished with death, (⁶²⁰⁰Leviticus 20:10 ⁶²²²Deuteronomy 22:22);

and shed blood are judged; who also were punished with death according to the original law in (⁰⁰⁰⁶Genesis 9:6); the Jews were not only guilty of spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry; but also of murder, by sacrificing their infants to idols; and murder often follows upon adultery, as Kimchi observes; and, these people were guilty of shedding innocent blood on other accounts; but the first mentioned is chiefly designed here:

and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy; by way of retaliation; blood being shed, blood is given, and that in wrath and vengeance; the allusion is to a jealous and abused husband, that avenges himself of the person that has injured him; (see ^{<666>}Revelation 16:6).

Ver. 39. *And I also will give thee into their hand*, &c.] Into the hand of their lovers and enemies that should be gathered against them, the Assyrians and Chaldeans, with others that joined them, as in (^{<2667>}Ezekiel 16:37);

and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thine high places; the city of Jerusalem, the temple, and altars; and not only these, but even the high places and altars which were set up for idolatrous uses; all should be destroyed by the Chaldean army. The Targum is,

“and they shall destroy thy walls, and thy high places shall be destroyed:”

they shall strip thee also of thy clothes; as persons commonly are when taken captives:

and shall take thy fair jewels; or, “the vessels of thy glory”^{f232}; the vessels of the sanctuary of gold and silver, and their own household furniture, with all their riches and substance:

and leave thee naked and bare; as at first when in Egypt; (see ^{<2667>}Ezekiel 16:7).

Ver. 40. *They shall also bring up a company against thee*, &c.] An army, so the Targum; the Chaldean army:

and they shall stone thee with stones: cast out of their engines and slings, by which they battered the walls, as well as killed the inhabitants; and so the Targum renders it, with sling stones; the allusion is to the stoning of adulterous persons, (^{<1724>}Deuteronomy 22:24 ^{<606>}John 8:5);

and thrust thee through with their swords; such as attempted to escape out of the city, or fell into the hands of the enemy when it was taken, were slain with the sword.

Ver. 41. *And they shall burn thine houses with fire*, &c.] As the houses in Jerusalem were by Nebuchadnezzar’s army, even the temple, the house of

the Lord, and the king's house, and the houses of great men, even all the houses in the city, (²⁵²³Jeremiah 52:13); and as was commanded to be done to idolatrous cities, (⁴⁵³⁶Deuteronomy 13:16); and this also may be said in allusion to the burning of adulterous persons, (⁰¹³²⁴Genesis 38:24);

and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women; or provinces, as the Targum; meaning the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, who would rejoice in their ruin; the judgments design those before mentioned:

and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more; their idols, high places, and altars, being demolished, and they plundered of their substance; and after the Babylonish captivity the Jews never returned to idolatry any more.

Ver. 42. *So will I make my fury towards thee to rest, &c.]* When the Jews should cease from their idolatries, and no more worship the gods of the nations, then the fury of the Lord, and the effects of it, should cease: God no longer contends with a people than while they are sinning; when a reformation is brought about, by afflictions or judgments, his end is answered, and he puts a stop to the spread of his wrath and fury; or if is made to rest, because there is nothing left for it to work upon, a total consumption of people and substance being made by it: or it may be rendered, "I will make my fury to rest upon thee"^{f233}; and the sense be, that his wrath should abide upon them, and not remove until an utter end was made of them; though the first sense seems best to agree with what goes before, and follows after:

and my jealousy shall depart from thee; as it does from a man when he has utterly rejected his wife because of whoredom, and is divorced from her; and his burning jealousy has satisfied itself, and there is no other way to operate and show itself in; or when a woman returns to her husband and gives him satisfaction, keeps close unto him, and lives chastely with him, having relinquished her former lewd ways and practices:

and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry: the effects of his anger cease, his judgments averted, and he at peace with them, and they with him; for he retains not his anger for ever: though some understand this of his being quiet and at ease in the destruction of the Jews; there being no more to wreak his vengeance upon.

Ver. 43. *Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, &c.]*

The low estate they were once in, and the great favours bestowed upon them, which laid them under great obligation to serve the Lord, and him only; but these they forgot, which highly provoked him, and caused him to do the things he did; (see ^{f232}Ezekiel 16:22):

and hast fretted me in all these [things]; irritated, provoked him, moved him to wrath and anger, stirred up in his breast a tumult, speaking after the manner of men; this they did by their ingratitude, idolatry, and other sins:

behold, therefore, I also will recompense thy way upon [thine] head, saith the Lord God; retaliate their evils, punish them according as their sins deserved, and in a way which they led unto:

and thou shall not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations; or add to all thine abominable idolatries this shocking piece of wickedness, the sacrificing of their children to their idols: or rather the words may be rendered, “for thou hast not taken this thought” (or counsel) “upon” or “concerning all thine abominations”^{f234}; to repent of them and turn from them So the Targum,

“and thou hast not taken counsel to thyself, to turn from all thine abominations.”

Or, as Jarchi,

“thou hast not taken counsel to put the, heart upon thine abominations to turn from them;”

and he observes, that the word here used always signifies counsels either good or evil. There is a double reading of this clause; we follow the “Keri”, or marginal reading; but the “Cetib”, or textual writing or reading, is, “and I have not done according to this lewdness above all thine abominations”; and so expresses the mercy and long suffering of God^{f235}.

Ver. 44. *Behold, everyone that useth proverbs, &c.]* That affects a proverbial way of sneaking that is witty and facetious, and has a talent at satirizing and scoffing, as some have had; such were Lucian and others:

shall use [this] proverb against thee; signifying that the sins of the Jews should be well known and exposed, and they should become the subject of the gibes and jeers of men:

saying, as [is] the mother, [so is] her daughter; an ancient and common proverb, used to express a likeness and agreement between persons their nature and disposition, in their behaviour, conduct, and conversation. So the Targum,

“as are the works of the mother, so those of the daughter;”

the mother is the land of Canaan, and the daughter the congregation of Israel, as Kimchi. The Jews were the successors of the old Canaanites, and they imitated them in their practices; and, because both of their succession and imitation, they are called the daughter of them; a bad daughter of a bad mother.

Ver. 45. *Thou [art] thy mother’s daughter*, &c.] Exactly like her; they that have known the one must know the other. The Targum is,

“wherefore art thou become the daughter of the land of Canaan, to do according to the works of the people?”

that loatheth her husband and her children; a true character of an adulteress; and which agrees both with the mother the Canaanites, and with the daughter the Jews; who both despised, rejected, and forsook God their husband, Creator, and lawgiver, and sacrificed their children to idols; (see ~~עזקל~~ Ezekiel 16:20,21 ~~לויקוס~~ Leviticus 18:21,24);

and thou [art] the sister of thy sisters; the true genuine sister of them, Samaria and Sodom after mentioned; being not only allied to them in blood, more nearly to the one more remotely to the other, but exceedingly alike in manners, religion, and worship:

which loatheth their husbands and their children; as before:

your mother [was] an Hittite, and your father an Amorite; these the Israelites succeeded in their land, and followed their customs; (see Gill on ~~עזקל~~ Ezekiel 16:3”). The Targum is,

“was not your mother Sarah among the Hittites? and she did not do according to their works; and your father Abraham was among the Amorites, and he walked not in their counsels.”

Ver. 46. *And thine elder sister [is] Samaria*, &c.] The metropolis of the ten tribes; “sister” to the Jews, because of the same descent, having one and the same father; the “elder” or “greater”^{f236}, because more in number

and power; the kingdom of Israel consisted of ten tribes, and the kingdom of Judah but of two; and the ten tribes also were the first in the apostasy from the true worship of God:

she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand; as Samaria the sister was the metropolis of the ten tribes, her daughters are the other cities and towns belonging thereunto; and so the Targum renders it, she and her villages; these were situated to the north of the land of Israel, as Judah was to the south, which with the Jews were left and right; as a man standing with his face to the east has the north on his left and the south on his right side:

and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, [is] Sodom and her daughters; where Lot the kinsman of Abraham lived, and from whom sprung the Ammonites and Moabites. Sodom was a lesser kingdom than that of Judah, and which lay to the south; that is, to the right of it; even that and the other cities, which perished with it, called her daughters, as Admah, Zeboim, &c.

Ver. 47. *Yet hast thou not walked after their ways*, &c.] But in ways more evil; were not content to keep pace with them, and do as they did; but outwent them, outstripped them in wickedness:

nor done after their abominations; but committed greater abominations than they did; sins of a more heinous nature, and attended with more aggravated circumstances; having more power and wealth, more Wisdom and understanding; the means of grace, the word and ordinances of God:

but, as [if that were] a very little [thing]; to commit the sins that Samaria and Sodom did: or, “it was loathing [to thee] as a little thing”^{f237}; they despised and loathed their sins as too mean and little, and not flagitious and enormous, or bold and daring enough to be committed; and looked upon them, with contempt, as sneaking sinners, that had no soul nor spirit in them, or taste for sinful pleasures, in comparison of them: or the sense is, it would have been a little thing, comparatively speaking, had they only walked after the ways and abominations of Samaria and Sodom, and stopped there; but they had greatly exceeded them; and so the Targum,

“if thou hadst walked in their ways, and done according to their abominations, thy sin had been small.”

Kimchi interprets it of a small time that the Jews continued in the ways and worship of God, after the captivity of the ten tribes, which were carried away in the sixth year of Hezekiah; so that there were but three and twenty years left of his reign, when his son Manasseh succeeded him, and was more wicked than all before him; and these three and twenty years are the little time here spoken of and within a very little time, and

thou wast corrupted more than they in all their ways; this explains what is meant by not walking after their ways and abominations; they were greater sinners than they; more corrupt in their principles and practices; more hardened in them, and more difficult to be reclaimed from them; (see ^{<0123>}Matthew 11:23,24).

Ver. 48. [*As I live, saith the Lord God, &c.*] This is an oath, which the Lord God swore; who, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, by his life; and this he did to confirm what he had and was about to say, that the sins of Judah were greater than those of Samaria and Sodom; which might not be easily believed, but it was as true as he was the living God:

Sodom thy sister hath, or done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters; that is, the inhabitants of Sodom, and of the villages adjacent, as the Targum, had not committed such gross iniquities as the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the towns and villages about it, and of other cities of Judah.

Ver. 49. *Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, &c.*] Namely, the first after mentioned, the source and spring of the rest; the causes and means of which are declared; and the same, as is suggested, was the sin of Jerusalem: namely,

pride; which was the sin of the devils, and the cause of their ruin; the sin of our first parents, by which they fell, and destroyed themselves, and their posterity; and is the prevailing, governing, sin of human nature: it has been the ruin of kingdoms and states, of cities and particular persons; a sin hateful to God, and destructive to man:

fulness of bread; the land of Sodom was very fruitful before it was destroyed; it was like the garden of the Lord, (^{<0130>}Genesis 13:10); it brought forth plentifully, so that there was great fulness of provision, of all sorts of food, which is meant by bread: this, considered in itself, was not sinful, but a blessing; it was the Lord's mercy and goodness to them that

they had such plenty; but it was their sin that they abused it; luxury and intemperance, eating and drinking to excess, are here meant; which led on to that sin, and kindled the flames of it, and were the fuel to it, which has its name from them; and, besides, this fulness of good things enjoyed by them was the source of their pride, and served to increase that, as before mentioned:

and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters; or, “peace of rest”^{f238}; prosperity and ease, security and quietness, at leisure, and without labour; two words are used to express the same thing, and to denote, as Kimchi observes, the abundance of it: sloth and idleness, as they often arise from the goodness and fruitfulness of a country, said fulness of provision, so they are the cause of much sin and wickedness; for, if persons are not employed in some business or another, either of the head or hand, they will be doing evil:

neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy; though she had such abundance of food to supply them with, and so much leisure to attend to their distress; but her pride would not suffer her to do it; and she was too idle and slothful to regard such service; perhaps more is intended than is expressed; that she weakened the hands of the poor and needy, and cruelly oppressed them; which is often done by proud men, in great affluence and at leisure, which they abuse to bad purposes.

Ver. 50. *And they were haughty*, &c.] Sodom and her daughters, the inhabitants of that place, and the cities adjacent; they lifted up themselves above God and man; they were above regarding the poor and needy; and were elated and swelled with their plenty and prosperity, and behaved very insolently, both to fellow citizens and strangers; (see ^{<01894>}Genesis 19:4,5,9);

and committed abomination before me; perhaps referring to that sin, which has its name from them; a sin abominable to God, and scandalous to human nature; and which they committed openly and publicly, neither fearing God, nor regarding men; and are said to be sinners before the Lord, (^{<01813>}Genesis 13:13);

therefore I took them away as I saw [good]; both as to time and manner, as he in his sovereignty thought most fit and proper, by raining fire and brimstone on them, and setting them forth as an example of the vengeance of eternal fire: or, “when I saw”^{f239}; their sin and wickedness, as soon as he saw it; (see ^{<01820>}Genesis 18:20,21). The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions

render it, “as thou sawest”, or “hast seen”; appealing to the Jews themselves, who were very well acquainted with the fact; for the destruction of Sodom was notorious and flagrant.

Ver. 51. *Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins, &c.*] The sins of Samaria, or the ten tribes, of which Samaria was the metropolis, were the worshipping of the calves at Daniel and Bethel; but the gods of Judah were according to the number of their cities, and they even set up their idols in the temple of Jerusalem, (²⁴²⁸Jeremiah 2:28 7:30) (²⁴⁸⁵Ezekiel 8:5,10,14,16); and, besides, their sins were aggravated by the benefits privileges they enjoyed; having the temple, the place of worship, among them; the priests of the Lord to officiate for them; the prophets to instruct and teach them; and many good kings to rule over them, who encouraged them in the pure worship of God, and set them examples; as also by their not taking warning at the captivity of the ten tribes, which were some years before; so that they were guilty of great ingratitude and obduracy:

but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they; than Samaria and her daughters, or the ten tribes; or than Sodom and Samaria, since both are intended in the next clause:

and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done; justified them in what they did; countenanced them in their wickedness, by doing the same abominations, and more, and much greater; saying, in effect, that they did right in what they did; and, by exceeding them in sin, made them to appear righteous in comparison of them; and gave them an opportunity of saying, in excuse for themselves, that the men of Judah had been guilty of more and greater sins than they, and yet had not been punished as they had been.

Ver. 52. *Thou also which hast judged thy sisters, &c.*] Sodom and Samaria, by censuring and condemning them for their sins; (see ²⁴³⁸2 Chronicles 13:8-10); in which sense Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the word; or by defending and patronizing them, acquitting and absolving them, by committing the same sins, and more heinous ones:

bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they; look upon thy sins, and blush at them; confess them with shame and confusion of face; take shame to thyself for them, in that thou hast censured and condemned these sins in others thou hast been guilty of thyself; and the rather, since thy sins are greater, and attended

with more aggravating circumstances, than those thou hast blamed in others; or this is a prophecy of their punishment for their sins, when they should be carried captive, and be put to shame before their neighbours: or, “thou shalt bear”^{f240}; shame is the fruit of sin, sooner or later:

they are more righteous than thou; in comparison of her; though neither of them were righteous in the sight of God, yet comparatively one was more righteous than another, having committed fewer sins, and lesser abominations:

yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters; this is repeated in stronger expressions, and with the reasons of it, to show the great confusion they should be brought unto, and the certainty of it, the more to strike and affect their minds with it.

Ver. 53. *When I shall bring again their captivity, &c.*] The captivity of Sodom and Samaria, as after mentioned:

the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters; which some understand as what never will be, as it never yet has been: Sodom remains to this day a dead sea, and the ten tribes are not returned:

then [will I bring again] the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them; that is, it shall never be brought again, according to the above sense; but rather this is to be understood of the calling of the Gentiles, comparable to Sodom for their wickedness, as the great city of Rome is, (^{f6108} Revelation 11:8); and of the calling of God’s elect among the ten tribes, scattered up and down among the Gentiles, by the preaching of the apostles; and when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in then will follow the conversion of the Jews, and all Israel will be sawed, (^{f5125} Romans 11:25,26); for it is certain those sisters, Sodom and Samaria, were to be restored, and received into the church, and given to her for daughters, (²³⁶⁶ Ezekiel 16:61); thus the conversion, of the Gentiles is signified by bringing again the captivity of Moab and Ammon, in (²⁴⁸⁷ Jeremiah 48:47 49:6).

Ver. 54. *That thou mayest bear thine own shame, &c.*] So long as the captivity remains; even until Sodom and Samaria, the Gentiles, and the ten tribes, are called and converted:

and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done; or, “for all that thou hast done”^{f241}; for and because of all the abominable sins they had been guilty of:

in that thou art a comfort to them; to Sodom and Samaria; countenancing them in their sins; justifying their iniquities, and strengthening their hands in their wickedness, by doing the same, and greater abominations; or in partaking of the same punishment with them, captivity; this being a kind of solace to them, that they were not punished alone; so Jarchi.

Ver. 55. *When thy sisters, Sodom, and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, &c.*] The Jews, as Jerom says, are of opinion, that in the days of their vainly expected Messiah Sodom will be restored to its ancient state, and be as the garden of God, and as the land of Egypt; and Jarchi interprets the bringing again the captivity of Sodom, in (²³⁶⁵Ezekiel 16:53); by the Lord’s healing the land of brimstone and salt, and placing inhabitants in it; and it is asserted by the Jews^{f242} that Sodom and Gomorrah shall be rebuilt in future times, in the times of the Messiah, according to the sense of this passage: but this is not to be understood in a literal sense, of the rebuilding of Sodom and cities adjacent, and of restoring them to their former fruitfulness and fertility, and of the inhabitants to their former prosperity, and much less to their former state of wickedness; but spiritually, of the conversion of Gentile sinners to their ancient and happy estate in Christ:

and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate; to the knowledge of the Messiah, and the pure worship of God:

then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate; the conversion of Judah, and of Israel or the ten tribes, here meant by Samaria, is frequently prophesied of, as what will be at the same time, (²²⁷⁶Jeremiah 23:6 50:4 ²⁸⁵¹Hosea 5:11).

Ver. 56. *For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth, &c.*] Or, “was not for a hearing”, or “a report, in thy mouth”^{f243}; the destruction of Sodom, though it was such an awful judgment of God, so flagrant and notorious, was visible and just at hand; yet it was not taken notice of, nor talked of; it was not the subject of conversation among friends; it was not reported from father to son, or heard of the one by the other; it was not regarded, nor was warning taken by it, which might have been, had it been more frequently mentioned; but they did not care, or neglected to speak of

it; though it was “an ensample to those that should after live ungodly”, (^{<6185>}2 Peter 2:6); yet it was not for instruction to them, as the Targum paraphrases it; they learned nothing by it; or Sodom was so infamous for sin and punishment, that they scorned to make mention of its name; and yet they were as great Or greater sinners, and deserving of sorer punishment:

in the day of thy pride; or “prides”, or “excellencies”^{f244}; in the time of their prosperity, in the days of David and Solomon, and other kings of Judah. Prosperity is apt to make men proud, and to lift them above themselves; and to forget what they have been, and what they may be; and to neglect observing the judgments of God on others, and to take warning by them.

Ver. 57. *Before thy wickedness was discovered, &c.*] By the punishment of it, by the judgments of God brought upon them; then they were humbled, who before were proud and haughty; and might speak and think of the vengeance of God on Sodom, which before they made no mention of. It is a sad thing only to know sin, and to have it discovered only by the punishment of it:

as at the time of [thy] reproach of the daughters of Syria, and all [that are] round about her, the daughters of the Philistines; this seems to refer to the times of Ahaz, when the Syrians smote the men of Judah; and carried many of them captive; and the Philistines invaded the cities of the low country, and southern parts of Judah, and took many of them, (^{<4815>}2 Chronicles 28:5,18); at which time the wickedness of the Jews was discovered; and it was a plain case they had sinned against the Lord, by his suffering their enemies to come upon them, and prevail over them; which was to their reproach. The Syrians reproached them, and so did the Philistines:

which despise thee round about; they spoiled and plundered them on all sides; and treated them with scorn and contempt, who before were formidable and terrible to them: thus it is with a people when they are left of God, they are despised by men.

Ver. 58. *Thou hast borne thy lewdness and thine abominations, &c.*] Openly and publicly; their abominable iniquities were written as it were upon their foreheads, and were to be seen of all men; their sin was to be read in their punishment, which is meant by bearing their lewdness and abominations; namely, the punishment due unto them:

saith the Lord; who always speaks what is just and true; this is added to denote the truth of what had been, and the certainty of what would be, as follows:

Ver. 59. *For thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] And what he says may be depended upon as truth, and what will certainly come to pass:

I will even deal with thee as thou hast done; reward them according to their works; or execute the law of retaliation upon them; and reject them, as they had rejected him; and cast them off from being his people, since they had forsook him as their God; they being the aggressors and transgressors of the covenant, he was under no obligation by virtue of that to bless and protect them:

which hath despised the oath by breaking the covenant; the covenant at Mount Sinai; or which was made in the plains of Moab, which had an oath annexed to it, (^{459D}Deuteronomy 29:12); but by breaking the covenant, which they did by their many abominations, they despised the oath by which they were sworn to keep it; and therefore it was but just with God to do with them as they had done with him and his covenant. The words are by some rendered, “I might even deal with thee as thou hast done”^{f245}, &c. I should be justified in so doing, and you could not justly complain of me; but I will not, as follows:

Ver. 60. *Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth*, &c.] The covenant made with them at Sinai, quickly after they came out of Egypt, when they were, both as a body politic and ecclesiastical, in their infant state; for, as Kimchi says, all the while they were in Egypt, and until they, came into the land of Canaan, were called the days of their youth; and to this covenant, which had the nature of a matrimonial contract, the prophet refers when he speaks of the “love” of their “espousals”, and the “kindness” of their “youth”, (^{411D}Jeremiah 2:2); this covenant the Lord remembered, and made good his part, though they neglected theirs; and it was particularly remembered when Christ was made under this law, and became the fulfilling end of it to his people; yielding perfect obedience to it, and bearing the penalty of it in their room and stead; for here begins a declaration of the grace and mercy of God to the remnant, according to the election of grace, which were among this degenerate people, and whom the Lord had a special regard unto:

and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant; the covenant of grace, made with the Messiah and his spiritual seed; which is confirmed of God in Christ; ordered in all things and sure; whose promises are yea and amen in Christ; and the blessings of it, the sure mercies of David; a covenant that shall never be broken, made void, or removed; but will continue for ever. This is the new covenant, or the covenant of grace, as exhibited and administered under the New Testament; (see ^{<3088>}Hebrews 8:8-13).

Ver. 61. *Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, &c.*] When covenant grace is manifested and applied, it brings persons to a sense of their sins, and to an ingenuous acknowledgment of them, with shame and blushing; they remember their evil ways in which they have walked, and blush at the thoughts of what they have been guilty of; and how they have sinned against a God of love, grace, and mercy; and what vile ungrateful creatures they have been:

when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger; Samaria and Sodom, (^{<2365>}Ezekiel 16:46); the ten tribes, or Benjamin and Simeon, whose part was in Judah, as Ben Melech; rather the Gentiles, even of all nations, ancient and modern, great and small, where the Gospel should come, and such of them as are called and converted by it; these, according to this prophecy, should be received into the communion of the church, to partipate of all the privileges and ordinances of it, under the Gospel dispensation. The passage respects the calling of the Gentiles, and the incorporating of them into the Gospel church state. The Syriac version renders it, “when I shall receive thy sisters”, &c. which the Targum interprets of greater and lesser provinces:

and I will give them unto thee for daughters; to be nursed up by the church, through the ministry of the word and ordinances, where they have a place, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; become members of the church, and so daughters of Jerusalem, the mother of us all, (^{<3085>}Galatians 4:26); to the laws, rules, and ordinances of which they submit, and yield an obedience, as daughters to their mother. The Targum is,

“I will deliver them unto thee for obedience.”

The Septuagint renders it, “for edification”; to be built up on their, most holy faith:

but not by thy covenant: made with the Israelites at Sinai, which genders to bondage, and under which the Jewish church with her children were in bondage, (^{<4024>}Galatians 4:24,25); but by virtue of the covenant of grace made with Christ; one article of which is, “[I] will be [their] father, and [they] shall be my sons and daughters”, (^{<4028>}2 Corinthians 6:18); or not on condition of observing the rites and ceremonies of the law, under which the former covenant was administered, the Gentiles being freed from that, the ceremonial law being abrogated by Christ; or, not because thou hast kept the covenant made with thee, therefore I give thee those (for that thou hast broken), but of my own mere grace and favour, so Jarchi: or I will give daughters to thee, which are not of thy covenant, of thy law, so Kimchi; who are not of the same religion, meaning the Gentiles; and so the phrase is the same with that in (^{<4016>}John 10:16); “which are not of this fold”. There is an ancient exposition of the Jews, mentioned by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, which renders it, “but not of that patrimony”; and explains it of the inheritance which God gave to Abraham between the pieces; as if the persons intended by those who are given for daughters did not belong thereunto.

Ver. 62. *And I will establish my covenant with thee, &c.*] (See Gill on ^{<2360>}Ezekiel 16:60”); and which is repeated for the comfort of the Lord’s people, being ashamed upon the remembrance of their evil ways; and to show the certainty of it, as well as because it is a matter of the greatest importance:

and thou shalt know that I [am] the Lord; a covenant keeping God; true and faithful to my promises, and able to make them good: this is a principal blessing of the covenant of grace, to know the Lord, (^{<2633>}Jeremiah 31:34).

Ver. 63. *That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, &c.*] The more souls are led into the covenant of grace, and the more they know of God in Christ, and of him as their covenant God and Father, the more they remember of their former evil ways, and reflect upon them with shame and confusion:

and never open thy mouth any more; against God, and the dispensations of his providence; against his Gospel, truths, and ordinances; against his people, the followers of Christ, and particularly the Gentiles; seeing they will now see themselves as bad and worse than ever they were; for this may have a special regard to the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn, (^{<3820>}Zechariah

12:10); and remember the evil ways of their ancestors, and their own stubbornness and infidelity, and be ashamed thereof; and say not one word by way of complaint of the judgments of God that have been upon them as a nation so long:

because of thy shame; because they will now be ashamed of their opposition to Christ and his Gospel; of their rejection and treatment of him; and of the evil things they have been guilty of:

when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God; God may be said to be pacified, or propitious, when he is at peace with men, his anger is turned away, his law and justice are satisfied, reconciliation and atonement are made for sin, and he signifies that for Christ's sake; and especially when his pardoning love and grace is manifested and applied: and this pacification is made, not by men themselves, by their obedience, or repentance, or faith; but by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; which, when made known to the conscience; or when this atonement, propitiation, and pacification is received by faith; or there is a comfortable sense of pardon, through the blood of Christ, for all sins and transgressions that have been committed in heart and life; it has such an effect, as to cause men to remember and call to mind their former evil ways, and to fill them with shame for them, and to put them to silence, so as never more to open their mouths to excuse their sins; or commend themselves and their own righteousness; or to murmur against God, or censure others. This is the nature of pardoning grace and mercy.

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 17

Under the simile of two eagles and a vine are represented the kings of Babylon and Egypt, and the condition of the Jews, who are threatened with ruin for their perfidy; and yet a promise is made of the raising up of the house of Judah, and family of David, in the Messiah. The prophet is bid to deliver a riddle or parable to the house of Israel, (^{<3170>}Ezekiel 17:1,2). The riddle or parable is concerning two eagles and a vine, which is delivered, (^{<3173>}Ezekiel 17:3-10); and the explanation of it is in (^{<3171>}Ezekiel 17:11-15); and then the destruction of the Jews is threatened for their treachery to the king of Babylon, (^{<3176>}Ezekiel 17:16-21); and the chapter is closed with a promise of the Messiah, and the prosperity of his kingdom, (^{<3172>}Ezekiel 17:22-24).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] After the prophet had been sent to charge the Jews with breaking the covenant with God, he is sent to rebuke and threaten them for breaking covenant with men, even with the king of Babylon; by whom they were in part carried into captivity, and another part remained in the land, as will be hereafter seen.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, put forth a riddle, &c.*] A dark saying, but a smart one: “whet a whetting”,^{f246} as in the Hebrew; something at first sight difficult to be understood, yet amusing and entertaining; and, when solved, very useful and instructive:

and speak a parable unto the house of Israel; or, “concerning the house of Israel”,^{f247}; as the Targum and Syriac version; something relating to them, and what would aptly describe and represent their case; for the prophet was bid to take such a method, not to hide things from them, but rather the more strongly to represent them to them; seeing hereby their attention would be excited, and things would be more fixed in their memories, and they would be put upon studying the meaning of them; and when explained to them, and understood, which was quickly done, they might be the more affected with them.

Ver. 3. *And say, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] The riddle is not the prophet's, nor the parable his, but the Lord God's; and exceeding beautiful and apt it is, to signify the things designed by it; the wisdom of God is greatly displayed in it:

a great eagle; which is Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, as it is explained, (^{<3772>}Ezekiel 17:12); who is compared to an eagle for his power and authority, that being the king of birds, and for his swiftness and voracity in conquering and subduing kingdoms; (see ^{<2480>}Jeremiah 48:40);

with great wings; so the Babylonish monarchy is signified by a lion with eagle's wings, (^{<2004>}Daniel 7:4); and the two parts of the Roman empire, into which it was divided at the death of Theodosius, are called two wings of a great eagle, (^{<624>}Revelation 12:14); and so here it may denote the large kingdoms and provinces which belonged to the Babylonian monarchy; (see ^{<7001>}Esther 1:1);

longwinged; or having a "long member"^{f248}; meaning the body of the wing, which was long; and so, as the wings spread, may signify the breadth of his dominion, this the length of them, and both their extensiveness:

full of feathers; of cities, towns, people, armies, wealth, and riches:

which had divers colours; or an "embroidery"^{f249}; like that of the weaver, only needle work, consisting of various colours; and so it alludes to such eagles as are called the golden eagle, and "asterias", from their golden colour, and their being spotted like stars, and which are said to be of the largest size, as Bochart, from Aelianus^{f250}, observes; and may signify people of divers languages, customs, manners, and circumstances, subject to the government of the king of Babylon:

came unto Lebanon; the northern border of the land of Judea, and invaded it; where were the mountain and forest of Lebanon, famous for the cedars that grew there, from whence the whole land may here take its name, as being more apt for the allegory used: or the city of Jerusalem, where were the temple built of the cedars of Lebanon, as many of its palaces and houses also were; whither the king of Babylon came, and took it, and who came northward, as Babylon was:

and took the highest branch of the cedar; by the "cedar" is meant, either the nation in general, or the royal family in particular; and by the "highest branch" the then reigning king, Jeconiah with the princes and nobles of the

land, who were taken and carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; (see ^{<1244>}2 Kings 24:14-16).

Ver. 4. *He cropped off the top of his young twigs, &c.*] By which are meant the princes of the land, or the several branches of the royal family; the top of which was King Jeconiah, who was but young and tender, being but eighteen years of age when he began his reign, and this was within three months after; and who was no more able to withstand the force of the king of Babylon, than a tender twig so ravenous a bird as an eagle, (^{<1248>}2 Kings 24:8); whose superior power and strength is signified by the cropping off of a tender twig:

and carried it into a land of traffic; not into the land of Canaan, as the Septuagint, and some other versions, literally render it; but into Babylon, which was become a place of great merchandise, through the great concourse of people to it, and the large additions made to the empire:

he set it in a city of merchants; meaning the city of Babylon, perhaps in particular, as distinct from the country before mentioned: the word for “merchants” signifies “apothecaries” or “druggists”^{f251}; and may design such merchants as traded in sweet spices and aromatic drugs. The words may be rendered, “and brought it out of the land of Canaan”^{f252}; out of which Jeconiah and his nobles were carried by the king of Babylon; so the particle **l a** sometimes signifies “from”, or “out of”, as in (^{<1180>}1 Kings 8:30); and others^{f253}, “and in a city of merchants he set it”; in Babylon, famous for merchants; whom the Jews, being captives, were obliged to attend in a servile manner.

Ver. 5. *He took also of the seed of the land, &c.*] Of the land of Judea, a native of it, not a stranger; not one of another country, a Babylonian; not one of his own nobles or princes, did Nebuchadnezzar, the eagle, take and set upon the throne of Judea, but one of their own, even one of the king’s seed, of the blood royal, as it is explained, (^{<2573>}Ezekiel 17:13), Mattaniah, the uncle of Jeconiah, whom the king of Babylon called Zedekiah, and made him king in his room:

and planted it in a fruitful field; in the land of Judea, and in Jerusalem the royal city:

he placed [it] by great waters; many people, (^{<6675>}Revelation 17:15); over whom he ruled, and by whom he was supported in his royal dignity:

[and] set it [as] a willow tree; which loves moist places, and grows up thick: unless it should be rendered, “he set it with great circumspection”^{f254}; took a great deal of care and caution in placing him upon the throne; he made a covenant with him, took an oath of him, and hostages for the performance of it, (³⁶⁷¹³Ezekiel 17:13). The Targum is,

“a planted vine he set it,”

to make it agree with what follows; but the word in the Chaldee and Arabic languages signifies a kind of willow, as we render it, as Ben Melech observes^{f255}.

Ver. 6. *And it grew, &c.*] King Zedekiah reigned and prospered, and the kingdom flourished under him:

and became a spreading vine of low stature; not so flourishing as it had been heretofore, in former reigns; it did not rise up to a cedar, as it had been, but was like a vine, which, though flourishing, does not rise up high, but runs upon the ground, and is dependent on something else; so the king and kingdom of Judah, though in tolerable circumstances, yet were humble and dependent on the king of Babylon:

whose branches turned towards him; the eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, to whom the people of the Jews were tributary:

and the roots thereof were under him; they were rooted and settled in their own land, yet under the power, and at the dispose, of the Babylonish monarch:

so it became a vine; a flourishing kingdom in some measure, though attended with some degree of weakness and dependence as a vine:

and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs; increased in people and in riches; particularly the king had many children, so that there was a prospect of a succession, and of a more flourishing estate, and a continuance of it, (³⁶⁷¹⁰Jeremiah 52:10).

Ver. 7. *There was also another great eagle, &c.*] Hophra king of Egypt, a very powerful prince, whom Herodotus^{f256} calls Apries; and says he was the most happy and fortunate, after Psammitichus, of all the kings that were before; though not so mighty as the king of Babylon; therefore all the same things are not said of the one as of the other:

with great wings and many feathers: had large dominions, but not go extensive as the former, and therefore is not said to be “longwinged” as he; and had “many feathers”, but not “full” of them, nor had it such a variety; he had many people, and much wealth, and a large army, but not equal to the king of Babylon:

and, behold, this vine did bend her roots towards him; Zedekiah, and the people of the Jews under him; inclined to an alliance with the king of Egypt, and gave him some private intimations of it:

and shot forth her branches towards him; sent ambassadors to acquaint him with it, (³⁵⁷¹⁵Ezekiel 17:15);

that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation; Nebuchadnezzar had planted this vine, and made furrows for the watering of it, and by his means it was become prosperous and flourishing; but Zedekiah, not content with the greatness and glory he had raised him to, sought to the king of Egypt to help him with horses and people, in order to free himself from subjection to the king of Babylon, and to increase his lustre and glory: the allusion is thought to be to the trenches and canals of the river Nile, by which the land of Egypt was watered: the words may be rendered, “out of the rivulets of her plantation”^{f257} which best agrees with watering.

Ver. 8. *It was planted in, a good soil, by great waters, &c.*] As is expressed in (³⁵⁷⁰⁵Ezekiel 17:5); this was done by the king of Babylon, who had raised Zedekiah from a low estate to a high one, and set him on the throne of Judah, over many people; and put him in such a condition, and in such circumstances, that he and his people might have been very happy, could they have been content:, for his view was,

that he might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine; that he and his people might grow numerous and rich, and be a prosperous and flourishing kingdom; this is mentioned to aggravate the ingratitude of Zedekiah, and the people of the Jews, in rebelling against the king of Babylon, who had used them well, and of whom they had no reason to complain.

Ver. 9. *Say thou, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Tell Zedekiah and his people, in the name of the Lord, what will be the issue of his ingratitude and treachery to the king of Babylon, and his vain confidence in the king of Egypt:

shall it prosper? the vine, the kingdom of Judah, and Zedekiah the king of it; can it be thought that prosperity will attend such conduct as this? was it ever known that persons guilty of such vices ever succeeded?

shall he not pull up the roots thereof; the first eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, being provoked by the rebellion of the king of Judah and his people; will he not come against them, and utterly destroy them, and root them up from being a people and a nation?

and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? the sons of the king, and of the nobles, and people of the land; so that the kingdom shall be ruined, and no hope left of its ever being restored again; which is the case of a vine when withered:

it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring; whereas it had been a springtime with this vine, under the influence of the king of Babylon, its leaves were green and flourishing; but now should wither, not as leaves do in autumn, which is to be expected, but in spring, which must be fatal; signifying, that in the midst of their prosperity, and when there was the greatest hope and expectation of a continuance and increase of it, utter ruin should come upon them:

even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof; signifying with what ease the king of Babylon would take Jerusalem, and the land of Judea, its king and its princes, and utterly destroy them; he would have no need of a large army, or to employ all his forces, a few, were sufficient to do it; even as it does not require many hands to pluck up, a vine by the roots, a single person is equal to it.

Ver. 10. *Yea, behold, [being] planted, &c.*] Supposing it ever so well planted, as first by Nebuchadnezzar; and still put into a better condition by the assistance of the king of Egypt, as was imagined:

shall it prosper? it shall not; their own strength, with the help of the king of Egypt, will not be able to protect them from the rage of the king of Babylon:

shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? which is very hurtful to vines, and by which is meant the Chaldean army; for Babylon, as Kimchi observes, lay northeast of the land of Israel; and it signifies how easily the destruction would be brought about, it would be only a touch of the east wind, and this vine would wither away atones:

it shall wither in the furrows where it grew; notwithstanding its being watered by Egypt, or the help and assistance that could afford it; or amidst all its prosperity, and the means of it, and the springing growing hope it had; or in the very country itself where it had been planted, and had flourished; Zedekiah and his princes were taken in the plains of Jericho, and his children and princes were put to death in Riblah, (^{<2418>}Jeremiah 52:8-10).

Ver. 11. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Here follows the explanation of the above riddle and parable, which the prophet from the Lord had orders to deliver.

Ver. 12. *Say now to the rebellious house, &c.*] It had been a rebellious house to God, and to his prophets, before; (see ^{<3118>}Ezekiel 2:5,6) and now, besides this was rebellious to the king of Babylon, to whom they were in some measure subject, (^{<3575>}Ezekiel 17:15);

know ye not what these [things mean]? the riddle and parable concerning the two eagles and the vine; suggesting that they must be very inattentive, and very stupid, if they did not know the meaning of them; for though the things intended were delivered in an enigmatical and parabolical way, yet they were easily to be understood by all that know the affairs of the Jewish nation; being things that were lately transacted there, and were obvious to everyone's view; but if they were so stupid and blockish as not to understand them, the prophet had the following order, to explain them to them:

tell [them], behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem; so that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is meant by the first "eagle", and the land of Judea, and particularly Jerusalem, by Lebanon, it came unto, (^{<3178>}Ezekiel 17:3). The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read this and the following verses in the future; as if these were things that were yet to come to pass, whereas they are related as things already done; and so the Targum renders all in the past sense, as the history of them requires it should:

and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon; the king of Judea, and the princes of it; Jeconiah and his nobles, who had been carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar; for Ezekiel was among these captives, (^{<3102>}Ezekiel 1:2); (see ^{<1242>}2 Kings 24:12-16); so that it appears that by the "twigs" of the cedar the princes of the land are designed; and by the "top" of them King Jeconiah; and by "the

land of traffic” the land of Chaldea; and by the “city of merchants” the city of Babylon, (^{257H}Ezekiel 17:4); whither they were carried.

Ver. 13. *And hath taken of the king’s seed, &c.*] One of the royal family, signified by the seed of the land, (^{257B}Ezekiel 17:5). Mattaniah, son of King Josiah, and uncle to King Jeconiah; whom Nebuchadnezzar took and made king of Judea, and called him Zedekiah, which signifies the “justice of the Lord”: to put him in mind of doing justly, by observing the covenant and oath after mentioned, or that he must expect vengeance:

and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him; he gave him the throne and kingdom upon certain conditions to be performed, and for the perform once of which he made him swear by the God of Israel; (see ^{483B}2 Chronicles 36:13);

he hath also taken the mighty of the land: or, “the rams of the land”^{f258}; the principal men of it for wisdom, riches, and valour, the princes and nobles of it; which he did, as to weaken the nation, that it might not be so capable of rebelling against him, so to be hostages for the performance of the covenant entered into; and this is meant by planting the seed with circumspection, (^{257B}Ezekiel 17:5).

Ver. 14. *That the kingdom might be base, &c.*] Low or humble; its king but a viceroy, a tributary to the king of Babylon; and the subjects obliged to a tax, payable to him; and this is intended by the vine being of “low stature”, (^{257B}Ezekiel 17:6);

that it might not lift up itself; above other neighbouring kingdoms and states; and particularly that it might not rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, but be kept in a dependence on him, and subjection to him:

[but] that by keeping of his covenant it might stand; continue a kingdom, and Zedekiah king of it; so that it was for their good that such a covenant was made, and it was their interest to keep it; for, had it not been made, it would have ceased to have been a kingdom, and would have become a province of the Babylonian monarchy, and have been put under the government of one of Nebuchadnezzar’s princes or captains; and, should they break it, would endanger the ruin of their state, as the event showed. In the Hebrew text it is, “to keep his covenant, to make it stand”; or, “to stand to it”^{f259}; that is, as it should seem, to make the covenant stand firm. The Targum is,

“that it might keep his covenant, and serve him;”

Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 15. *But he rebelled against him, &c.*] Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon, broke the covenant he entered into, and violated his oath:

in sending his ambassadors into Egypt; to form an alliance with the king of it, and obtain help from him to break off the Babylonian yoke; this is signified by the vine “bending [its] roots, [and] shooting forth [its] branches [towards] another great eagle”, the king of Egypt, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 17:7);

that they might give him horses and much people; with both which Egypt abounded, (^{<1103>}1 Kings 10:28 ^{<2300>}Isaiah 31:1,3); but in Judea there was a scarcity, as of horses, so of men, by means of the multitude of captives which the king of Babylon had carried away; wherefore Zedekiah sent to Egypt for both, for recruits of men; and for horses to form a cavalry, to free himself from the king of Babylon, and defend himself and people against him:

shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such [things]? that is guilty of breaking an express law of God, which forbids the kings of Israel multiplying horses, and sending to Egypt for them, (^{<6716>}Deuteronomy 17:16); and placing confidence in an arm of flesh, (^{<2300>}Isaiah 31:1,3 36:9); and of such base ingratitude to the king of Babylon, who had set him upon the throne, and put him in a comfortable and flourishing condition:

or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered? shall one guilty, as of the other crimes, so of breach of covenant, and of perjury, escape the vengeance of God and man? he shall not.

Ver. 16. *[As] I live, saith the Lord God, &c.*] This is the form of an oath, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; the Lord swears, in his wrath, by himself, by his life; this shows how much he resented, what Zedekiah had done, and how sure and certain his ruin was:

surely in the place [where] the king [dwelleth] that made him king; in Babylon, where Nebuchadnezzar dwelt, that made Zedekiah king of Judah; which is mentioned, to point out the ingratitude of that prince to the king of Babylon:

whose oath he despised, whose covenant he broke; the oath of fealty and, allegiance, which Zedekiah took to Nebuchadnezzar; and the covenant entered into between them, by which the former held the kingdom of Judea of the latter: the oath he made light of, though solemn, one made by the God of Israel; and the covenant he broke, though ratified by an oath; in which things were given to him he could not claim, at least possess, but by the courtesy of the conqueror; these sins were displeasing to God: oaths and covenants, though made with conquerors, and with Heathen princes, are to be kept:

[even] with him; that is, with Nebuchadnezzar:

in the midst of Babylon he shall die; when first taken he was had to Riblah, and there his eyes were put out; and after that he was carried to Babylon, and put in prison, and there died, (²⁵¹⁰Jeremiah 52:9-11).

Ver. 17. *Neither shall Pharaoh, with [his] mighty army and great company, make for him in the war, &c.*] The king of Egypt, to whom Zedekiah applied for horses and men to help him; though he should come with a great army, and a large multitude of people, yet should be of no use to Zedekiah, nor do any hurt to Nebuchadnezzar, or hinder him from taking Jerusalem:

by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons; that is, when Nebuchadnezzar should besiege Jerusalem, and raise mounts, and build fortifications, in order to take the city, and destroy its inhabitants; as he did, (²⁵¹⁰Jeremiah 52:4); the Egyptian army should not be able to hinder him going on with the siege, and taking the city; for though the siege was broke up for a time, upon the approach of Pharaoh's army, yet Nebuchadnezzar, having conquered the Egyptians, returned again to the siege of Jerusalem, and took it; (see ²⁵⁷⁵Jeremiah 37:5-10).

Ver. 18. *Seeing he despised the oath, by breaking the covenant, &c.*] This is repeated again, to show the heinousness of the sin Zedekiah had been guilty of, and what was the cause of his ruin:

when, lo, he had given his hand; to the king of Babylon, to testify his hearty agreement with him, and that he might depend upon the oath and covenant being sacredly observed by him. This was a rite for custom frequently and early used in different nations, when covenants and agreements were entered into; we find it used in the times of Homer^{f260}; and among the Romans. When Antoninus, Lepidus, and Octavius made

peace, the historian says^{f261}, they joined their hands together. Virgil^{f262} speaks of the same ceremony used by Anchises to Achaemenides, for confirmation of friendship. Though some understand this of his giving the hand to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and entering into an alliance with him, and broke the covenant and oath made to the king of Babylon; and so the Targum,

“and, lo, he stretched out his hand to Pharaoh:”

and hath done all these [things]; been guilty of such and so many crimes, as ingratitude, perjury, covenant breaking, and vain confidence:

he shall not escape; divine vengeance, just and proper punishment for his sins.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, [as] I live, &c.*] A repetition of the oath of God as before, expressing his indignation at the king of Judah, and the certainty of his ruin:

surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken; the Lord calls it his oath, because it was made and taken in his name, (⁴⁸⁶³2 Chronicles 36:13); and his covenant, because it was agreeable to his will, and was made in his sight, and he was solemnly appealed to at the making of it; all which were an aggravation of Zedekiah’s sin in violating them, and made his punishment the heavier:

even it will I recompense upon his own head; he shall personally bear the punishment due to such crimes. The Targum is,

“I will revenge his way upon his head.”

Jarchi thinks this refers to the putting out of his eyes; and Kimchi takes notice of the same sense.

Ver. 20. *And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, &c.*] (See Gill on “³²¹³Ezekiel 12:13”); where the same words are used, and of the same person:

and I will bring him to Babylon; though, as it is said in the place referred to, he should not see it, his eyes being put out before he was brought thither:

and I will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me; for though it was breaking covenant and oath with a Heathen

prince, yet it was a trespass against God, in whose name they were made; and his being laid in prison at Babylon, and kept there to the time of his death, was the Lord's pleading with him, and judging of him; it was a reproof for his sins, and a condemnation of him and them.

Ver. 21. *And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword,* &c.] So those of his army that fled, and attempted to make their escape, when the city of Jerusalem was taken, as many as fell into the Chaldean army, which was round about the city, at least a great number of them, fell by the sword of the Chaldeans, (^{<2517>}Jeremiah 52:7,8);

and they that remain shall be scattered towards all winds; and so it was, that such that escaped the sword were either carried captive into Babylon, or fled some one way, and some another, even into all parts, east, west, north, and south:

and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken [it]; the Targum adds, by my word, and will do it; who is the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent, just and righteous; faithful and true, as to his word of promise, so of threatening.

Ver. 22. *Thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Lest it should be thought, by the above prophecies, that the tribe of Judah should be utterly lost, and the family of David extinct, and the promise to him void, that he should have one of his seed to sit upon his, throne for evermore, (^{<321>}Psalms 132:11,12); it is here in a figurative manner signified, that of his seed the Messiah should be raised up, by whom the church and kingdom of God would be brought into a flourishing state and condition:

I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar; Nebuchadnezzar had took one of the family of David, and set, him upon the throne, signified by taking of the seed of the land, and planting it, (^{<275>}Ezekiel 17:5); but without success; wherefore the Lord here promises that he will “also”, take one and plant it, which should thrive and prosper: by the “high cedar” is meant the Jewish nation, which the Lord chose and set on high above all nations of the earth distinguishing it with peculiar blessings and favours; for which reason it may be compared to the high and spreading cedar; (see ^{<945>}Numbers 24:5,6 ^{<176>}Deuteronomy 7:6,7 28:1); and by “the highest branch” of it the tribe of Judah, who prevailed above his brethren, because from him came the chief ruler, (^{<322>}1 Chronicles 5:2); and from whence the

Messiah was to come, and did, (⁰¹⁴⁹⁰Genesis 49:10 ⁸⁰⁷⁴Hebrews 7:14) (⁶⁰⁸⁵Revelation 5:5);

and set [it]; namely, the slip taken from the highest branch of the high cedar; or one that should descend from the Jewish nation, and particularly from the tribe of Judah, more fully described in the next clause:

I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one; and by the “top” and “young twigs” of the highest branch of the cedar, or of the chief tribe in Israel, are meant the house and family of David, the royal family, and the descendants of it, the chief of the tribe of Judah; and by the “tender one” is designed the Messiah; and so Jarchi interprets it; and which interpretation is mentioned by Kimchi, though he would have Zerubbabel intended; and owns it to be the sense of the Targum, which is this,

“I will bring one of the kingdom of the house of David, which is like to a high cedar, and I will raise him up an infant from his children’s children;”

and so Abendana observes, that from Shealtiel, the son of Jeconiah, comes forth the King Messiah, who shall rule over all the world, and under whom every bird of wing shall dwell. The Messiah is often called a “branch” in prophecy, (²³⁰²Isaiah 4:2 11:1 ²²⁷⁵Jeremiah 23:5 ³⁰⁸⁸Zechariah 3:8 6:12); and here a “tender twig” or branch, as in (²⁵⁰²Isaiah 53:2); a “tender plant”; which is expressive of the meanness of his descent, David’s family being very low at the time of his birth, and of the contemptible appearance he made in the form of a servant; having also all the sinless infirmities of the human nature on him, as well as was attended with poverty, griefs, and sorrows of various kinds; and so made a very unpromising appearance of being the great Prophet, Priest, and King in Israel: and now by the “cropping off” of this tender twig seems to be designed not the incarnation of the Messiah, but his sufferings and death; whereby he was cut off, not for himself, but for the sins of his people, and in which his divine Father had a considerable hand, (²⁵⁰⁸Isaiah 53:8,10); and to which is owing the great fruitfulness of his kingdom and interest, (⁶¹²⁴John 12:24); moreover, this may respect not only the person of the Messiah, and his mean appearance in the world; but also his church and interest, which were at first like a little stone cut out of the mountain, and like a grain of mustard seed, the least of all seeds, (²⁰²⁴Daniel 2:34,35 ⁴¹³¹Matthew 13:31, 32); the Gospel, which was the instrument of raising the church of God, was very contemptible, because of its subject, a crucified Christ; and the first

preachers of it were mean and illiterate persons; those that received it were the poor of this world, and those but a few, and they the offscouring of all things;

and will plant [it] on a high mountain and eminent; which may be expressive not of the incarnation of Christ, but rather of his ascension to heaven after his death, and resurrection from the dead; and the constitution of him upon that as Lord and Christ, or the setting of him up as King over God's holy hill of Zion, the church of God: and no doubt but there is an allusion to Mount Zion, and to Jerusalem, from whence the Gospel first went forth, and where the first Gospel church was planted; and being said to be on a mountain high and eminent, may note both the visibility and stability of the church of Christ.

Ver. 23. *In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it, &c.*] In the highest part of the land of Israel, as Jerusalem is said to be by the Jewish writers; the land of Israel, they say, particularly Kimchi upon the place, was higher than all other lands, and Jerusalem was the highest part of that land; here the Messiah preached and wrought his miracles, even in the mountain of the Lord's house, the temple; and here the first Christian church was planted and established:

and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; that is, the tender twig or branch cropped off, set and planted as before described: by the "boughs" or "branches" it brings forth may be meant believers, who are as branches in Christ; are of the same nature with him, united to him; have a communication of life and grace from him; are supported and strengthened by him; and so, abiding in him, persevere to the end; (see ^{<B150>}John 15:4,5); and the same may be said of particular churches; and by "fruit" it is said to bear may be designed the persons of the chosen, redeemed, and called; who are the fruit of Christ's death, and of the ministration of his Gospel, (^{<B124>}John 12:24 15:16); or the blessings of grace which are in him, come from him, and are communicated by him; even fill spiritual blessings, as justification, pardon, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life; in short, both grace and glory; and thus he becomes and appears to be a "goodly cedar", in his person, office, and grace, to his people, to whom he is altogether lovely; being full of grace and truth, (^{<A156>}Song of Solomon 5:16 ^{<B114>}John 1:14); and in his kingdom and interest, especially in the latter day, when the kingdoms of this world shall become his:

and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell; by whom are designed converted sinners of all sorts, and of all nations, Jews and Gentiles; compared to birds, because weak, defenceless, and timorous; exposed to danger; and wonderfully delivered; are subject to wander and go astray; and for their chirping and warbling notes: now these may be said to “dwell” under the “shadow” of the “branches” of this “goodly cedar”, Christ and his church; that is, under the ministration of the word and ordinances, which is a very delightful and refreshing shadow, a very safe and fruitful one, (^{211B}Song of Solomon 2:3 ^{214D}Hosea 14:7 ^{214E}Isaiah 4:6 25:4); and here saints choose to dwell, and determine to abide and continue, as it is their interest and happiness so to do; and what a flocking and tabernacling of these birds here will there be in the latter day, where they will chirp and sing in the height of Zion? (^{214A}Isaiah 66:4,8 ^{211D}Jeremiah 31:12); compare with this (^{413D}Matthew 13:32); where our Lord is thought by some to allude to this passage.

Ver. 24. *And all the trees of the field shall know*, &c.] All the nations of the World, and the great ones, and the mighty men of the earth, shall know, own, and acknowledge, when the above things are accomplished:

that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: some by the high and green tree understand Zedekiah, who was brought low; and by the “low” and “dry tree”, Jeconiah, who was raised by the king of Babylon, (²⁶²¹Jeremiah 52:11,31,32); this is Jarchi’s sense, and is mentioned by Kimchi: others, by the former, think Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonish monarchy are intended, which were brought down; and, by the latter, the house of David, and kingdom of Judah, which were exalted: though rather by the one are meant the people of the Jews, once the people of God, but now cast off; and by the other the Gentiles, called by the grace of God, and received by him: though it seems best of all to interpret the “high and green tree” of the mighty kingdoms of this world, which will be put down by Christ; and the “low and dry tree” of his kingdom and interest, which shall flourish and spread abundantly, and be an everlasting kingdom; (see ^{214B}Daniel 2:44);

I the Lord have spoken and have done [it]; because the prophecy of it is sure, and because of the certainty of the fulfilment of it, it is said to be done as soon as it was spoken of.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 18

This chapter contains an answer to an objection of the Jews to the dealings of God with them in a providential way. The objection is expressed in a proverb of common use among them, and complained of as being without cause, (²⁶⁸⁰¹Ezekiel 18:1,2); however, for the future, no occasion should be given them to use it; for, though God could justify his proceedings upon the foot of his sovereignty, all souls being his; yet he was determined none but the sinner himself should suffer, (²⁶⁸⁰³Ezekiel 18:3,4); and puts various cases for the illustration and vindication of his proceedings; as that a just man, who is described by his proper characters, as abstaining from several sins specified, and doing what is right and good, should surely live, (²⁶⁸⁰⁵Ezekiel 18:5-9); but that the son of such a just man, being the reverse of his father's character, should surely die, (²⁶⁸¹⁰Ezekiel 18:10-13); and again, the son of such a wicked man, observing the heinousness of his father's sins, and abstaining from them, though his father should die in his iniquities, he should not die for them, but live, (²⁶⁸¹⁴Ezekiel 18:14-18); by which it appears that the dealings of God with the Jews were not according to the proverb used by them, but quite agreeable to his resolution; that the sinner, be he a father or a son, shall die for his own sins; and that the righteous man's righteousness shall be upon him, and the wicked man's sin upon him, and accordingly both shall be dealt with, (²⁶⁸¹⁹Ezekiel 18:19,20); which is further illustrated by a wicked man's turning from his sinful course, and doing righteousness, and living in that righteousness he has done; which is more agreeable to God that he should live, and not die in sin, (²⁶⁸²¹Ezekiel 18:21-23); and by a righteous man turning from his righteousness, and living a vicious life, and dying in it, (²⁶⁸²⁴Ezekiel 18:24); from both which instances this conclusion follows, that God is to be justified; and that his ways are equal, and the Jews' ways were unequal, and their complaint unjust, (²⁶⁸²⁵Ezekiel 18:25); and the same instances are repeated in a different order, and the same conclusion formed, (²⁶⁸²⁶Ezekiel 18:26-29); upon which the Lord determines to judge them according to their own ways, their personal actions, good or bad; and exhorts them to

repentance and reformation; and closes with a pathetic expostulation, with them, (²³⁸⁰Ezekiel 18:30-32).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me again, saying.*] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum; and its being mentioned is coming from the Lord is to give it weight and authority. This is a distinct sermon or prophecy from the former, and was sent and delivered out at another time.

Ver. 2. *What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, &c.*] This is spoken to the Jews in Babylon, who used the following proverb concerning the land of Israel; not the ten tribes, but the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, concerning the desolation of the land, and the hardships the Jews laboured under, since the captivity of Jeconiah, and they became subject to the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar: this expostulation with them suggests that they had no just cause, or true reason, to make use of the proverb; that it was impious, impudent, and insolent in them, and daring and dangerous; and that they did not surely well consider what they said. The proverb follows:

saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? that is, as the Targum explains it,

“the fathers have sinned, and the children are smitten,”

or punished, as the ten tribes for the sins of Jeroboam, and the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin for the sins of Manasseh; hereby wiping themselves clean; and as if they were innocent persons, and free from sin, and were only punished for their forefathers' sins, and so charging God with injustice and cruelty; whereas, though the Lord threatened to visit the iniquity of parents upon their children, and sometimes did so, to deter parents from sinning, lest they should entail a curse, and bring ruin upon their posterity; yet he never did this but when children followed their fathers' practices, and committed the same sins, or worse; so that this was no act of unrighteousness in God, but rather an instance of his patience and long suffering; (see ²⁸¹²Jeremiah 31:29,30).

Ver. 3. *[As] I live, saith the Lord God, &c.*] This is a form of an oath; the Lord here swears by his life, by himself, because he could swear by no greater, (²⁸¹³Hebrews 6:13); and it expresses how displeased he was with the above proverb, and how much he resented it, as well as the certainty of

what follows; which, it might be depended on, would be assuredly done, since the Lord not only said it, but swore unto it:

ye shall not have [occasion] any more to use this proverb in Israel; signifying that he would no longer defer the execution of his judgments, but immediately bring them upon them; so that or the future there would be no use of the proverb; no occasion to make mention of it in the next generation; and, moreover, that he would make it so manifest to themselves and others, by his dealings with them, that it should be seen, and known, and acknowledged by all, that it was for their own sins and transgressions that they were visited and corrected.

Ver. 4. *Behold, all souls are mine,* &c.] By creation; they being the immediate produce of his power; hence he is called “the Father of spirits”, (~~8129~~ Hebrews 12:9), or the souls of men; these he has an apparent right unto; a property in; a dominion over; they are accountable to him, and will be judged impartially by him:

as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; and therefore must be thought to have as great a respect and affection for the one as for the other; for the soul of a son as for the soul of a father; and not deal partially in favour of the one, and cruelly and unrighteously with the other:

the soul that sinneth, it shall die; the soul that continues in sin, without repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, shall die the second death; shall be separated from the presence of God, and endure his wrath to all eternity: or the meaning is, that a person that is guilty of gross sins, and continues in them, shall personally suffer; he shall endure one calamity or another, as the famine, sword, pestilence, or be carried into captivity, which is the death all along spoken of in this chapter; the Lord will exercise no patience towards him, or defer punishment to a future generation, his offspring; but shall immediately execute it upon himself.

Ver. 5. *But if a man be just,* &c.] Not legally, as to be wholly free from sin, for there is no such just man, (~~2072~~ Ecclesiastes 7:20); but evangelically, through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto him; and who has a principle of grace and holiness wrought in him; a man of a just principle and good conscience; who is disposed by the grace of God to that which is just and right; for this seems to refer to the inward frame of the mind, as distinct from actions, and as the source of them, as follows:

and do that which is lawful and right; or “judgment”^{f263} and “justice”; true judgment and justice, as the Targum; that which is just and right by the law of God, and is so between man and man; the particulars of which follow:

Ver. 6. [*And hath not eaten upon the mountains*, &c.] Where temples and altars were built for idols, and sacrifices offered up to them; and where feasts were kept to the honour of them, and the sacrifices to them eaten; (see ^{<4163>}Ezekiel 6:13); for otherwise it was not unlawful to eat common food on mountains, as well as on other places; but here it denotes idolatrous practices; and the Targum is,

“and hath not served idols on the mountains:”

neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel; their “dunghill gods”^{f264} as the word signifies; as not to the idols of the Gentiles, so not to those of Israel, as the calves at Daniel and Bethel; these he does not worship, nor pray unto, or invoke, nor even give a pleasant and favourable look unto; but turned from them with abhorrence and contempt:

neither hath defiled his neighbour’s wife; been guilty of adultery, by lying with another man’s wife; or by marrying one divorced, not having committed fornication; which divorces were common among the Jews, and marrying such so divorced, (^{<499>}Matthew 19:19);

neither hath come near to a menstruous woman: a woman in her monthly courses, even his own wife; who, according to the law, was set apart for her uncleanness for a certain term of time; during which she was not to be touched, nor anything she sat or lay upon; and all conjugal acts to be abstained from, (^{<859>}Leviticus 15:19-24 18:19 20:18).

Ver. 7. *And hath not oppressed any*, &c.] By fraud or force, particularly the poor, to the great grief and hurt of them:

[*but*] *hath restored to the debtor his pledge*; which was pawned; not embezzling it, or keeping it beyond the time fixed by the law of God, (^{<842>}Deuteronomy 24:12,13 ^{<1226>}Exodus 22:26);

hath spoiled none by violence; has not committed theft and robbery, or done injury to any man’s person and property:

hath given his bread to the hungry; which was his own; what he had laboured for, and come by honestly, and so had a right to dispose of; and

being merciful, as well as just, eats not his morsel alone, but distributes it to the poor and hungry, (^{<2887>}Isaiah 58:7);

and hath covered the naked with a garment; as Job did, as well as the former, and for which Dorcas is commended, (^{<8317>}Job 31:17-20 ^{<4188>}Acts 9:39).

Ver. 8. *He [that] hath not given forth upon usury, &c.*] Money, victuals, or any other thing, which was forbidden the Jews to take of their brethren, though they might of strangers, (^{<1529>}Deuteronomy 23:19,20);

neither hath taken any increase: or interest; or rather something over and above the interest money or use, as a gratuity for lending it upon the said interest:

[that] hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity; not only that now mentioned, but all others; who, having inadvertently engaged in that which is sinful, as soon as it appears to him to be so, gets out of it, and abstains from it as soon as possible:

hath executed true judgment between man and man; whether in office as a judge, who sits on the bench for that purpose; or as an arbitrator chosen to decide matters in controversy between one man and another, and that does everything just and right between man and man.

Ver. 9. *Hath walked in my statutes, &c.*] Respecting the worship of God and true religion; being observant of all laws and ordinances relating thereunto:

and hath kept my judgments to deal truly; in things moral and civil among men; regarding all such laws of God as oblige to such things:

he [is] just; such a man is a just man, at least externally; and if he does all these things from a right principle, without trusting to them for justification before God, and acceptance with him, but looking to the righteousness of Christ for these things, he is truly, and in the sight of God, a just man:

he shall surely live, saith the Lord God; spiritually and comfortably here, and an eternal life hereafter; or rather he shall not be distressed with famine, sword, or plague, or go into captivity; but shall live in his own land, and eat the good things of it; and this shall be his case, let his father have been what he will, ever so great a sinner.

Ver. 10. *If he beget a son [that is] a robber, a shedder of blood, &c.]* But if this just man beget a son that is a thief and a murderer, as he may; for grace is not conveyed by natural generation, though sin is: a good man has often bad children, even such as are guilty of capital crimes, as a “robber”, a “highwayman”, a “breaker up”, or “through”, as the word^{f265} signifies; one that breaks through walls, and into houses, and breaks through all the laws of God and man; and sticks not to shed innocent blood in committing his thefts and robberies, as these sins often go together; such an one was Barabbas, whose name signifies the son of a father, and perhaps his father might be a good man:

and [that] doeth the like to [any] one of these [things]; or that does anyone of these things, whether theft or murder.

Ver. 11. *And that doeth not any of those [duties], &c.]* Before mentioned, which his father did, but the reverse of them; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “and in the way of his righteous father does not walk”; does not tread in his steps, and work righteousness as he did:

but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour’s wife; has been guilty of idolatry and adultery; (see Gill on “²³⁸⁰⁶Ezekiel 18:6”).

Ver. 12. *Hath oppressed the poor and needy, &c.]* Who are weak, and have none to help them, and stand by them, and so are oppressed by such a man. This serves to explain the clause, in (²³⁸⁰⁷Ezekiel 18:7);

hath spoiled by violence; his neighbour’s goods; taken them away from him by force:

hath not restored the pledge; to the borrower before sunset, but kept it for his own use; taking the advantage of the poverty of him that borrowed of him:

and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols; whether of the Gentiles, or of the house of Israel:

hath committed abomination; either idolatry, the sin just before mentioned, which was an abomination to the Lord; or else approaching to a menstruous woman, since this follows the other in (²³⁸⁰⁶Ezekiel 18:6); and is not mentioned, unless it is designed here; and so Kimchi interprets it; but Jarchi understands it of the abominable and detestable sin of sodomy: it may regard any and every sin that is abominable in the sight of God.

Ver. 13. *Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase, &c.]*

Contrary to the law of God; (see Gill on “^{238B}Ezekiel 18:8”);

shall he then live? by virtue of his father’s righteousness and goodness, free from calamities, and in the quiet possession of the land of Israel, and the good things of it:

he shall not live; but go into captivity, and be destitute of the good things of life he has enjoyed; and, without repentance, shall never have eternal life:

he hath done all these abominations; before mentioned; theft, murder, idolatry, adultery, oppression of the poor, and usury, sins against both tables of the law:

he shall surely die; the death of affliction, or undergo temporal punishment; and not only die corporeally, but eternally too, if grace prevent not: “in dying he shall die”^{f266}; as in the Hebrew text; he shall die both the first and second death; his father’s goodness shall not save him from either:

his blood shall be upon him; or “bloods”^{f267}; the innocent blood he has shed, which he must answer for being guilty of, and shall not escape righteous judgment, and his own blood, the destruction of himself; he shall be the cause of his own ruin, and bring just punishment on his own head.

Ver. 14. *Now, lo, [if] he beget a son, &c.]* That is, the wicked man before mentioned; if he begets a son who proves a good man, which sometimes is the case, as Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, and Josiah the son of Amon:

that seeth all his father’s sins which he hath done; not every particular action, but the principal of them; however, the several sorts and kinds of sin he was addicted to, and which were done publicly enough, and obvious to view; and yet does not imitate them, as children are apt to do:

and considereth: the evil nature and tendency of them; how abominable to God; how contrary to his law; how scandalous and reproachful in themselves, and how pernicious and destructive in their effects and consequences. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, read, “and feareth”:

and doeth not such like; he fears God; and because the fear of God is before his eyes, and on his heart, which was wanting in his father, therefore

he cannot do the things he did; the fear of offending him, the fear of his goodness, and of his judgments, both have an influence to restrain from sin.

Ver. 15. [*That*] *hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife.*] (See Gill on “²⁶⁸⁶Ezekiel 18:6”); where the same things are mentioned as here, and in the same order; only that clause, “neither hath come near to a menstruous woman”, is here omitted.

Ver. 16. *Neither hath oppressed any, &c.*] (See Gill on “²⁶⁸⁷Ezekiel 18:7”).

hath not withholden the pledge; or, hath not pledged the pledge^{f268}. The meaning is, not that he had not given one, but had not taken one. So the Targum,

“the pledge he hath not taken;”

or, if he did, he did not keep it beyond the time the law directs, but restored it to him whose it was;

neither hath spoiled by violence, [but] hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment. The rest of the verse is the same with (²⁶⁸⁷Ezekiel 18:7).

Ver. 17. [*That*] *hath taken off his hand from the poor, &c.*] When he perceived it lay heavy upon him, withdrew it from hurting him, and forbore to do it when it was in his power, and perhaps eased him of the hardships his father had laid upon him; which was very kind and humane:

[*that*] *hath not received usury nor increase;* (see Gill on “²⁶⁸⁸Ezekiel 18:8”);

hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; had not only negative, but positive holiness: not only abstained from things sinful, but did that which was just and right, both with respect to God and man; observed the worship of God, and did justice to mankind:

he shall not die for the iniquity of his father; or be punished for his father's sins, with sword, famine, pestilence, or captivity; shall not die a corporeal death, and much less eternal death, on that account:

he shall surely live; in his own land, and in the enjoyment of the good things of life; and having the grace and fear of God, and acting from

gracious principles, with a view to the glory of God, he shall live eternally, though the son of a wicked man.

Ver. 18. [*As for his father*, &c.] It shall be otherwise with him:

because he cruelly oppressed; or, “oppressed an oppression”; or, “with an oppression”^{†269}; oppressed the poor, and had no mercy on them, but used them in the most rigorous manner:

spoiled his brother by violence; took away the spoil of his brother; spoiled him of his substance; did injury to his person and property, and all the mischief that lay in his power:

and did [that] which [is] not good among his people; neighbours, citizens, and countrymen; did nothing which was good, as he ought to have done; but everything that was bad, which he should not have done:

lo, even he shall die in his iniquity: and for it; it shall not be forgiven him; he shall be punished for it with death, with the death of affliction; and with corporeal death, as a punishment for sin; and with eternal death, dying in his sins, and in a state of impenitence. These instances, put every way, most clearly show the equity of God; the justness of his proceedings in providence; and how inapplicable the proverb in (~~GEN~~ Ezekiel 18:2) was to them; and that such that sin, and continue therein, shall die for their own iniquities, and not for the sins of others.

Ver. 19. *Yet say ye, why?* &c.] Why do you say so? why do you go on to assert that which is not fact, or which is contrary to fact, contrary to what we feel and experience every day, to say that children are not punished for their parents’ sins? these are the words of the murmuring, complaining, and blaspheming Jews, quarrelling with the prophet, and with the Lord himself:

doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? have not we proof of it every day we live? are not our present case and circumstances a full evidence of it? or the words may be rendered, “why does not the son bear the iniquity of the father?” so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions; or, as the Targum,

“why is not the son punished for the sins of the father?”

and so they are an objection, which is foreseen might be made, and is here anticipated, to which an answer is returned; and so the Syriac version introduces it, “but if they said”, &c. then adds, “tell them”, as follows:

when, or “because”

the son hath done that which is lawful [and] right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them: this is the reason why he shall not bear his father’s sins, or be punished for them; intimating that they had not done these things that made the complaint, or put the question; but had committed the same sins their fathers had, and so were punished, not for their fathers’ sins, but their own: for otherwise the man that does what is just and right with God, and between man and man,

he shall surely live; (see Gill on “⁻²⁶⁸¹⁷Ezekiel 18:17”).

Ver. 20. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die,* &c.] This is repeated from (⁻²⁶⁸¹⁸Ezekiel 18:4), for the further confirmation of it:

the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; that is, as the Targum paraphrases it,

“the son shall not be punished for the sins of the father, nor shall the father be punished for the sins of the son.”

This is to be understood of adult persons, and of actual sins; for of such only the prophet speaks throughout the whole chapter, or of temporal, and not of eternal punishment:

the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him; he shall be rewarded with temporal good things in this life, according to his righteousness; which, as the Targum says, shall “remain” upon him; (see ⁻²⁶⁸¹⁹Psalms 112:9); he shall eat of the fruit of his own doings, (⁻²⁶⁸²⁰Isaiah 3:10); this is true of a man that is evangelically righteous, or is so through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to him; which is upon him as a robe to clothe him, and will always remain on him, being an everlasting righteousness, and will answer for him in a time to come:

and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him; and not another; his sin shall remain on him unatoned for, unexpiated, not taken away or forgiven; the punishment of it shall be on him, and abide upon him.

Ver. 21. *But if the wicked,* &c.] So far is the Lord from punishing the sins of one man upon another, that he will not punish a man for his own sins: if he

will turn from all his sins that he hath committed: if he truly repents of them, and thoroughly forsakes them; for it must not be one sin only, but all; every sin is to be loathed and mourned over, and sorrow expressed for it, and to be forsaken; not one sin is to be cherished and retained, but all to be relinquished: or the repentance and conversion may be justly questioned whether they be sincere:

and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right; as the repentance and turning from sin must be general, so also obedience to the commands of God, both moral and positive; respect is to be had to all his ordinances, which are all of them to be esteemed as right and lawful, and to be observed: this is bringing forth fruits meet for repentance:

he shall surely live, he shall not die; he shall live in his own land, and not go into captivity. Kimchi's note is, he shall live in this world, and not die in the world to come; so Ben Melech.

Ver. 22. *All his transgressions that he hath committed, &c.*] Before his repentance, conversion, and obedience:

they shall not be mentioned unto him; they shall not be charged upon his conscience, or brought against him in providence; he shall not be upbraided with them, or punished for them; but they shall be forgiven him, at least in such sense as to prevent temporal calamity and ruin:

in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live; he shall live "in" it, though not "for" it; this will be the fruit and consequence of his obedience and righteousness, that he shall live and not die, in the sense that has been already given, according to the tenor of the law, (^{
}Leviticus 18:5).

Ver. 23. *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God, &c.*] Perish by sword, famine, or pestilence, or go into captivity; this, though the Lord's will and work, yet is his strange work; mercy is his delight. This is to be understood not absolutely; for the Lord does take pleasure in these things, as they fulfil his word, secure the honour of his truth and holiness, and glorify his justice, and especially when they are the means of reclaiming men from the evil of their ways; but comparatively, as follows:

[and] not that he should return from his ways, and live? that is, it is more pleasing to God that a man should repent of his sins, and forsake his

vicious course of life, and enjoy good things, than to go on in his sins, and bring ruin on himself, here and hereafter.

Ver. 24. *But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, &c.]*

This is to be understood, not of a truly righteous man; for no man can be so denominated from his own righteousness; but from the righteousness and obedience of Christ; and such a man cannot turn from his righteousness; for that is the righteousness of God, and can never be lost; and is an everlasting one, and will always endure; and with which eternal life is inseparably connected: but this is to be interpreted of one that is reckoned so from his own righteousness, what he himself has done, and not from another, from the righteousness of Christ, which he has wrought out; he is one that is righteous in his own esteem, and in the account of others; who is outwardly righteous before men; who trusts in himself that he is righteous, and trusts to his own righteousness; (see ^{<4883>}Ezekiel 33:13); whose righteousness is not an evangelical one, but either a ceremonial righteousness, or at most a mere moral one, consisting of some negative holiness, and a few moral performances, as appears from (^{<4885>}Ezekiel 18:5-9); and from such a righteousness as this a man may turn, commit iniquity, sin and die; (see ^{<4821>}2 Peter 2:20,21); and is no proof or instance of the apostasy of real saints, true believers, or truly righteous men; besides, this man is represented as a transgressor, or “prevaricator”, as the word signifies; a hypocrite, a man destitute of the truth of grace, and of true righteousness:

and committeth iniquity; makes a trade of sinning; goes into a vicious course of life, and continues in it; which a truly gracious man, one that is born again, and has true faith in Christ’s righteousness, by which he is justified, can never do, (^{<4888>}1 John 3:8,9);

[and] doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked [man] doeth; such as theft, murder, adultery, idolatry, oppression of the poor, and giving upon usury, (^{<4880>}Ezekiel 18:10-13);

shall he live? in his own land, in peace and prosperity, enjoying all manner of good things? he shall not; much less shall he live an eternal life, so living and dying:

all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: or, “all his righteousnesses”^{f270}; all the good works which he has done will never come into any account, or be of any avail; as they merited nothing, they will meet

with no reward; they will not preserve him from present calamity, which his now sinful life exposes him to, nor secure him from eternal ruin; these may be mentioned and pleaded by himself, but to no purpose; God will not mention them, nor take any notice of them, nor the Judge at the great day of account, (⁴⁰⁷²Matthew 7:22,23);

in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die; or, for his hypocrisy, “prevarication”⁴²⁷¹, and vicious course of life he now lives in, a death of affliction shall come upon him; great calamities and distresses in this world; and, if grace prevent not, eternal death in the other; if he dies in his trespasses and sins, he will die the second death.

Ver. 25. *Yet ye say, &c.*] Notwithstanding these plain instances, which show the equity of God in his proceedings, and vindicate his justice in the dispensations of his providence; yet such was the blindness and stupidity of these people, or rather their stubbornness, obstinacy, and impudence, that they still insisted upon it that

the way of the Lord is not equal; just and right; is not even, according to the rules of justice and equity; or is not ordered aright, is not steady, and firm, and consistent with himself, and the declaration of his will; a very bold and blasphemous charge, and yet the Lord condescends to reason with them about it:

hear now, O house of Israel; the ten tribes that were now in captivity; or the Jews that were carried captive with Jeconiah, with those that were still in Jerusalem and Judea; these are called upon to hear the Lord, what he had to say in vindication of himself from this charge, as it was but just and reasonable they should:

is not my way equal? plain and even, constant and uniform, according to the obvious rules of justice and truth? can any instance be given to the contrary? what is to be said to support the charge against me? bring forth your strong reasons if you can, and prove what is asserted:

are not your ways unequal? it is plain they are; your actions, your course of life, are manifest deviations from my law, and from all the rules of righteousness and goodness; it is you that are in the wrong, and I in the right.

Ver. 26. *When a righteous [man] turneth away from his righteousness, &c.]* This is repeated for the further confirmation of it, and to raise their attention to it; to make it more plain and manifest to them, and to fix it upon their minds:

and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them: or, “he shall die for them”^{f272}; both for his turning away from his righteousness, and for his committing iniquity:

for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die; in both respects. This is repeated to denote the certainty of it.

Ver. 27. *Again, when the wicked [man] turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, &c.]* Repents of his sins, and forsakes the vicious course of life he has lived:

and doeth that which is lawful and right; or “judgment” and “righteousness”^{f273}; that which is agreeable to the law and will of God, and is just and right between man and man:

he shall save his soul alive; from famine, pestilence, the sword, or captivity; he shall be preserved, and not be involved in calamities and distress: or, “shall quicken his own soul”^{f274}; which, in a spiritual sense, is only done by the Spirit and grace of God, and not by man himself; nor is the enjoyment of eternal life by the works of men, but through the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 28. *Because he considereth, &c.]* Being come to himself, and in his right mind, he considers the evil of his ways; what they lead to; what they deserve at the hand of God; and what he may expect, should he continue in them; (see ²⁸⁸⁴Ezekiel 18:14);

and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed; not only repents of them, but reforms from them; and that not from one, or a few of them, but from them “all”; which shows the truth, reality, and sincerity of his repentance; there being a change of mind, a change of actions and conversation follows:

he shall surely live, he shall not die; (see Gill on “²⁸⁸²Ezekiel 18:21”). Jerom interprets the just man turning from his righteousness, of the Jews leaving the author of righteousness, denying the son of God, and smiting

the heir; and the wicked man turning from his wickedness, of the Gentiles, and of their conversion of faith.

Ver. 29. *Yet saith the house of Israel, the way of the Lord is not equal,* &c.] Though the case was put so many ways, and the thing was made so clear and plain, by the instances given; as, if a man was a just man, let his father be what he would, he should live; but, if his son was a wicked man, he should die; yet, if his son should do well, he should not die for his father's sins, his father only should suffer for his iniquity; and then again, on the one hand, if a seemingly righteous man become an apostate, he should be treated as such; but, on the other hand, if a wicked man repented and reformed, things would go well with him; by all which it most clearly appeared that God did not, and would not, punish children for the sins of their fathers, unless they themselves were guilty of the same; and that the methods of Providence in dealing with men in this world, as they were good or bad, were equal and right, and to be justified:

O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?
This is an appeal to their own consciences, upon the evidence before given.

Ver. 30. *Therefore will I judge you, O house of Israel,* &c.] The case being fairly stated, the charge removed, instances to the contrary given, the Lord, as Judge, proceeds to bring the controversy to an issue, and to pass the definitive sentence, and to deal with them in the way of his providence as they deserved:

everyone according to his ways, saith the Lord God; not according to the ways of their father, but according to their own ways: this refers, not to the last and general judgment, but to some sore temporal punishment, which God, as the righteous Judge, would inflict upon them for their sins, according to the just desert of them; but whereas, notwithstanding all their wickedness, insolence, and blasphemy, the Lord was desirous of showing mercy to them, rather than proceed to strict justice; he exhorts and advises them to the following things:

repent, and turn [yourselves] from all your transgressions; this is to be understood of a national repentance for national sins, to prevent national judgments, being an address to the whole house of Israel; and not of evangelical repentance, which is the gift of God, and of an external reformation, as the fruit of it; and not of the first work of internal conversion, which is by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; though,

were both exhorted to, it would not prove that these are in the power of men, only show the want and necessity of them, and so be the means of God's bringing his chosen people to them. The phrase, "yourselves", is not in the original; both words used signify "to turn"; and may be rendered and explained thus, "turn" yourselves, and "cause [others] to turn"^{f275}; let every man turn himself from his evil courses, and do all he can to turn his brother, or his neighbour, from the same; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret them. The Targum is,

"turn you to my worship, and remove from you the worship of idols:"

so iniquity shall not be your ruin; meaning temporal ruin, as it deserved, and they were threatened with; and which might be prevented by repentance and reformation: or, "shall not be a stumbling block to you"^{f276}; an hinderance, an obstruction in the way of their enjoyment of temporal blessings.

Ver. 31. *Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed, &c.*] As unprofitable and pernicious, to be abhorred and abstained from, and to be cast off, as loads and burdens upon them. Kimchi interprets it of the punishment of their sins, which might be cast off, or escaped, by repentance; perhaps it is best to interpret it of the casting away of their idols, by which they transgressed; (see ^{צו}Ezekiel 20:7,8);

and make you a new heart and a new spirit; which the Lord elsewhere promises to give, and he does give to his own elect; (see Gill on ^{צו}Ezekiel 11:19"); and if here to be understood of a regenerated heart and spirit, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace and holiness, it will not prove that it is in the power of man to make himself such a heart and spirit; since from God's command, to man's power, is no argument; and the design of the exhortation is to convince men of their want of such a heart; of the importance of it: and which, through the efficacious grace of God, may be a means of his people having it, seeing he has in covenant promised it to them. The Targum renders it,

"a fearing heart, and a spirit of fear;"

that is, a heart and spirit to fear, serve, and worship the Lord, and not idols; and so the amount of the exhortation is, yield a hearty reverential obedience to the living God, and not to dumb idols; or that they would be

hearty and sincere in their national repentance and reformation they are here pressed unto:

for why will ye die, O house of Israel? which is to be understood, not of an eternal death; since the deaths here spoken of was now upon them, what they were complaining of, and from which they might be recovered, (^{<388D>}Ezekiel 18:2,23); but temporal calamity and affliction, as in (^{<4010>}2 Corinthians 1:10 11:23); and so in the following words.

Ver. 32. *For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth,* &c.] Which is not to be interpreted simply and absolutely, and with respect to all persons afflicted and punished by him; for he does take delight in the exercise of “judgment” and “righteousness”, and “laughs” at the “calamity” of wicked men, (^{<2492>}Jeremiah 9:24 ^{<3103>}Proverbs 1:26); but comparatively, as in (^{<2886>}Hosea 5:6). The sense is, that he takes no pleasure in the afflictions, calamities, and captivity of men, which are meant by death here; but rather that they would repent and reform, and live in their own land, and enjoy the good things of it; which shows the mercy and compassion of God to sinners:

wherefore, he renews his exhortation,

turn [yourselves], and live ye; or, “ye shall live”^{f277}; I take no delight in your present deaths, your captivity; it would be more agreeable to me would you turn from your evil ways to the Lord your God, and behave according to the laws I have given you to walk by, and so live in your own land, in the quiet possession of your goods and estates.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 19

The subject matter of this chapter is a lamentation for the princes and people of the Jews, on account of what had already befallen them, and what was yet to come, (²⁵⁹⁰Ezekiel 19:1). The mother of the princes is compared to a lioness, and they to lions; who, one after another, were taken and carried captive, (²⁵⁹⁰Ezekiel 19:2-9); again, their mother is compared to a vine, and they to branches and rods for sceptres, destroyed by an east wind, and consumed by fire, (²⁵⁹⁰Ezekiel 19:10-14).

Ver. 1. *Moreover, take thou up a lamentation, &c.*] These words are directed to the Prophet Ezekiel, to compose a doleful ditty, a mournful song, such as was used at funerals; and by it represent the lamentable state of the nation of the Jews and their governors, in order to affect them with it, with what was past, and present, and yet to come:

for the princes of Israel; or, “concerning them”^{f278}; the princes meant are Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, who were kings, though called princes, these words being synonymous; or, if so called by way of diminution, the reason might be, because they were tributary, either to the king of Egypt, or king of Babylon.

Ver. 2. *And say, what [is] thy mother? &c.*] That is, say so to the then reigning prince, Zedekiah, what is thy mother like? to what is she to be compared? by whom is meant, not the royal family of David only, or Jerusalem the metropolis of the nation, but the whole body of the people; and so the Targum interprets it of the congregation of Israel. The answer to the question is,

a lioness; she is like to one, not for her strength and glory, but for her cruelty and rapine; for her want of humanity, mercy, and justice:

she lay down among lions; that is, kings, as the Targum interprets it Heathen princes, the kings of the nations about them, as of Egypt and Babylon, (²⁵⁹⁷Jeremiah 50:17); so called for their despotic and arbitrary power, tyranny, and cruelty: now this lioness, the people of the Jews, lay

down among them, joined with them in leagues and marriages, and learned their manners, and became of the same temper and disposition:

she nourisheth her whelps among young lions; princes, as the Targum explains it; either the princes of Judah, who were become like young lions, fierce and cruel; or the princes of other nations, among whom the children of the royal family were brought up; or, however, they were trained up in the principles of such, even of arbitrary and despotic power, and were taught to oppress their subjects, and not execute justice and mercy among them.

Ver. 3. *And she brought up one of her whelps*, &c.] Or sons, as the Targum: or, “made him to ascend”¹²⁷⁹, as the word signifies; to mount the throne; this was Jehoahaz, whom the people of the land took and anointed him, and made him king in the stead of Josiah his father, (¹²³⁰2 Kings 23:30);

it become a young lion; that is, a king, as the same Targum explains it, and a tyrannical and arbitrary one:

and it learned to catch the prey; being instructed by evil counsellors, he soon learned to oppress his subjects, to get their substance from them, and do many evil things, as he is said to do, (¹²³¹2 Kings 23:32);

it devoured men; or a man, Adam, the people of Israel, so called, (¹²³²Ezekiel 34:31); as the Jews frequently observe; it ate up and destroyed their liberties, privileges, and property.

Ver. 4. *The nations also heard of him*, &c.] The neighbouring nations, particularly the Egyptians; the fame of his behaviour reached them; they were informed how he used his own subjects, and what designs he had formed, and what preparations he was making against his neighbours; wherefore they thought it proper to oppose his measures in time, and to hinder him from proceeding and putting his projects into execution, by coming out against him, and fighting with him, as they did:

he was taken in their pit; alluding to the manner of hunting and taking lions, and such like beasts of prey; which was done by digging pits, and covering the mouths of them with straw, as Jarchi observes, into which in their flight they fell unawares: so Pharaohnecho king of Egypt came out against Jehoahaz, and took him, and put him in bonds at Riblah in the land

of Hamath, that he might reign no more in Jerusalem, after he had been on the throne but three months, (¹²³⁸2 Kings 23:31,33);

and they brought him with chains into the land of Egypt; or, “with hooks”^{f280}; in his nose, as in (²³⁷⁹Isaiah 37:29); or with a bridle, as the Septuagint; or with branches, as the Syriac version, in his jaws; the Targum renders it in chains, as we do: it is certain that Jehoahaz was put in bonds or fetters, and carried into Egypt, where he died, (¹²³⁸2 Kings 23:33,34).

Ver. 5. *Now when she saw*, &c.] That is, his mother, as the Syriac version expresses it; not his natural mother; as the mother of Sisera looked out and waited for him; but the congregation of Israel, as Jarchi interprets it, the body of the Jewish people:

that she had waited; for the return of Jehoahaz out of Egypt, which was expected for some time: or, “that she was become sick”; or “weak”^{f281}, and feeble, and brought to a low estate by his captivity, and by the tax the king of Egypt put upon her:

[and] her hope was lost; of his return to her any more, and so of being eased of the tribute imposed, and of being restored by him to liberty and glory; for the Lord had declared that he should return no more to his native country, but die in the place where he was carried captive, (³²¹⁰Jeremiah 22:10-12);

then she took another of her whelps; or sons, as the Targum:

[and] made him a young lion: a king, as the same Targum paraphrases it; that is, Jehoiakim, the brother of Jehoahaz, who before was called Eliakim, but his name was changed by Pharaohnecho; and though he is said to make him king, yet it was by the consent of the people of the Jews.

Ver. 6. *And he went up and down among the lions*, &c.] The kings, as the Targum; kings of neighbouring nations, as Pharaoh king of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and sometimes he was subject to the one, and sometimes to the other: and his going up and down among them may denote his continuance as a king; for whereas his brother reigned but three months, he reigned eleven years:

he became a young lion; an oppressive prince, a cruel and tyrannical king:

and learned to catch the prey, [and] devoured men; he was notorious for his acts of injustice and arbitrary power; for the detaining the wages of

workmen, and for his oppression, violence, and rapine, and shedding of innocent blood, (²⁴²¹³Jeremiah 22:13,17).

Ver. 7. *And he knew their desolate palaces*, &c.] He took notice of the palaces or seats of the richest men of the nation, and pillaged them of their treasure and wealth, and so they became desolate: it may be rendered, he “knew their widows”^{f282}: or, “his own widows”; whom he made so; he slew the men to get their substance into his hands, and then defiled their widows:

and he laid waste their cities; by putting the inhabitants to death; or obliging them to leave them, and retire elsewhere, not being able to pay the taxes he imposed upon them, partly to support his own grandeur and luxury, and partly to pay the tribute to the king of Egypt:

and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring; by his menaces and threatenings, edicts and exactions, he so terrified the inhabitants of the land, that though it was full of men and riches, it became in a great measure destitute of both; the people left their houses, both in city and country, and fled elsewhere with the remainder of their substance that had not fallen into his hands: his menacing demands being signified by roaring agrees with his character as a lion, to which he is compared, (³¹⁹¹²Proverbs 19:12).

Ver. 8. *Then the nations set against him*, &c.] Or, “gave against him”^{f283}; that is, their voice, as Kimchi; they called to one another, to gather together against him; they gave their counsel against him; they, joined together, agreed, and combined against him, and disposed their armies, and set them in array against him:

on every side from the provinces; Nebuchadnezzar and his auxiliaries, which consisted of the people of the provinces all around, who were brought together, and placed round about Jerusalem, at the siege of it; particularly the bands of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, (¹²⁴¹¹2 Kings 24:1,2);

and spread their net over him; which may be expressive both of the policy, crafty and secret contrivances and designs, of Jehoiakim’s enemies; and of their external force and hostile power against him:

he was taken in their pit; which they dug for him, or by the means which they contrived for his ruin, and which they put in execution and effected:

the metaphor of a lion is carried on, and the manner of taking one is alluded to, which is commonly in pits, as Pliny^{f284} says; and the Arabs now dig a pit where lions are observed to enter, and covering it over slightly with reeds, of small branches of trees, they frequently decoy and catch them^{f285}.

Ver. 9. *And they put him in ward in chains, &c.*] Or “in an enclosure”; or “in a collar with hooks”^{f286}; put a collar of iron, as is said, about his neck, which had hooks in it, and to those hooks chains were put, in which he was led a prisoner; and it is certain that he was bound in fetters, in order to be carried to Babylon though it is thought he never reached thither, but died by the way (⁴⁸¹⁶2 Chronicles 36:6);

and brought him to the king of Babylon; to Nebuchadnezzar, who came up against him with his army of many nations, he having rebelled against him; and, being taken by his soldiers, was brought to him in chains, wherever he was, whether without the gates of Jerusalem, or at any other place; for it is not certain where he was: however,

they brought him into holes; places of confinement, one after another, in his way to Babylon; where, it seems, before he came thither, he died, and was cast out on a dunghill, and had no burial, as Jeremiah foretold, (³²²⁸Ezekiel 22:18,19);

that his voice should no more be heard in the mountains of Israel; in the kingdom of Israel, to the terror of its inhabitants, threatening them with death, if they did not answer his exorbitant demands; nor was it ever heard any more: the allusion still is to a lion traversing the mountains, and roaring after its prey, to the terror of other creatures.

Ver. 10. *Thy mother [is] like a vine in thy blood, &c.*] Another simile is here made use of, relating to the same persons; the same that were compared to a lioness are here compared to a vine, as the people of the Jews frequently are, (⁴⁸¹⁸Psalm 80:8 ²³⁶¹Isaiah 5:1 27:3 ³⁴²¹Jeremiah 2:21 ³³¹¹Ezekiel 15:2 17:6); the same person is here addressed, the then reigning prince, Zedekiah, whose mother, the Jewish people, from whence he sprung, had been in times past, and still was, like a vine; and especially with respect to his blood, the royal family from, chore he descended: the allusion is to the use of blood laid to the roots of vines, by which they became more fruitful. It may have regard; as Calvin thinks, to the original of the Jewish nation, who, when in their blood, or as soon as they were

born, that is, as soon as they became a nation, were at first like a flourishing vine. Some render the words, “in thy likeness”; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; to which the Targum agrees,

“the congregation of Israel, when it did according to the law, was like to a vine, &c.”

planted by the waters; for in those hot countries vines required water, and thrived the better for being near to them, or for being in watery places; this may denote the many privileges, blessings, laws, and ordinances, which were for the advantage of the Jewish people; both in their civil and ecclesiastical state:

she was fruitful and full of branches, by reason of many waters; grew populous, rich, and wealthy.

Ver. 11. *And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bear rule,* &c.] That is, many sprung from her, and rose up in that nation who were fit to hold sceptres to be kings, rulers and governors, and were such. So the Targum.

“and there were in her strong rulers, kings that were, highly to subdue kingdoms;”

such as David, Solomon, and at hers after them: or this may refer to the times of Josiah, and at his death, who left behind him several sons, who became kings, besides other princes of the blood; as his brother Mattaniah, who also was king: and some even carry this to Zedekiah himself, who had many children, who seemed to be strong rods, fit for sceptres, or sceptre bearers; that is, to be kings. The allusion seems to be to the sceptres of the ancients, which were no other than walking sticks, cut off of the stems or branches of trees, and decorated with gold, or studded with golden nails. Thus Achilles is introduced by Homer^{f287} as swearing by a sceptre; which, being cut off of a trunk of a tree left on the mountains, and stripped of its bark and leaves, should never more produce leaves and branches, or sprout again: and such an one, he observes, the Grecian judges, *εν παλαμης φορεουσι*, carry in their hands. Sometimes they were made of the “oleaster”^{f288}, or wild olive, the same as a shepherd’s staff; for what shepherds were to their flocks, that were kings to men;

and her stature was exalted among the thick branches; as the body and trunk of a tree rises up higher than the branches, which are thickest about

the middle of it, and so more eminent and conspicuous; thus it was with the nation of the Jews, and the royal family in it, that appeared more glorious and excellent among the nobles and princes of it; or, as the Targum expresses it,

“it was lifted up in its strength above its own kingdom;”

or rather the sense is, that in the days of David and Solomon, and some others, it greatly exceeded all the kingdoms of the nations round about it:

and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches; was seen and taken notice of for the multitude of her people, and the grandeur of her state.

Ver. 12. *But she was plucked up in fury*, &c.] This vine being turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine; or the people of the Jews becoming wicked, disobedient to God, and disregarding his laws and ordinances, the wrath of God came upon them, and let in the Assyrians among them, who carried off ten tribes at once; and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin not taking warning hereby, but continuing and increasing in sinful courses, great part of them were carried captive into Babylon, with their king Jeconiah, who succeeded Jehoiakim before mentioned; when the kingdom seemed to be utterly ruined and destroyed, and is what is here referred to:

she was cast down to the ground; a phrase expressive of, the entire overthrow of the nation; for a vine, though plucked up, yet, if immediately planted again, might grow; but being plucked up, and left on the ground, and there lie, there is no hope of it; so that this denotes the desperate case of this people at this time, being in captivity. So the Targum paraphrases both clauses,

“and it was rooted up with strength out of the land of the house of the Shechinah, and translated into another land;”

and the east wind dried up her fruit; Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and the Chaldean army, compared to an east wind, because hurtful and pernicious, as that is to trees and fruit, and because Babylon lay northeast of Judea; the people of, the land are meant by the fruit of the vine, with their wealth and riches, which were seized upon and wasted, or carried into Babylon. So the Targum,

“and a king strong as the east wind slew her people;”

her strong rods were broken and withered; or, “strong rod”; the singular for the plural; which may design King Jeconiah particularly, who with his mother, wives, princes, and officers, and the mighty of the land, even all the mighty men of valour, with the craftsmen and smiths, were taken and carried captive, (~~1234~~2 Kings 24:14-16);

the fire consumed them; the wrath of God, which is often compared to fire, the same with fury in the beginning of the verse; which shows that it was for sin, which had provoked the Lord to wrath and anger, that all this ruin came upon the Jewish nation. The Targum is,

“her strong governors removed, and were carried captive; and the people which are strong, as fire consumed them.”

Ver. 13. *And now she [is] planted in the wilderness, &c.*] In the land of Babylon, which though a very fruitful country, yet, because of the hardships and miseries which the Jews were exposed unto in it, was a wilderness to them:

in a dry and thirsty ground; which is a periphrasis or description of a wilderness, (~~1950~~Psalm 63:1); and designs the same place as before; where the Jews were deprived of their liberties, and had not the opportunities of divine worship, the word and ordinances; and were destitute of the comforts both of civil and religious life. Unless this is to be understood of the land of Judea, which by the devastation made in it by the king of Babylon, and the multitudes that were carried captive by him out of it, it became like a desert, a dry and thirsty land; and so the vine planted in it signifies the remainder of the people left in it, after this great destruction; when it looked like a vine plucked up, and thrown down, and left on the ground, dried up with the east wind, and burnt with fire; and thus it fared with the remnant in a little time after, as the next words show.

Ver. 14. *And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, &c.*] By “her branches” are meant the rest of the Jews left in the land; and by the “rod” of them King Zedekiah, now on the throne, when this prophecy was given out; the “fire” said to go out of him signifies his rebellion against the king of Babylon, his breaking covenant and oath with him, which greatly provoked the Lord, and brought down the fire of his wrath upon him, (~~1240~~2 Kings 24:20);

[which] hath devoured her fruit; destroyed the people by sword, famine pestilence, and captivity; yea, the city and temple of Jerusalem, with the

palaces and houses therein, were burnt with material fire; their king was taken, and his eyes put out; his sons were slain, and all the princes of Judah:

so that she hath no strong rod [to be] a sceptre to rule; none to be king, or succeed in the kingdom; and there never was a king after of the family of David, or of the tribe of Judah, till Shiloh the Messiah came; though there were princes and governors, yet no sceptre bearer, no king. The Targum of the whole is,

“and there came people who were strong as fire, and, because of the sins of her pride, slew her people; and there were not in her strong rulers, kings that are mighty to subdue kingdoms;”

this [is] a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation; that is, this prophecy, as the Targum, is a lamentation, or matter of lamentation; what of it had been already fulfilled occasioned lamentation; and, when the rest should be fulfilled, it would be the cause of more. Lamentable was the case of the Jews already, but it would be still more so when all that was foretold of them should be accomplished. It denotes the continuance of the sad estate of that people; and perhaps may refer to their present condition, which will continue till they are turned to the Lord.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 20

The prophecy in this chapter is occasioned by some of the elders of Israel coming to inquire of the Lord; when the prophet is bid to tell them that he would not be inquired of by them. The reason of which were their abominations he is ordered to make known unto them, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:1-4); and then proceeds the narration of them; first of what their fathers committed in Egypt; of God's goodness to them, and their ingratitude; how that though he promised and swore that he would bring them from thence, when he charged them to abstain from the idolatry of that people where they were, nevertheless they did not, for which he threatened them with his wrath to consume them; yet such was his goodness as to spare them, and bring them out of that land, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:5-9); being brought out of Egypt into the wilderness, the Lord gave them statutes and ordinances to observe, particularly sabbaths, as a sign between him and them, but these they despised and broke; wherefore the Lord threatened to consume them in the wilderness, and not bring them into the land of Canaan; yet such was his kindness and mercy to them, that he did not make an utter end of them in the wilderness, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:10-17); and whereas he exhorted their posterity not to imitate their parents, but to walk in his statutes and judgments, and observe his sabbaths, yet they would not; which drew out his resentment against them, and he threatened to scatter them among the Heathens; but, for his name's sake, that that might not be polluted among the heathen, he spared them, and did not cut them off, only gave them up to do things very pernicious to them, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:18-26); and even when they were brought into the land of Canaan, they were guilty of blasphemy against God, and of idolatry on every high hill they saw, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:27-29); but whereas it might be objected, what is all this to the present generation? it is observed, that they imitated their fathers, and were guilty of the same idolatries, and therefore the Lord would not be inquired of by them, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:30,31); and threatens to rule them with fury, and plead with them, as he had pleaded with their fathers in the wilderness, (^{<310>}Ezekiel 20:32-36); nevertheless he suggests that there would be a remnant among them, when he should have purged the rebels

and transgressors from them, that he would deal graciously with in a covenant way; who should serve him in his holy mountain, where he would require and accept their sacrifices, in whom he would be sanctified; and who should know him, and loathe themselves, when made sensible of the distinguishing favours bestowed upon them, (³¹⁸Ezekiel 20:37-44); and the chapter is closed with a prophecy dropped against Jerusalem, denouncing utter destruction on it, (³¹⁹Ezekiel 20:45-49).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the seventh year, &c.*] Of Zedekiah's reign, and of the captivity of Jeconiah; from whence the dates of Ezekiel's visions and prophecies are taken, (³²⁰Ezekiel 1:2 8:1); two years, one month, and five days, after Ezekiel began to prophesy, and eleven months and five days after the preceding prophecy:

in the fifth [month], the tenth [day] of the month; the month Ab, which answers to our July and August; on this day afterwards Jerusalem was twice destroyed, first by the Chaldeans, and then by the Romans:

[that] certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord; by the prophet; these were either some of the elders that were carried captive, who came to inquire how long they should continue in this state; or what methods they should use to free themselves from it; or what they should do while they were in it; whether it would be advisable that they should conform to the customs of the Heathens among whom they were; or what would be the case of those that were left in Judea: or else these were sent by Zedekiah to pay the king of Babylon his tax, or to negotiate some affair with him relating to the captives; and who took this opportunity of consulting the Lord by the prophet what methods should be taken to throw off the yoke, and to know what was the mind of God in it; but these things are uncertain, as are also the persons the inquirers; though the Jews say^{f289} they were Ananias, Azarias, and Misael; which is not probable, since they were good men, whereas these seem to be hypocritical persons:

and sat before me; with great seriousness and devotion seemingly, waiting for an answer.

Ver. 2. *Then came the word of the Lord unto me, &c.*] While the elders were sitting before him, by an impulse upon his mind, dictating things unto him:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 3. *Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, &c.]* Give them this for an answer from me:

thus saith the Lord God, are ye come to inquire of me? no; not seriously, heartily, and in good earnest, determining to abide by the advice and counsel that might be given; or how can you have the face to inquire of me, when guilty of such abominations?

[as] I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you; knowing their wickedness and hypocrisy, which were detestable to him, and therefore would not hear what they had to say, nor give them any answer, or direct them what they should do. Sad is the case of persons when the Lord will not be inquired of by them! it is plain he has no favours to bestow upon them; for, when he has, he will put them upon inquiring of him for them, to do them unto them, (²⁸⁶⁵Ezekiel 36:37); this was the case of Saul, whom God, when he inquired of him, would not answer in any of his usual ways, (⁴⁹²⁶1 Samuel 28:6).

Ver. 4. *Wilt thou judge them, son of man? &c.]* Excuse them, patronise them, defend their cause, and plead for them? surely thou wilt not; or rather, wilt thou not reprove and correct them, judge and condemn them, for their sins and wickedness? this thou oughtest to do:

wilt thou judge [them]? this is repeated, to show the vehemency of the speaker, and the duty of the prophet:

cause them to know the abominations of their fathers: the sins they committed, which were abominable in themselves, and rendered them abominable unto God, and what came upon them for them; by which they would be led to see the abominable evils which they also had been guilty of, in which they had imitated their fathers, and what they had reason to expect in consequence of them.

Ver. 5. *And say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* Here begins the account of their fathers; of God's unmerited goodness to them, and of their sins and transgressions against him, and how it fared with them:

in the day when I chose Israel; to be his peculiar people, above all people on the face of the earth; when he declared his choice of them, and made it appear that he had chosen them, and distinguished them, by special blessings and favours bestowed on them:

and lifted up mine hand to the seed of the house of Jacob; the posterity of Jacob or Israel, to whom the Lord swore that he would do such and such things for them; of which the lifting up the hand was a token; it is a gesture used in swearing, (²⁷¹¹⁷Daniel 12:7); and so the Targum,

“and I swore unto them by my word:”

and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt: by his name Jehovah; by the prophets he sent unto them, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; and by the miracles he wrought among them:

when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I [am] the Lord your God: making promise of it, declaring it unto them, confirming it with an oath; (see ³¹⁶⁷Hebrews 6:17,18).

Ver. 6. *In the day [that] I lifted up my hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt, &c.*] Not only promised and swore to it, but exerted his power in the miracles he wrought, by bringing plagues upon the Egyptians, to oblige them to let them go forth from thence:

into a land that I had espied for them; which he had in his eye and in his heart for them; which he had in his mind provided for them, and was determined in his purposes to bring them to; and which he, as it were, looked out for them, and singled out as the best and most suitable for them:

flowing with milk and honey; a phrase often used, to express the fruitfulness of the land, of Canaan, and the great plenty of provisions in it:

which [is] the glory of all lands; that is, either which fertility, signified by milk and honey, is the glory of all lands, or makes all countries desirable where they are found; or else, which land of Canaan, being so fruitful, is more glorious or desirable than any other country; it greatly surpassing all others in its situation, soil, and climate. The Targum is,

“which is the praise of all provinces;”

that is, was praised and commended by the inhabitants of all other provinces for the plenty in it; which must needs be very great, to support so large a number of inhabitants in it, and yet its compass but small.

Ver. 7. *Then I said unto them, &c.*] Having promised and swore to do such great and good things for them; which must lay them under an

obligation to regard what he should command them: promises and blessings of goodness are great incentives to duty, and lay under great obligation to it:

cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes; which should be so, meaning idols; but which his eyes were taken with, and were lifted up unto, as his gods; though they ought to have been rejected with the utmost abhorrence, as abominable:

and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt; their “dunghill gods”, as the word^{f290} signifies; which to worship, as it was an abomination to God, was defiling to themselves; yet these they were fond of, and prone to worship them; their eyes and their hearts were after them; and they needed such cautions and instructions as these, backed with the following strong reason against such idolatry:

I [am] the Lord your God; their Creator and Benefactor, their covenant God; the only Lord God, and whom only they ought to serve and worship; to whom they were under ten thousand obligations; and who was infinitely above all the idols of Egypt.

Ver. 8. *But they rebelled against me*, &c.] All sin is rebellion against God, an act of hostility, especially idolatry; it is refusing homage and casting off allegiance to him:

and would not hearken unto me; to his word by his prophets; so the Targum,

“they rebelled against my word, and would not receive my prophets:”

they did not every man cast away the abominations of his eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of the Gentiles; whence it appears that there were some among them that did give in to the idolatry of the Egyptians; and could not be prevailed upon to relinquish it, notwithstanding the favours shown them, and the promises made unto them. The Jewish writers, Jarchi and Kimchi, say that there were many of these wicked men among the Israelites when Moses was sent to them; and that they died in the time of the three days’ darkness, so that the Egyptians did not see their fall, and rejoice at it;

then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them; he threatened them, by his prophets, that he would bring down deserved wrath upon them, like a mighty shower of rain:

to accomplish mine anger against them; to bring it upon them to the utmost, and consume them with it:

in the midst of the land of Egypt; and so not bring them forth from thence, as he had promised; but cut them off in it, for their sins and rebellions.

Ver. 9. *But I wrought for my name's sake, &c.*] In a way of grace and mercy; did well by thorn, did what he promised to do; not for any merits of theirs, but for his own honour, and the glory of his name:

that it should not be polluted before the Heathen, among whom they [were]; be spoken evil of, which is a polluting it; saying, either that he was not true to his word, in not doing what he promised; or else that it was not in his power to perform; either of which would reflect dishonour on his name, and so defile it:

in whose sight I made myself known unto them; by the wonders he wrought; and who, by one means or another, became acquainted with the promises of God to Israel, that he would bring them out of Egypt, and settle them in the land of Canaan: wherefore for the honour of his name he exerted his power,

in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt; as he did, as follows:

Ver. 10. *Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, &c.*] It was the Lord that brought them out from thence with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; that obliged Pharaoh to let them go, and gave them favour in the eyes of the Egyptians, that they went out unmolested by them:

and brought them into the wilderness; before they went into the land of Canaan; here they had freedom from their bondage, and were in a wonderful manner provided for by the Lord, guided, supported, preserved, and at last brought to the promised land.

Ver. 11. *And I gave them my statutes, &c.*] The precepts of his law, the law on Mount Sinai, of which there were not the like among other nations; nor were they given unto them, but were a special gift unto Israel, and greatly to be valued, (⁴⁹¹⁸Deuteronomy 4:8 ⁴⁹⁷⁹Psalm 147:19,20 19:8-10);

and showed them judgments: the nature, use, and excellency of the the necessity and advantage of observing them: the same as before, called “statutes”, because appointed, fixed, and certain, being of inviolable and lasting obligation; and “judgments”, being according to strict justice and equity: these, though they were originally written on man’s heart, yet so obliterated by sin that there was need not only of their being afresh written and published, but of their being taught and made known; or of pointing out the use of them, and obligation to them:

which [if] a man do, he shall live in them; or “by them”^{f291}; in the land of Canaan, enjoying all the blessings of a long and happy life: reference seems to be had to (^{<8885>}Leviticus 18:5). The Targum adds,

“in eternal life;”

but eternal life is not to be obtained by the works of the law, since no man can perfectly obey or fulfil it, but is the pure gift of the grace of God.

Ver. 12. *Moreover, also, I gave them my sabbaths*, &c.] The Targum is,

“the days of the sabbaths;”

or sabbath days, the seventh day sabbaths, which recurring throughout the year are many; but, besides these, there were the year of remission, for the seventh year sabbath; and the jubilee year, the great sabbath of all, once in fifty years; yea, Kimchi thinks the feasts, such as the passover, &c. are included: now these are distinguished from the statutes and judgments, or the precepts of the law, which were of a moral nature; these being ritual and ceremonial, and were peculiar to the Jews, and continued but for a while; however, they were gifts, and valuable ones, of considerable use and significance:

to be a sign between me and them; of his being their God, and they being his people; of his favour and good will to them, and of the obligations they were under to him; of his having separated and distinguished them from all other nations of the world; these sabbaths being only given to them as a memorial of their deliverance out of Egypt, and as a pledge of their entering into the land of rest; and of the future rest to be enjoyed by Christ, and in heaven, to all eternity; for these were shadows of things to come, (^{<5126>}Colossians 2:16,17);

that they might know that I [am] the Lord that sanctify them; separate them from other nations, and, by such means and opportunities, begin and carry on the work of sanctification in them; for the sabbaths, and the services of them, were useful to such purposes; as Lord's days, and the work of them, are now.

Ver. 13. *But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness,* &c.] Where they were wholly at the mercy of God, entirely dependent upon him; and miracles were wrought every day for the sustaining and preservation of, them from famine, wild beasts, and enemies; yet they rebelled against the Lord; provoked him bitterly by their manifold transgressions, their ingratitude, unbelief, and idolatry; and this not a few of them only, but the whole body of the people, the house of Israel, the whole family, and that for the space of forty years, (^{<1989>}Psalm 95:9,10);

they walked not in my statutes; did not make them the rule of their walk and conversation, and steer the course of their lives and actions by them, as they ought to have done:

and they despised my judgments; as not worthy their notice and regard, as useless and unprofitable; nay, had an aversion to them, and a loathing of them, as the word ^{f292} signifies; such is the corrupt and wicked heart of man; it is enmity against God and his law, and all that is good:

which [if] a man do, he shall even live in them; (see Gill on "^{<3311>}Ezekiel 20:11");

and my sabbaths they greatly polluted; or "profaned", or "[made them] common"^{f293}; that is, with other days; by going out for manna on them; by gathering sticks upon them; by doing their own work, speaking their own words, and seeking their own pleasure, and worshipping false deities:

then I said, I would pour out, my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them; that they should not enter into the land of Canaan; as the generation that came out of Egypt were consumed in the wilderness, excepting two; as the Lord threatened, (^{<0445>}Numbers 14:35).

Ver. 14. *But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the Heathen,* &c.] (See Gill on "^{<3311>}Ezekiel 20:9"); who would be ready to say it was for want of power, or faithfulness, or, goodness, that he did not bring them into the promised land; or there was no such land to bring them to God's own glory was concerned, and that is his ultimate end

in all he does; and is of more weight with him than any other argument whatever:

in whose sight I brought them out; from Egypt, into the wilderness; this was done publicly in the sight of the Egyptians, they urging them to be gone.

Ver. 15. *Yet also I lifted up mine hand unto them in the wilderness, &c.]* Swore unto them, as in (³⁵¹⁶Ezekiel 20:5,6);

that I would not bring them into the land which I had given [them]; by promise to their fathers, and to them. This is to be understood of the generation that came out of Egypt, that received the ill report the spies made, and murmured against the Lord; wherefore he swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest; or he would not bring them into the land of Canaan, save Caleb and Joshua; and accordingly none else entered but them, though their posterity did; and so both his oath to them, that they should not enter, and his oath to Abraham, that he would give to his seed the land, had their accomplishment, (⁰⁴²³Numbers 14:23,24,30); a land

flowing with milk and honey, which [is] the glory of all lands; (see Gill on “³⁵¹⁶Ezekiel 20:6”).

Ver. 16. *Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths, &c.]* Which were just causes of divine resentment and anger; (see Gill on “³⁵¹³Ezekiel 20:13”);

for their heart went after their idols; which they had served in Egypt; and that led them off from the true worship and service of God; no man can serve two masters; if he holds to the one, and his heart is towards him, he will despise the other; and yet these idols were no other, as the word signifies, than dunghill gods, as in (³⁵¹⁶Ezekiel 20:16); and such are all worldly things, in comparison of God, that the heart of man is going after.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless, mine eye spared them from destroying them, &c.]* Utterly, so as to leave neither root nor branch; for though the whole generation died excepting two, either by the immediate hand of God in wrath, or else by ordinary deaths; yet there was a generation raised up in their stead, to whom mercy was shown:

neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness; that they should be no more a nation and people; though the carcasses of them that believed not

fell in the wilderness, and never saw the good land, yet their posterity was spared to see it, and did.

Ver. 18. *But I said unto their children in the wilderness, &c.*] Or, “then I said”^{f294}; his judgments and statutes being neglected and despised by them, and good instructions and kind providences being of no use unto them, the Lord turns to their posterity while yet in the wilderness: what follows seems to refer to those directions, instructions, and exhortations given in the book of Deuteronomy by Moses, in the plains of Moab, a little before the children of Israel went over Jordan into the land of Canaan:

walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments; they were not only not to imitate their parents in their open sins and transgressions of God’s law; but they were not to follow them in the observance of such rules of worship, which were of their own devising, and they had formed into a law: this makes greatly against such who think it a very heinous sin to relinquish the religion of their ancestors, or that in which they were brought up; but if this does not appear to be according to the word of God, the statutes and judgments of our fathers should stand for nothing, yea, should be rejected:

nor defile yourselves with their idols; idolatry, as it is abominable to God, is defiling to men, and renders them loathsome to him; and it being what their fathers practised will not excuse them; for, as it was defiling to their fathers, it is no less so to their children.

Ver. 19. *I [am] the Lord your God, &c.*] Not only that had made them and preserved them, but had chose them above all people to be his people; who had made a covenant with them, and had distinguished them by his favours from all others:

walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; which he had given unto their fathers, and they had neglected and despised; those contained in the decalogue, and in the whole book of Deuteronomy, and elsewhere,

Ver. 20. *And hallow my sabbaths, &c.*] Or keep them holy, by abstaining from worldly business on them; by observing all the duties of religion, private and public, to be performed on such days:

and they shall be a sign between me and you; of present and future good; (see Gill on “²⁵⁰²Ezekiel 20:12”);

that ye may know that I [am] the Lord your God; not only acknowledge him to be the Lord their God, by observing his laws, and sanctifying his sabbaths; but also have a larger experience of his grace and goodness, as their covenant God.

Ver. 21. *Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me*, &c.] After the death of their fathers, when they were come into the plains of Moab, and just going to enter the land; they rebelled against the Lord, and greatly provoked him, by joining themselves to Baalpeor, the idol of Moab, they worshipped, (⁰⁴²⁸Numbers 25:3);

they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them; they did as their fathers before them; though they saw with their eyes the judgments of God upon them, yet this did not deter them from following their evil ways:

which [if] a man do, he shall even live in them; (see Gill on "⁰⁴³³Ezekiel 20:13");

they polluted my sabbaths; just as their fathers had done, taking no warning by them, and what befell them:

then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish mine anger against them in the wilderness; twenty and four thousand died on account of the idolatry of Baalpeor, (⁰⁴³⁹Numbers 25:9).

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand*, &c.] When it was stretched out against them, as in the above instance, and did not utterly consume them. The Targum is,

“and I turned away the stroke of my might:”

and wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth. (See Gill on "⁰⁴⁴⁰Ezekiel 20:9”) and (see Gill on "⁰⁴⁴⁴Ezekiel 20:14”).

Ver. 23. *I lifted up mine hand also to them in the wilderness*, &c.] Swore unto them, as in (⁰⁴⁴⁵Ezekiel 20:5,6,15);

that I would scatter them among the Heathen, and disperse them through the countries; after they came to be settled in the land of Canaan, they sinned against the Lord; which was fulfilled in the times of the Babylonish captivity, and in their destruction by the Romans; but was threatened and

foretold while they were in the wilderness, (^{<1373>}Leviticus 26:33) (^{<1325>}Deuteronomy 32:26); with this compare (^{<1465>}Psalms 106:26-30).

Ver. 24. *Because they had not executed my judgments, &c.]* Had not done that which was right and just, as the Lord commanded them:

but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths; as their fathers had done:

and their eyes were after their fathers' idols; which they had learned to serve in Egypt, or brought with them from thence; these the eyes and the hearts of their children were after, as theirs find been; and they were more desirous, encouraged, and emboldened to serve them, because they were their fathers'; but this would not excuse their sin; yea, it was rather an aggravation of it, that they should follow them in such practices, for which they had been often reprov'd and punished.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore I gave them also statutes [that were] not good, &c.]*

Yea, were very bad; not the moral law, and the statutes of it; for that is holy, just, and good, though the killing letter and ministration of condemnation and death to the transgressors of it; indeed those laws were both good and bad to different persons, as Abendana observes; good to those that observed them, but not good to those that transgressed them, the issue of which was death: rather these were the statutes and rites of the ceremonial law, which were not in their own nature good; nor did they arise from the nature and holiness of God, but from his will; and though very good and useful under the legal dispensation, until the Messiah came, especially when attended to by faith, and with a view to him; yet had the sanction of death to many of them, that a man could not live by them: but it may be, the punishments inflicted on them for their sins, by the plague, by fire, and by serpents, are meant; which may be called "statutes" and "judgments", because ordered and appointed by the Lord, and according to justice: or, as many, both Jews and Christians, think, the idolatrous laws, usages, and customs of other nations, the traditions of their fathers, their wicked laws and statutes, and their own; which, being left to a reprobate mind, they were suffered to walk in, to their hurt and ruin; which is sometimes the sense of the word give; and so here, he "gave", that is, he permitted them to observe such statutes; and this sense is countenanced and confirmed by (^{<1315>}Ezekiel 20:26); to which agrees Jarchi's note,

“I delivered them into the hand of their imagination (or corrupt nature) to stumble at their iniquity;”

(see ^{<4128>}Romans 1:28). Kimchi interprets them of laws, decrees, tribute, and taxes, imposed upon them by their enemies that conquered them. The Targum is,

“and I also, when they rebelled against my word, and would not obey my prophets, cast them far off, and delivered them into the hands of their enemies; and they went after their foolish imagination, and made decrees which were not right:”

and judgments, whereby they should not live; yea, which were deadly and destructive to them; which brought ruin, destruction, and death upon them; for more is designed than is expressed: this was the effect of following the customs of the nations, and of walking in the statutes of their fathers, and of their own; whereas, had they walked according to the judgments and statutes of God, moral and ceremonial, they had lived comfortably and prosperously.

Ver. 26. *And one polluted them in their own gifts, &c.*] Suffered them to defile themselves; or declared them to be, and treated them as polluted persons, in the gifts and sacrifices which they offered to idols, particularly their firstborn: as the next clause explains it:

in that they caused to pass though [the fire] all that openeth the womb; this very likely they did, when they sacrificed to Baalpeor, the same with Molech, (^{<4218>}Numbers 25:3);

that I might make them desolate; their families, by stripping them of their children, their firstborn, and strength:

to the end that they might know that I [am] the Lord; a righteous God, in punishing men for sin, in a way it deserves. Some interpret this, not of causing the firstborn to pass through fire to an idol; but of causing them to pass, or of setting them apart, to the Lord, according to the law in (^{<4212>}Exodus 13:12); where the same word is used as here; and the sense is that God declared them to be impure in or with all their gifts, by commanding them to cause their firstborn to pass to him, which they were obliged to redeem; which sense is approved of by Gussetius¹²⁹⁵; and so Abendana, taking the words to refer to both, gives this sense of them,

“I pronounced them impure, and removed them far from me, instead of sanctifying them; because they caused everyone that opens the womb to pass from me, whom I commanded to give to me for holiness, but they have given them to idolatry;”

rather, according to Braunius^{f296}, the words may be understood of God’s rejecting and causing the firstborn to pass from him, and not suffering them to offer gifts and sacrifices unto him; which may be meant by pronouncing them impure, or polluting them in their gifts; this was after the worship of the golden calf; when he took Aaron and his sons in their room.

Ver. 27. *Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, &c.*] The elders of Israel, (^{<301>}Ezekiel 20:1); who came in the name of the whole body, and represented them, and by whom the following message is sent unto them; or the prophet by them might speak unto them, as he is ordered:

thus saith the Lord God, yet in this your fathers have blasphemed me; besides what they did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, when they were come into the land of Canaan, such was their ingratitude, that to all the rest they added this wickedness, to sacrifice to other gods on every high hill, and in all thick trees; which was a blaspheming the name of God, and casting reproach upon him:

in that they have committed a trespass against me; idolatry is meant, described in (^{<318>}Ezekiel 20:28); and which they committed, not through ignorance and weakness, but voluntarily, against light and knowledge; and obstinately, notwithstanding all the remonstrances made unto them, and cautions, exhortations, and reproofs given them.

Ver. 28. *[For] when I had brought them into the land, &c.*] Brought them out of Egypt through the wilderness into the land of Canaan, through so many difficulties, by such displays of power, goodness, and truth:

[for] the which I lifted up mine band to give it to them; which he swore he would give unto them, and which he did, and so fulfilled his word and oath; and which was an instance of his bounty and goodness; and not owing to any merits of theirs; which he did, and so fulfilled his word and oath; and which was an instance of his bounty and goodness, and not owing to any merits of theirs:

then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees; as soon as they had got into the land, and took a view of it, they at once fixed their eyes upon the high hills and groves, as proper places to set up their idols on, and perform idolatrous worship in; in the one place more openly, and in the other more secretly, as they might judge proper and necessary; in which they imitated the Heathens, who had their temples, idols, altars, and sacrifices, amidst groves and thick trees. So Herodotus^{f297} relates of the temple of Diana at Bubastis in Egypt, that at the entrance of it there were rivulets from the Nile, which flowed about it here and there, shaded with trees; and within were a vast grove of the largest trees, planted about the temple; and which he afterwards calls trees reaching to heaven:

and they offered there their sacrifices; either to the God of Israel, as some of them sometimes did, and which was sinful; for though they might offer sacrifices, as were commanded, to a right object, yet not in the proper place: or rather to their idols; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, *to their own gods*; which they had made to themselves, and had chose and approved of:

and there they presented the provocation of their offering; or their offering which provoked the wrath of God against them; being such as either he had not appointed, or was offered in a wrong place, or the wrong object; than which nothing could be more provoking to him; it was giving his glory to another, and his praise to graven images:

there also they made their sweet saviour; incense to their deities. The Targum is the worship of their sacrifices:

and poured out there their drink offerings; libations of wine: all kind of sacrifices were offered up here by them; which shows to what lengths in idolatry they ran, and how dreadfully guilty they were.

Ver. 29. *Then I said unto them, &c.*] By his prophets that he sent unto them:

what is the high place where, unto you go? what is the name of it? what is the use of it? to what end do you go there? is there not an altar built by my order and command to sacrifice upon is this high place better than that? does it answer a better end and purpose?

and the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day; or a high place. The Septuagint also leaves the word untranslated, and calls it Abama; and the Arabic version Abbana; so they called their altars after the Gentiles, by whom they are called βωμοι; nor were they ashamed of it, but persisted in so calling them, from the first use of them to the present time. These are often called, Bamah and Bamot in the books of Kings. Jarchi says it is a term of reproach, as if it was said, Bamah---in what is it to be accounted of?

Ver. 30. *Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] To the elders, as before:

are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? they were: *and commit ye whoredoms after their abominations?* spiritual adultery; that is, idolatry, in the same abominable manner? they did, as appears by what follows:

Ver. 31. *For when ye offer your gifts,* &c.] And sacrifices to idols. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it,

the firstfruits of your gifts; it may design their firstborn; (see ^{AMB}Ezekiel 20:26) as the following clause seems to explain it:

when ye make your sons to pass through the fire; or between two fires to Moloch, as their fathers had done before them;

ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day; by worshipping idols, or dunghill gods, as the word signifies, as often observed; they defiled themselves with those filthy things, which they continued to do to that very day, and so became more and more polluted; and were as their fathers had been, and therefore must expect to be used in like manner:

and shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? can you think that I will suffer you to come and inquire of me or to make your requests to me? or can you hope to have an answer from me; at least a favourable one, such as you could wish for?

as I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you; so confirming again with an oath what he had before declared, (^{AMB}Ezekiel 20:3), wherefore they might assure themselves that they would not be acceptable to him, neither their persons nor petitions, or be regarded by him.

Ver. 32. *And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, &c.*] What they had contrived in their own breasts, and laid a plan of, and would gladly have brought about, should be frustrated, take no effect, and come to nothing:

that ye say, we will be as the Heathen; live without God; not be in subjection to him, or under his government, or be called by his name, or attend to his word, worship, and ordinances; but join ourselves to them; enter into alliance, and intermarry with them; carry on trade and commerce with them, and embrace the same religion; and then we shall prosper as they do, as well as no more incur the reproach of singularity or preciseness in religion:

as the families of the countries: being incorporated into them, dwelling with them, and joining with them in the same exercises of religious worship:

to serve wood and stone; images made of wood and stone. Strange! that a people that had a revelation from God, and such an experience of his power and goodness, should ever form such a scheme, or once think of entering into such measures, so grossly absurd and scandalous.

Ver. 33. *As I live, saith the Lord God, &c.*] The form of an oath; the Lord swears by his own life, used more than once before; it supposes something of moment, and the certain performance of it:

surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm; from which none can escape, and which none can withstand:

and with fury poured out: like floods of water, in a violent hasty shower of rain; it denotes the abundance of divine wrath, and the sudden and sure execution of it:

will I rule over you; not in a gentle and merciful way, but with great rigour and severity; though they had contrived to withdraw themselves from under his domination and government, by joining with the Gentiles, and conforming to their laws and customs, and complying with their religious rites and idolatrous practices; yet they should not be able to accomplish their designs; they should be so far from being free men, as they promised themselves, that whereas they did not choose to be his voluntary and faithful subjects, he would keep a watchful eye and a strict hand over them as rebels, and rule them with a rod of iron, as well as with a sceptre of

righteousness; and would be King over them, and they should be subject to his authority, whether they would or not.

Ver. 34. *I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, &c.*] The Egyptians, Ammonites, and others; where they went for safety and protection, and among whom they intended to settle, and had formed a scheme to cast off the yoke of God and his worship, and be no more a nation or people under his government; but mix themselves with these nations, and become a part of them, and join with them in all matters, civil, commercial, and religious; but here the Lord will not suffer them to continue, but will bring them out from hence:

with a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out: as before, (^{20:33}Ezekiel 20:33) though some think this is to be understood as a favour to the Israelites, who should be brought out of the countries of the idolatrous Gentiles by mighty power, and with marks of wrath and displeasure upon the nations; designing hereby the good of his people, that they might be reduced to his government, and live happily and comfortably under him, and not be destroyed and lost among the nations.

Ver. 35. *And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, &c.*] Into Babylon, and into captivity there, which they thought to avoid by fleeing to other countries. Some think that those inhospitable nations are meant, Syro-media, Caspia, Hyrcania, Iberia, and others, into which many of the Jews were brought, who sought to live elsewhere than at Babylon; and others are of opinion that this respects the time of their return from Babylon to their own land, between which lay a wilderness, here referred to; but perhaps the prophecy respects the present state of the Jews, in which they have continued ever since their destruction by the Romans; through whom they have been brought among the several nations of the world, particularly the Roman empire, compared to a wilderness; and represented as a populous one, as it is, and in which the beast, or antichrist, now is; (see ^{17:3}Revelation 17:3) and there will I plead with you face to face; judge, condemn, and take vengeance, or inflict punishment on them in the most public manner, as he now does. The Targum is, “and I will take vengeance on you face to face”.

Ver. 36. *Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, &c.*] Which was opposite the land of Egypt, near unto it, on the

borders of it; and into which the people immediately went, when they came out of Egypt, and passed the Red sea; and the Arabic version is,

“when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

This refers to the controversy the Lord had with the Israelites for murmuring upon the report of the spies; and the sentence he passed upon them, that they should not enter into the land of Canaan, but their carcasses should fall in the wilderness, (⁻⁰⁴¹⁴³Numbers 14:29,30):

so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God; take vengeance on them, as the Targum; who disbelieve the Messiah, reject him, and will not have him to reign over them; these are now punished, by a dispersion of them in the wilderness of the nations, where they die and perish, and see not their own land.

Ver. 37. *And I will cause you to pass under the rod, &c.*] That is, such whom God will not take vengeance on, and shall not die in the wilderness of the people; but whom he will have mercy on, and show favour to, and bring at length into their own land; these he indeed will bring under the rod of correction and chastisement, by which they shall be brought to a sense of sin, a confession of it, humiliation for it, and to seek to Christ for salvation from it; or under the rod of his word, the rod of his strength, he sends out of Zion the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation; by which they shall be brought to agree unto and comply with the way of salvation by Christ; to submit to his righteousness; to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and be subject to the ordinances of it: or the allusion is to shepherds, in taking an account of their flocks, or at the tithing of them, who strike and mark them with their rod, (⁻¹⁸²⁷³Leviticus 27:32 ⁻⁴³³¹³Jeremiah 33:13), and thus, as the Lord has in election distinguished his sheep from others, taken an exact account of them, and set his seal or mark of foreknowledge on them; so in effectual calling he separates them from others, takes special knowledge of them, and sets his mark of sanctification on them. This will be the case of the converted Jews in the latter day:

and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: or, “the discipline of the covenant”, as the Syriac Version; the same with the rod of correction, being what is provided in covenant for the good of the covenant ones. This covenant is the covenant of grace; the bond of which are not faith, repentance, and new obedience; for these are parts and blessings of the covenant; nor any outward ordinance; not circumcision formerly, nor

baptism and the Lord's supper now; which persons may submit to, and yet not be in the covenant: but it designs that which makes the covenant firm, sure, and lasting; which are the everlasting love of God, from whence it springs; his unchangeable counsel, according to which it proceeds; his solemn oath, that it shall never be removed; his faithfulness, which will not suffer it to be made void; and his power, which will accomplish every article of it; and the blood of Christ, which ratifies and confirms it. So Kimchi interprets it, "I will bind you in a covenant, that ye shall not go out of it for ever": or it is that which binds persons, or lays them under obligation to love, fear, and serve the Lord; and that is the love of God and Christ, and the exceeding great and precious promises of the covenant; and now into this sure, firm, and obliging covenant the Lord has brought all his chosen ones in eternity, when it was first made with Christ; and into which he may be said to bring them in time; as he will the converted Jews, when he manifests it to them, and applies the blessings and promises of it; shows them it, and their interest in it.

Ver. 38. *And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me, &c.*] All men are enemies, and enmity itself, against God; and every sin is an act of hostility and rebellion against him; every transgression and violation of his law is a casting off of allegiance to him, and a trampling upon and despising his legislative power and authority; wherefore rebels and transgressors of his law are put together; the one being explanative of the other. The people of the Jews were always more or less a rebellious people; so they were in the times of Moses, and all the while that he was with them, and were notoriously so in the times of Ezekiel; and therefore are often so described in this book; but they were not all so; such as were, the Lord here declares that he would single them out, as goats from among his sheep he brought under the rod, and purge them as chaff from the wheat; that sinners in Zion should be no more in the congregation of the righteous:

I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn; or "countries"; wherever they have been pilgrims and sojourners, as they now are; wherever they are; it looks as if, a little before or when the remnant of God, according to the election of his grace, shall be converted, that the rest shall be collected together into some one place, and be destroyed as rebels:

and they shall not enter into the land of Israel; when the converted Jews shall; an emblem of carnal Israelites, wicked professors, being not admitted into the New Jerusalem, and being excluded from the kingdom of heaven:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord; that knows all things, can do all things, and will faithfully and punctually perform all that is promised, threatened, or predicted.

Ver. 39. *As for you, O house of Israel, &c.*] The then present house of Israel, and the elders of it, who were upon the spot with the prophet:

go ye, serve ye everyone his idols; or dunghill gods; since they liked not to serve the true God: this is not giving them leave to serve idols, or approving their idolatrous practices; but is said “ironically”, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, who compare it with (²¹¹¹⁹Ecclesiastes 11:9):

and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me; not only serve them now, but for the future; seeing ye choose not to hearken to my voice, to obey my laws, and to worship me, and me only; for it suggests, that it was better to attend to the service of the one, or of the other, and not halt between two opinions; but either, if the God of Israel was the true God, then serve him, and him only; but if Baal, or any other Heathen deity, was so, then serve them, and keep serving them:

but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts and with your idols; to worship him along with them, and them along with him; to pretend they worshipped him in them, and offered their gifts and sacrifices to him through them; and so made use of his name as a cover to their idolatrous practices: this was a polluting his name, and was abominable to him.

Ver. 40. *For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, &c.*] Alluding to Mount Zion, or Moriah, on which the temple was built, on the highest part of the land of Israel, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; here the Gospel church is meant, comparable to a “mountain” for its firmness and durability; said to be a “holy” one, because consisting of holy persons, performing holy worship to a holy God; and represented as “high”, being established, as it will be in the latter day, upon the top of the mountains, and be very visible and glorious:

there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: when all Israel shall be saved, or converted; and, the rebels and transgressors being purged away from them, they shall join themselves to the Gospel

church, and in it serve the Lord, according to the rules of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; even all of them that shall enter into their own land and dwell in it; the rest being not admitted to it:

there will I accept them; their persons, and their sacrifices of prayer and praise, being offered up, in the name and faith of Christ, that altar which sanctities every gift; (see ²³⁰⁷Isaiah 56:7):

and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things; meaning the offering up of their persons: bodies, and souls, as a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice, which he would require of them as their reasonable service; together with all holy duties of prayer, praise, and beneficence; sacrifices with which God is well pleased through Christ and his sacrifice; and which are the only sacrifices he now requires under the Gospel dispensation; for ceremonial ones he does not require, seek after, enjoin, or accept; these are done away and made void by the sacrifice of his son; only it may be observed, as in other places and prophecies of Gospel times, that New Testament worship is expressed by the phrases, forms, and usages suited to the Old Testament; (see ⁴⁰¹⁶Psalms 40:6).

Ver. 41. *I will accept you with your sweet savour*, &c.] Their sins being expiated by the sacrifice of Christ, which is unto God for a sweet smelling savour; and their persons being, clothed with the robe of his righteousness, and the garments of his salvation, all whose garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; the Gospel being the savour of life unto life unto them; and the savour of the knowledge of Christ being communicated to them by it; and also the savour of his good ointments, the graces of the Spirit, being imparted to them:

when I bring you out of the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; which will not only be locally and literally true of them, when the Jews are converted, that they shall be collected together out of all nations where they now are dispersed, and return to their land; but spiritually also, they being effectually called out from among the, men of the world, and to leave their former company, customs, and lusts:

and I will be sanctified in you before the Heathen; the Gentiles, Christian men; who will take notice of the power, and grace, and goodness of God, in the conversion and restoration of them, and praise and glorify him on

account of it; and when he will be visibly feared, served, and worshipped, in the midst of them.

Ver. 42. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, &c.*] The one only Jehovah, that keeps covenant; performs promises; is faithful to his word; is kind, gracious, and merciful, as well as mighty and powerful; and all this they shall experimentally know, and publicly own and acknowledge:

when I shall bring you into the land of Israel; which will be the Lord's doing; his hand and his power will be signally seen in it; this is one of the places in prophecy, which clearly asserts that the Jews, when converted, shall be brought into their own land again:

into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand, to give it to your fathers; that is, which he swore he would give unto them.

Ver. 43. *And there ye shall remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, &c.*] Their rejection of the Messiah; their continued disbelief of him; their obstinacy, hardness, and impenitence; their adherence to the traditions of the elders, to the making void the word of God; together with the most flagrant immoralities that ever any people were guilty of, and which are of a very defiling nature, and made them abominable in the sight of God; these now the Spirit of God convincing them of, they will remember with shame and confusion, and mourn over them in an evangelical way; and the more so, when they shall find themselves reinstated in their own land, enjoying all civil and religious privileges and liberties under Christ their King, whom they will now know, own, and serve; (see ^{<3320>}Zechariah 12:10):

and ye shall loath yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed; against God and Christ; against the law of the one, and the Gospel of the other. Sin is a loathsome thing to God; and it is so to his people. When they are thoroughly convinced of it, and they loath themselves for it; and never more so than when they have the greatest instances and clearest discoveries of the love and grace of God in Christ to them; then they blush, are ashamed of themselves and their sins, and are confounded when they perceive the Lord is pacified towards them, and their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake: sin never appears more odious and loathsome than when viewed in the glass of pardoning love; (see ^{<4306>}Ezra 9:6,8 ^{<3366>}Ezekiel 16:63).

Ver. 44. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, &c.]* Jehovah their righteousness, their Redeemer and Saviour, Lord and King; they shall know Christ, and him crucified, and God in Christ as their covenant God; (see Gill on “^{230D}Ezekiel 20:42”); when I have wrought with you for my name’s sake; in the thorough conversion of them; not that there is any cooperation with God in that work; ministers indeed are coworkers, not as efficient, but instruments; persons converted are wholly passive in the first work of conversion or regeneration; and in all later actings move as they are acted, turn being turned, walk and run being drawn, not being able to do anything as of themselves: but the phrase signifies a working in favour of them; doing great things for them, and good things in them, well pleasing in his sight, and good unto them; plucking them as brands out of the burning; taking them out of the hands of Satan; calling them out of darkness into light, and bringing them out of bondage into liberty; and all this

for his own name’s sake, of his own will and pleasure, according to his abundant mercy, and for the glory of his rich grace:

not according to your wicked ways, not according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord God; had he, they must have perished in their sins, and been miserable for ever; but he neither proceeds according to the bad works nor the good works of men, in calling and converting them, but according to his own purpose and grace, (^{230D}2 Timothy 1:9), their evil works do not hinder his grace when he is resolved to work, and their good works do not merit it; he acts freely, and in a sovereign way.

Ver. 45. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.]* Or the word of prophecy, as the Targum. Here begins a new prophecy, and most properly a new chapter should here begin; for the next chapter is of the same argument with this, and an explanation of it, and an enlargement upon it. And here Ben Melech begins one; and so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, and Castalio.

Ver. 46. *Son of man, set thy face toward the south, &c.]* The land of Judea, which lay south of Babylon, where the prophet now was, as Babylon lay north of that, (^{241H}Jeremiah 1:14 4:6) to set his face was to speak freely and boldly, with courage and constancy, and without fear and dread, to the inhabitants of it; and as a token of the Lord’s face being set against them for their sins. The Targum is,

“take a prophecy towards the way of the south.”

And drop thy word toward the south; or prophecy, as the Targum; doctrine or prophecy being compared to rain, and the delivery of it to the dropping or distilling of rain; which falls gently, gradually, successively, and oftentimes with weight, and to good purpose; (see ^{631D}Deuteronomy 32:2), which metaphorical phrase is explained in the next clause:

and prophesy against the forest of the south field; the city of Jerusalem, in the land of Judea, which was very full of people, as a forest of trees; but these barren and unfruitful, as the trees of the wood generally are; and a rendezvous of wicked persons, comparable to beasts of prey, that haunt in woods and forests.

Ver. 47. *And say to the forest of the south, &c.*] To the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea:

hear the word of the Lord; attend to it, and receive it, believe it, and take warning from it:

thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will kindle a fire in thee; in Jerusalem; meaning that he would send great calamities among them, the sword of the Chaldean army, famine, and pestilence; and that at last it should be burnt with fire, and the remainder of the inhabitants be carried captive:

and it shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree; all sorts of persons should be consumed by one or other of the above calamities, high and low, rich and poor, good and bad; and if good men should suffer, comparable to green trees, which fire will not so easily burn, not being fit fuel for it; then much more bad men, who were by far the most numerous, comparable to dry trees, and so fit fuel for the flames, and easily consumed thereby:

the flaming flame shall not be quenched or, the “flame, flame”; or, “the flame of flame”^{f298}; signifying either the succession of these calamities one after another; or the force and strength of them, which should not be abated until the ruin of the city was completed:

and all faces from the south to the north shall be burnt therein; which some understand of an utter destruction of the Jews, either by sword, famine, and pestilence, or by captivity from Jerusalem or Judea unto Babylon; but rather the meaning is, that all the inhabitants thereof should

suffer, from one end of it to the other, from Beersheba to Dan, the country lying in such a position.

Ver. 48. *And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it, &c.*] Not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea should see the hand of the Lord in their destruction; but even all the neighbouring nations, the case was so clear and plain, the matter so visible:

it shall not be quenched; no stop put to it by all the art and power of man; so that it was a clear point that it was the Lord's doing.

Ver. 49. *Then said I, ah Lord God!* &c.] The Septuagint version is, "by no means, Lord, Lord"; that is, let me not be sent on such an errand; at least, let it not be delivered in such figurative terms; or let not such a general calamity befall the people. The Targum is,

"receive my prayer, O Lord God;"

the prophet here either complains of the usage he had met with after delivering the above prophecy; or rather of what he had met with before, and which he expected again; and therefore desired either that he might be excused delivering the prophecy; or, however, that it might be delivered not in obscure and enigmatical terms, but in plain and easy ones:

they say of me, doth he not speak parables? as before, of a lion and her whelps; and of a vine, and its rods and branches, (²⁵⁰⁰Ezekiel 19:1-14) and now here again, of a fire, and a forest, and trees of it, green and dry; things not easily understood, and so not attended to and regarded; as if they should say, this man brings us nothing but parables, riddles, and enigmas, and such sort of unintelligible stuff, not worth minding; and rather appears as a man delirious and mad than a prophet. Wherefore Ezekiel seems to desire that he might be sent to them with a message more plainly expressed; and which might excite their attention and regard, and not expose him to their ridicule and contempt; and accordingly we find it is explained and expressed in clearer terms in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 21

This chapter contains an explanation of a prophecy in the latter part of the preceding chapter; and a new one, concerning the sword of the Chaldeans, and the destruction of the Jews and Ammonites by it. The prophecy of the fire in the forest is explained, (^{21:1-5}Ezekiel 21:1-5), upon which the prophet is directed to show his concern at it by sighing, in order to awaken the attention of the people to it, (^{21:6,7}Ezekiel 21:6,7), then follows a prophecy of a very sharp and bright sword, which should do great execution upon the people and princes of Israel; and therefore the prophet, in order to affect them, with it, is bid to howl and cry, and smite on his thigh; and smite his hands together, and the Lord says he would do so; all which is designed to set forth the greatness of the calamity and the distress, (^{21:8-17}Ezekiel 21:8-17), next the prophet is ordered to represent the king of Babylon as at a place where two ways met, and as at a loss which way to take, and as determined by divination to go to Jerusalem first, (^{21:18-24}Ezekiel 21:18-24), and then Zedekiah, the then reigning prince of Israel, has his doom pronounced on him, and he is ordered to be stripped of his regalia; and an intimation is given that there should be no more king over Israel of the house of David until the Messiah came, (^{21:26,27}Ezekiel 21:26,27) and the chapter is concluded with a prophecy of the destruction of the Ammonites in their own land, which should certainly be, though their diviners might, say the contrary, (^{21:28-31}Ezekiel 21:28-31).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Upon the above excuse or complaint about speaking in parables; wherefore the prophet is ordered to speak in plainer language to the people. It is very probable that the prophet delivered the prophecy recorded in the latter part of the preceding chapter in the figurative terms in which he received it; and he here is bid to explain it to the people, or to repeat it to them in clearer expressions.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, &c.*] Which shows that this city was meant by “the south”, (^{20:46}Ezekiel 20:46):

and drop thy word toward the holy places; which also are meant by the south in the passage referred to, even the holy land, holy city, and holy temple; or the temple itself is only meant, with the courts adjoining to it; or as consisting of three parts, as Kimchi, the porch, the temple, and the oracle; or the outward court, the holy place, and the holy of holies; and it may respect all other places for sacred worship, as their synagogues, both in city and country; which were not to be spared any more than the temple, nor were they, (^{כִּי} Psalm 74:7,8). Jarchi thinks that the destruction both of the first and second temple is here intended; and which sense Kimchi also mentions.

And prophesy against the land of Israel: by which it appears that this is intended by the “forest of the south field”: even the numerous inhabitants of it in general, as well as the city of Jerusalem, (^{כִּי} Ezekiel 20:46).

Ver. 3. *And say to the land of Israel, &c.*] The inhabitants of it, signified by the “forest of the south field”, (^{כִּי} Ezekiel 20:47):

thus saith the Lord, behold, I am against thee; and sad it is to have the Lord against a people, a nation, a city, or a family, or a particular person; for there is no contending with him, or standing before him; there is always a reason for it, it is for sin when God is against a people, even his own professing people:

and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath; bring the Chaldean army out of Babylon; which interprets what is meant by the “fire” he would kindle in the land of Israel, (^{כִּי} Ezekiel 20:47), namely, the sword of the enemy, which he would bring upon it; or war, with all its desolating train of judgments:

and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked; meant by the green and dry tree, (^{כִּי} Ezekiel 20:47), who, though they shall not perish everlastingly together, yet may fall together in temporal calamities; the one may be chastised, and the other condemned; or the one be carried captive for their good, as Ezekiel and Daniel, &c. and others be cut off by sword and famine; and such as were captives, never the better for their captivity. The Targum is,

“I will remove out of thee thy righteous ones, that I may destroy thy wicked ones.”

Some think that only such who were righteous in appearance, or in their own sight, are here meant. R. Saadiah Gaon, as Kimchi quotes him, interprets them of such as were righteous to Baal, and served him continually, in distinction from such as were wicked to him, and did not serve him continually; and both were wicked before the Lord, and therefore justly cut off.

Ver. 4. *Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, &c.*] Some by the sword, some by famine, some by pestilence, and others by captivity; and, upon the whole, none spared, but the land left desolate:

therefore shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh, from the south to the north; the Chaldean army shall go out of their own land against all the inhabitants of Judea, from Beersheba to Dan; this explains what is meant by all faces being burnt from the south to the north, (^{אֶזְכִּיאל}Ezekiel 20:47), namely, the general destruction of the Jews by the Chaldeans.

Ver. 5. *That all flesh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath, &c.*] The same with kindling a fire in Judea, (see Gill on “^{אֶזְכִּיאל}Ezekiel 20:48”):

it shall not return any more; that is, into its sheath, until it has done all its work; meaning that the Chaldean army should not return to their own land until they had executed the whole will of God upon the Jews; this is the fire that should not be quenched, (^{אֶזְכִּיאל}Ezekiel 20:48) and here ends the explanation of the said prophecy.

Ver. 6. *Sigh, therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins, &c.*] As if thy loins were broke, and go as if they were, and sigh as thou goest; or as a woman in travail, having her hands upon her loins as ready to break, and in the utmost distress; or heave, and groan, and sigh, till the girdle of the loins is broke, and by these motions and gesture show the miserable state of this people, and how much thou art affected with it:

and with bitterness sigh before their eyes; in the sight and hearing of the captives at Babylon; who would take care, by some means or other, to inform their brethren at Jerusalem of it, how the prophet sighed and groaned, under an apprehension and assurance of a dreadful calamity coming upon them; using along with his sobs and sighs, and brinish tears, doleful words and bitter lamentations.

Ver. 7. *And it shall be, when they say unto thee, wherefore sighest thou?* &c.] Which he was to do that purpose, that they might be put upon asking him the reason of it; whether it was on his own personal amount, or on account of his family or particular friends; or whether on a public account, either because of what should befall the captives there, or their countrymen in Judea and Jerusalem:

that thou shalt answer, for the tidings, or, the “report”^{f299},

because it cometh; the report of the Chaldean army approaching and invading Judea, and besieging Jerusalem, which he had from the Lord; and the thing itself was just at hand, and would shortly and certainly be; and that was the thing that affected him, and caused such sorrow and sighing:

and every heart shall melt; like wax, for fear of the enemy; even such who then disbelieved the report, and laughed at it as an idle story:

and all hands shall be feeble; and not able to hold a sword, or strike a stroke:

and every spirit shall faint; yea, such who had the greatest spirits, and were the most bold and undaunted, shall be quite dispirited, no heart nor courage to defend themselves or their country:

and all knees shall be weak as water; they shall not be able to stand upon their legs, and fight like men in their own defence; nor even be able to flee away, and make their escape: or,

shall flow with water^{f300}; either with sweat, or with urine, through fear of the enemy:

behold, it cometh, and shall be brought pass, saith the Lord God; let no man therefore put this evil day far from him, or treat this report as an idle tale, or a thing at a distance, and which may never come to pass; for it is now a coming, and in a very little time will be accomplished; for the Lord has said it, who cannot lie, whose counsel shall stand, and will do all his pleasure.

Ver. 8. *Again, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Either this is a new prophecy of another sword, distinct and different from that of the Chaldeans, even of the sword of the Romans, as Cocceius thinks or it is a further explanation of the former, and an enlargement upon it.

Ver. 9. *Son of man, prophesy and say, thus saith the Lord, &c.*] Deliver out the following prophecy in the name of the Lord:

say, a sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished; it is not only drawn out of its sheath, as before, but is made sharp and bright, and ready for use. It is repeated, either to show the certainty of it, or to express the terror and anguish of mind on account of it; persons in distress generally repeating that which is the occasion of it. The Targum interprets it of two swords, the sword of the Babylonians, and the sword of the Ammonites; first the one was to be used, and then the other: this latter, Jarchi and Kimchi observe, was fulfilled by Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slaying Gedaliah, sent for that purpose by Baalis king of the Ammonites, (~~300~~Jeremiah 40:14 41:2,10), but if two distinct swords are meant, I should rather think the sword of the Chaldeans, and the sword of the Romans, are intended. Cocceius, before observed, interprets it only of the latter; but Abendana both of the sword of the king of Babylon, and of the sword of the Romans.

Ver. 10. *It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter, &c.*] To cut easily, and wound deeply, and make a slaughter of men, like beasts for sacrifice; a sacrifice to the justice of God for their sins, and so acceptable to him; and it is he indeed that sharpens it, or prepares the instruments of his vengeance, whether Chaldeans, or Romans, or both; and gives them might and courage to execute his will with great keenness of wrath and fury:

it is furbished that it may glitter; and so strike terror on those against whom it is drawn, and for whom it is prepared, as glittering armour does:

should we then make mirth? sing, and dance, and feast, and indulge ourselves in all kind of mirth and jollity, when this is the case, a drawn, sharp, glittering sword hangs over our heads? no, surely! there is good reason for you to lament and sigh, as I do; you ask me the reason of it, this is it; is there not a cause? there is; it is not a season for mirth; but for weeping and lamentation. The words may be rendered, “or let us rejoice”^{f301}; that is, if we can, ironically spoken.

It contemneth the rod of my son, as every tree; thus says the Lord God, this sword so sharpened and brightened despises the rod or sceptre (for so the word signifies) of Israel my son, my firstborn, and makes no more of it than a common stick, and cuts it to pieces, and destroys it; signifying hereby the easy destruction of the sceptre and kingdom of Judah by the

sword of the Chaldeans or Romans. Some understand it of Christ the Son of God. The words may be rendered, “it is the rod of my son, it despiseth every tree”^{f302}; this sword, prepared, is no other than the rod of iron, which the Son of God makes use of to rule his enemies with, and break them in pieces; and no tree, high and low, can stand before it; it cuts down all, and destroys them, be they what they will; (see ^{<900>}Psalm 2:7-9). Cocceius interprets the former clause, “or we shall make merry”^{f303}, of the Father and of the Son, and of their delight and pleasure, while wrath was executed on their enemies.

Ver. 11. *And he hath given it to be furbished, that it might be handled,* &c.] Either Nebuchadnezzar, or rather God, or the Son of God, prepared and brightened the sword, that it might be handled and made use of, either by the Chaldeans or Romans, to the destruction of the Jews. The Targum is,

“he gave their vengeance to be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.”

The sword is sharpened and furbished, to give it into the hand of the slayer; either the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar; or the Roman emperor, Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 12. *Cry, howl, son of man,* &c.] Not only sigh, but cry; and not cry only, but howl; signifying hereby that this would be the case of the Jews when these calamities should come upon them; and, in order to affect them with them before hand, the prophet is ordered to act such a part, as well as to express his sympathy with them:

for it shall be upon my people; that is, the sword, or the calamity signified by it; this should be not upon other nations, but upon the Lord’s own people; such who professed themselves to be his people, and whom he had distinguished from all others; this is said, to affect the prophet the more, they being both the Lord’s people, and his also:

and it shall be upon all the princes of Israel; who were slain in Riblah by the king of Babylon, (^{<950>}Jeremiah 52:10), the sword spared neither people nor princes.

Terrors, by reason of the sword, shall be upon my people; upon the rumour of the invasion, and when besieged in the city, and when

attempting to make their escape by flight: or “my people are fallen by the sword”^{f304}, as some:

smite therefore upon thy thigh; as one grieved in spirit, in great distress and anguish; (see ³⁸¹⁹Jeremiah 31:19).

Ver. 13. *Because it is a trial*, &c.] As all afflictions and calamities are, especially to the people of God they try their faith and patience, and every other grace; and also to wicked men, they try them, whether they will repent or not:

and what if the sword contemn even the rod? the sceptre: the king of Judah, and his family; not only come upon and cut off the people and the princes, but the royal family also; and even overturn the tribe of Judah, as the word also signifies; and subvert the government of it, of which the rod or sceptre is an ensign; this would be a sore trial indeed, and yet it is intimated that so it should be:

it shall be no more, saith the Lord God; the rod or sceptre shall be no more in one of David’s line, of the tribe Judah, until the Messiah comes, (³²¹⁷Ezekiel 21:27). I should choose to render the words thus, “for it is a trial, but what?”^{f305} what an one is it? or for what is it? what will be the fruit, effect, and issue of it?

if also the sceptre despises; the king despises the trial, the affliction, the calamity, and is not brought to repentance by it:

it shall be no more, or “it shall not be”^{f306},

saith the Lord God; it, the sceptre, shall be taken away, and not restored to the house of David, until the Messiah comes.

Ver. 14. *Thou, therefore, son of man, prophesy, and smite thine hands together*, &c.] As being in the greatest agony for what is coming upon thy people: or “strike hand to hand”^{f307}; clap them together, as encouraging the enemy with his drawn, sharp, and glittering sword, to make use of it, and do execution with it:

and let the sword be doubled the third time; some think this has reference to the three captivities of Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah: others to the threefold calamity in Zedekiah’s time; the first, the taking of him; the second, the taking of the city; the third, the carrying captive the residue along with Gedaliah: or to the three times the Chaldeans came against

Jerusalem, after this prophecy; first with Nebuchadnezzar, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and took him and the city; then with Nebuzaradan, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, and burnt the city and temple; and again in the twenty third of Nebuchadnezzar, and carried away the remnant of the people, (^{261b}Jeremiah 52:5,6,12,30):

the sword of the slain: by which many should be slain:

it is the sword of the great men that are slain: of the sons of the kings, and of the princes and nobles of the land:

which entereth into their privy chambers; where they should endeavour to hide themselves from it, but in vain, none should escape; their privy chambers could not secrete nor secure them: or “which remains with them”; as that which is laid up, and reserved in a privy chamber, as Deuteronomy Dieu, from the use of the word in the Ethiopic language, renders it.

Ver. 15. *I have set the point of the sword against all their gates*, &c.] The word rendered “point” is nowhere else used, and is differently translated: by some the “fear” of the sword^{f308}, as Menachem and Kimchi; by others the “cry” of the sword, or of those that are slain with it, as Jarchi; and the Targum paraphrases it,

“those that slay with the sword:”

some, as both Jarchi and Kimchi, observe, by an inversion of the letters of the alphabet, called “athbash”, render it, the “slaughter” of the sword; and Deuteronomy Dieu and Dr. Castel, from the use of the word in the Ethiopic language, the “destruction” of it, or, the power of it. The meaning is, that the enemy, with their swords drawn, should be placed at every gate of the city of Jerusalem, or of their houses, pointed towards them; which would be very terrible, and sore destruction to them.

That their hearts may faint; seeing nothing but death before their eyes, and no way to escape it:

and their ruins be multiplied; of their families, and of their houses.

Ah! it is made bright; to terrify the more, as in (²⁵¹⁰Ezekiel 21:10), appearing as a flaming sword, and so causing fear; the prophet expresses his sorrow and concern for it. The Targum is,

“woe! the sword is drawn out to kill.”

It is wrapped up for slaughter; in its sheath or scabbard, that it might not rust or be blunted, it being furbished and brightened; but this seems contrary to its being drawn out of its sheath, as in (³²¹⁸Ezekiel 21:3,5). Kimchi renders it, therefore, “sharpened”, as in (³²¹⁰Ezekiel 21:10) and so the Targum,

“it is sharpened to destroy;”

the more easily and speedily.

Ver. 16. *Go thee one way or another*, &c.] Go to some one place: or “unite thyself”^{f309}; to other swords, or join other soldiers holding swords; the address is to the sword, to steer its course some one way, and slay as it goes along, sparing none:

either on the right, or on the left; or south, or north; so the Targum,

“unsheathe, and slay on the south, and destroy on the north:”

whithersoever thy face is set; or prepared, as the Targum, or appointed for destruction; this is the usual interpretation: but why may not the words be an apostrophe to the prophet, to go alone or single, either to the right or left, south or north, as his face was set, (³²¹⁰Ezekiel 21:2), sighing and crying, smiting his hands together, in order to affect the minds of the people with the sense of their calamities coming upon them?

Ver. 17. *I will also smite my hands together*, &c.] As well as the prophet was bid to do, (³²¹⁴Ezekiel 21:14), either expressing a concern for the calamity of the people, or indignation at their sins: or rather as encouraging their enemies to make use of the sword pointed at them, and, as it were, rejoicing at their destruction for the honour of his justice. The Targum is,

“and even I will bring vengeance upon vengeance:”

and I will cause my fury to rest; when the sword has done its business, and just vengeance is taken, the fury of the Lord shall cease; it shall proceed no further, it shall be kept within due bounds, and no more or further rage:

I the Lord have said it; who is omnipotent, and can do all things, and will do everything that he has said, whether in a way of promise or threatening.

Ver. 18. *The word of the Lord came unto me again, &c.*] Immediately after the former; for this respects the same prophecy about the sword, and the way of its coming, and the cause of it:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 19. *Also thou, son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come, &c.*] Describe or draw out upon a table or tile, as in (~~2001~~ Ezekiel 4:1), or on the ground, two roads, such as are described in maps; which it may be supposed the king of Babylon would take, either the one or the other, in order to make war against some king or another:

both twain shall come forth out of one land; both ways must be drawn as coming from one country, even Babylon;

and choose thou a place, choose it at the head of the way to the city; fix upon some spacious place, where Nebuchadnezzar may be supposed to bring his army, as a proper rendezvous for them to muster them in; and let be where two ways meet, that lead to cities, one to one city, and another to another: and it seems that upon the desert of Arabia, through which the king of Babylon came, there was such a place, where two ways met, and one led to Jerusalem, and the other to Rabbath; and this is the place the prophet was to describe, and where in fact Nebuchadnezzar came.

Ver. 20. *Appoint a way, &c.*] Mark out a way, describe a road, draw one out upon the ground, or point out one upon a table, or tile:

that the sword may come; in which the sword will come; or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum, even the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar:

to Rabbath of the Ammonites; which was the metropolis of the Ammonites, and is now called Philadelphia, as Jerom writes; it is so called, to distinguish it from others of the same name; (see ~~1025~~ 2 Samuel 12:26):

and to Judah in Jerusalem, the defenced city; which was so both by nature and art; it had mountains round about it, and had been fortified by several kings from the time of David, as Solomon, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. Judah is said to be in it; though it would seem more properly that Jerusalem was in Judah, because that people from all parts of Judah, upon hearing of the king of Babylon's intention and near approach to invade their land, fled to

Jerusalem, being a fortified place, for security. Now the prophet is bid to describe a way hither; not that one and the same way led to Rabbath and Jerusalem; but he was to describe a way from the place where Nebuchadnezzar stopped, which led to Rabbath, and another which led to Jerusalem.

Ver. 21. *For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, &c.*] That is, he would stand there; the prophet knew that it was certain it should be, and therefore represents it as if it was; he had, by a spirit of prophecy, seen, that when the king of Babylon was come to such a place, on the borders of the desert of Arabia, where the road from Babylon parted, where two ways met, the one leading to Jerusalem on the right, and the other to Rabbath on the left, he should make a full stop with his army, and consider which way he should take, whether that which led to Jerusalem, or that which led to Rabbath. It is very probable, when he came out of Babylon, his scheme was to make an attempt on both these important places, and take them; but he had not determined which to attack first, and was still doubtful; and now being come to the two roads, which led to the one and the other, it was necessary to make a halt, consider, and conclude, which course to steer; to determine which, he thought proper “to use divination”, which was performed in the following manner:

he made his arrows bright; being made of iron or steel; in the brightness of which diviners looked, and made their observations, and accordingly directed what was to be done; as they did by looking into the brightness of a man’s nails, as David Kimchi observes; though his father, Joseph Kimchi, was of opinion that the word has the signification of casting of arrows, or causing them to fly in the air; and supposes that Nebuchadnezzar cast up arrows into the air, and observed on which side they fell, and so judged which way to take; to this agrees the Targum,

“with a bow he cast out arrows;”

so the Syriac and Arabic versions^{f310}. Jerom says the way of divining by arrows was this: arrows, with the names of the cities inscribed upon them, were put into a quiver, and mixed together; and the city upon the arrow which came out first was first attacked. To this agrees the Vulgate Latin version, which renders the words, “mingling the arrows”; and Dr. Pocock^{f311} prefers this sense of the word, which he observes so signifies in the Arabic language; and who gives an account of the use of divination by

arrows among the Arabians, who much used it; though forbidden by Mahomet, as Schultens^{f312} observes. Their custom was this; when a man was about to marry a wife, or go a journey, or do any business of importance, he put three arrows into a vessel; on one was inscribed,

“my lord hath commanded me;”

on another,

“my lord hath forbid me;”

the third had nothing on it. If the first he took out had the command upon it, then he proceeded with great alacrity: but if it had the prohibition, he desisted; and if that which had nothing inscribed on it, he laid it by, till one of the other two was taken out; and there is to this day a sort of divination by arrows used by the Turks; it is commonly for the wars, though it is also performed for all sorts of things; as to know whether a man should undertake a voyage, buy such a commodity, or the like. The manner of doing it, as Monsieur Thevenot^{f313} relates, is this; they take four arrows, and place them with their points against one another, giving them to be held by two persons; then they lay a naked sword upon a cushion before them, and read a certain chapter of the Alcoran; with that the arrows fight together for some time, and at length the one fall upon the other: if, for instance the victorious have been named Christians (for two of them they call Turks, and the other two by the name of their enemy), it is a sign that the Christians will overcome; if otherwise, it denotes the contrary. The Jews^{f314} say, that in the present case of Nebuchadnezzar, that when he or his diviner cast the arrow for Antioch, or for Tyre, or for Laodicea, it was broke; but when he cast it for Jerusalem, it was not broke; by which he knew that he should destroy it. This is that sort of divination which is called “belomancy”: he consulted with images; or “teraphim”; images in which, as Kimchi says, they saw things future; Heathen oracles, from whence responses were made; these were images for private use, such as were the “lares” and “penates” with the Romans; these Laban had in his house in which Rachel stole from him; and are supposed to be such as are made under certain constellations, and their influences capable of speaking; (see ^{<300>}Zechariah 10:2), as Aben Ezra on (^{<0334>}Genesis 31:34) observes, with which men used to consult about things future or unknown; and this is thought to be one reason why Rachel took away these images from her father, that he might not, by consulting with them, know which way Jacob

fled^{f315} with such as these the king of Babylon consulted, that he might know which way he should take:

he looked in the liver; of a beast slain, and made observations on that to direct him; as used to be done by the Aruspices among the Romans. This is that sort of divination which is called “hepatoscopy”, or inspection into the liver; for though the Aruspices or Extispices, so called from their looking into the entrails of a beast, and making their observations on them, used to view the several inward parts, yet chiefly the liver, which they called the head of the intestines; and if this was wanting, or the head in it, the chief part of it, it was an ill omen; thus, in the month that Claudius Caesar was poisoned, the head of the liver was wanting in the sacrifice; or if the liver was livid, vicious, had any pustules upon it, or any purulent matter in it; or was touched, cut and wounded with the knife of the sacrificer, it foreboded great evils and misfortunes; or if the extreme part of the liver, which is called the fibre, was so placed, that from the lowest fibre the livers were replicated, or there was a double liver, this was a token for good, and portended joy and happiness^{f316}: moreover, they used to divide the bowels or entrails into two parts, and so the liver; the one they called “familiaris”, by which they judged what would befall themselves and their friends; the other “hostilis”, what concerned their enemies; according to the habit, colour, and position they were in, they concluded what would befall the one and the other^{f317}. Lucan^{f318} and Seneca^{f319} particularly have respect to this: and the king of Babylon here having two people to deal with, the Ammonites and the Jews, he inspects the liver of a creature slain for sacrifice, that he might judge which was best and safest for him to attack; which was less threatening, and more easy to be overcome^{f320}: this divination used to be made with calves, kids, and lambs^{f321}.

Ver. 22. *At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, &c.*] All his divinations, whether by arrows, or by images, or by liver, all directed him to his right hand, to turn to that which led to Jerusalem; and thus what appeared to him to be the effect of divination was overruled by the providence of God, to direct him to go and do what he designed he should:

to appoint captains to open the mouth in the slaughter; upon which he appointed his several captains and officers their distinct bodies of men they were to lead on to the siege of Jerusalem; and give them the word of command when to attack the place, scale the walls, or make breaches in it, and fall upon the enemy, and make a slaughter of them. The word for

“captains” signifies “rams”; and Joseph Kimchi interprets it of battering rams, to beat down walls; but these are after mentioned; and is both by Jarchi and David Kimchi explained of general officers of the army; and so the Targum,

“to appoint generals to open the gates, that the slayer may enter by them:”

to lift up the voice with shouting; which is usually done in sieges, when a shout is made, and a place is stormed; both to animate the besiegers, and to terrify the besieged:

to appoint battering rams against the gates; to break them down, or break through them, and so make way for the army to enter in; these were engines used in sieges, to beat down walls, and make breaches in them, that the besiegers might enter; so called from the iron heads of them, which resembled rams; and are thus described by Josephus^{f322},

“the ram is a huge beam, not unlike the mast of a ship; the top of it is capped with a thick piece of iron, in the form of a ram’s head, from whence it has its name: this is hung by the middle with ropes to another beam, which lies across, supported by a couple of posts; and thus hanging equally balanced, is, by a great number of men violently thrust backwards and forwards, and so beats the wall with its iron head; nor is there any tower so strong, or wall so broad, as to resist its repeated strokes.”

Vitruvius^{f323} says it was invented by the Carthaginians at the siege of Cadiz; but Pliny^{f324} affirms it was invented by Epeus at the siege of Troy; but the first mention of them is made by Ezekiel here, and in (~~200~~ Ezekiel 4:2), and Diodorus Siculus^{f325} affirms they were not known in the times of Sardanapalus, when Nineveh was taken by Arbaces. The Targum interprets it of officers set at the gates, as before; and so Jarchi:

to cast a mound; made up of earth, to raise their batteries upon: and

to build a fort; to cast out their arrows from thence, and protect the besiegers; (See Gill on “~~200~~ Ezekiel 4:1”).

Ver. 23. *And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight, &c.]* That is, the Jews shall laugh at this divination as a vain thing, as a Heathenish practice, and of which nothing would come; and even at the

prophet's account of it, and his prophecy concerning the king of Babylon coming to invade them; they looked upon them all as of a piece, trusting to their false prophets, who assured them that they should not be delivered into his hands:

to them that have sworn oaths; a description of the Jews, who had with their king Zedekiah sworn allegiance to the king of Babylon; which oaths they had violated, taking others to the king of Egypt; or, “because they were bound by oaths to them”^{f326}; meaning either the Egyptians, who had bound themselves by oaths to protect the Jews; and therefore they feared nothing from this pretended divination and prophecy, as they judged them to be, though they had not kept faith with the Chaldeans themselves; or the Jews, because of the Egyptians who had entered into an alliance with them, confirmed by oaths; and this had made them secure, on this they depended. The Targum takes the words as if they signified “seven times seven”; and gives this strange paraphrase of them, accounting for the vain confidence of the Jews;

“and their divinations were lies in their eyes, and the enchantments with which he enchanted them; for they knew not that he had observed forty nine times (i.e. his arrows, images, and liver), and an answer was returned upon the word, till the time came to him in which they should be delivered into his hands:”

but he will call to remembrance the iniquity: that is, Nebuchadnezzar would call to mind the perfidy and perjury of the king of Judah, in breaking covenant with him, and violating his oath. Some think that the Chaldeans that were with Nebuchadnezzar were not satisfied at first that it was a true divination that was made, they being set upon the taking of Rabbath first; but Nebuchadnezzar, remembering and putting them in mind of the treachery of Zedekiah, reconciled them to it, and determined them in the expedition against the Jews:

that they may be taken; as birds in a snare, or beasts in a net, and be carried captive.

Ver. 24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Because of their vain confidence, added to their perjury and perfidy:

because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered; their old sins, by committing new ones, both against the Lord, and against the king of Babylon:

in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; both in their religious and civil actions; in the worship of God, and in their covenants and agreements with men; their sins were exposed and manifest to all, not only to God, who was provoked thereby, but to men, to the nations round about; particularly to Nebuchadnezzar, who was enraged by them:

because, I say, that they are come to remembrance; both before the Lord, and the king of Babylon:

ye shall be taken with the hand; as easily as a bird is, when in the snare. The Targum is,

“ye shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon;”

which is no doubt the sense of the passage.

Ver. 25. *And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, &c.*] Meaning Zedekiah, the then reigning prince; who is so called, because he had profaned or violated the oath and covenant he made with the king of Babylon, as well as because of other sins he was guilty of; and his being a prince of Israel was an aggravation of his crimes: now, though it is “not fit” in common, or for ordinary persons, “to say to a king thou art wicked, and to princes ye are ungodly”, (~~183418~~ Job 34:18), yet a prophet from the Lord, and in his name, may say so; and he ought, when he has a commission from God for it:

whose day is come; the time of his downfall and ruin; and so the Targum,

“whose day of destruction is come:”

when iniquity shall have an end; a stop put to the torrent of it, both in the king and his subjects; they not having the opportunity and means of sinning in captivity as before; or when the measure of iniquity is filled up, then comes punishment; or when the punishment of iniquity shall be completed. So the Targum,

“the time of the recompence of his sins.”

Ver. 26. *Thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem, and take off the crown, &c.*] That is, from Zedekiah; and as these are the regalia and ensigns of royal dignity, taking them off signifies the deposition of him as a king, the stripping him of his kingly power and authority: an earthly crown

is a corruptible and fading one, at most it continues but during this life, and sometimes not so long; it does not always sit firm; sometimes it is tottering and shakes, and sometimes quite fails off to the ground; it is taken from the head of one, and put upon the head of another, by him who gives the orders in the text, and has the sovereign disposal of crowns and kingdoms; who sets up one, and puts down another. The “diadem” was a royal tire of the head, wore in common; the “crown” was put on at certain times; both signify one and the same thing, royal dignity; though the former is sometimes used as an ornament of the priesthood, as the latter of kingly power; hence the Targum,

“remove the diadem (or mitre) from Seraiah the high priest, and I will take away the crown from Zedekiah the king;”

but the latter is only meant; besides, as Kimchi observes, it was not Seraiah, but Jehozadak his son, that was carried captive with Zedekiah:

this shall not be the same; this royal dignity shall not continue the same; the kingdom shall not be in the same lustre and glory, nor in the same hands:

exalt him that is low: either Jeconiah now in captivity; and which was fulfilled when Evilmerodach lifted up his head, and set his throne above the thrones of the kings in Babylon, (^{צפני} Jeremiah 52:31,32), or Zerubbabel, of the seed of Jeconiah, who was born in the captivity, and became prince of Judah; or rather the Messiah, who was of a low extraction; born of mean parents; was as a root out of a dry ground; appeared in the form of a servant, poor and lowly; yet, when he had done his work, was highly exalted at the right hand of God; far above angels, principalities, and powers; as well as set upon the throne of his father David:

and abase him that is high; the then prince upon the throne, Zedekiah; who was high and lifted up, but should be pulled down and humbled, as he was.

Ver. 27. *I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it, &c.*] The crown and kingdom of Judah; which being expressed three times, has not respect, as Kimchi thinks, to the three generations, in which the crown ceased after the captivity, as those of Asir, Shealtiel, Pedaiah; and in the fourth generation was restored to Zerubbabel; for he was no king, nor was there any of David’s line after; nor were the Maccabees or Hasmoneans properly kings; but the phrase denotes the utter abolition of the kingly power, and the

certainty of it, which could not be restored, notwithstanding the attempts made by Gedaliah and Ishmael; all their schemes were overturned, and so in successive ages and may also denote and include the troubles that were in the Jewish state, not only during the captivity, but from that time unto the Messiah's coming; there were nothing but overturnings, overturnings till that time came:

and it shall be no more; a kingdom governed by one of the seed of the then present family, or of the seed of David; there shall be no more a king of his race, as there was not till Shiloh came, intended in the next clause:

until he come whose right it is; the right of the crown and kingdom of Israel; which belongs to Jesus the Messiah, being descended from a race of kings of the house of Judah, and of the seed of David: or,

to whom the judgment is^{f327}; to whom the Father hath committed all judgment, (^{<BIB>}John 5:22) all power of judging both his church and people, and the whole world:

and I will give it him; the crown and kingdom, which is his right; put him in the possession of it, as he was at his resurrection and ascension; and which will more fully appear in the latter day, when all kingdoms will become his; especially he has, and will appear to have, the throne of his father David, and of his kingdom there will be no end, (^{<BIB>}Luke 1:31,32). This is understood and interpreted of the Messiah, by R. Abendana^{f328}, a modern Jew.

Ver. 28. *And thou, son of man, prophesy, and say, &c.*] Here begins a new prophecy, or rather an enlargement on part of the former; two ways being marked out for the sword of the Chaldeans to come in; the one leading to Jerusalem, the other to Rabbath of the Ammonites; the prophecy being finished concerning the former, here an account is given of the latter; how the sword should move that way, and what execution it would do:

thus saith the Lord God concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; Nebuchadnezzar, agreeably to the above prophecy, having taken his route to Jerusalem, as his divination directed him, and destroyed that, returned to Babylon, without making any attempt upon the Ammonites; which so flushed them, that they insulted the Jews, and laughed at their destruction, as if their God whom they served could not save them; attributing their safety and prosperity to the idols they worshipped; (see ^{<BIB>}Ezekiel 25:1-7 ^{<BIB>}Zephaniah 2:8-10):

even say thou, the sword, the sword is drawn for the slaughter; the same sword of the Chaldeans, which was drawn for the slaughter of the Jews, is now drawn for the slaughter of the Ammonites; and which is repeated for the certainty of it, and to inject terror; and this, as Josephus^{f329} says, was accomplished five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, in the twenty third year of Nebuchadnezzar:

it is furbished, to consume because of the glittering; being brightened and made sharp, it not only terrified with its glittering, but was more fit and prepared to cut and destroy; (see ²⁷⁰⁹Ezekiel 21:9, 10).

Ver. 29. *Whiles they see vanity unto thee, whiles they divine a lie unto thee, &c.*] The Ammonites had their seers, soothsayers, diviners, and false prophets, which they are bid to be aware of, and are cautioned against hearkening to, (²⁷⁰⁸Jeremiah 27:3,9), these told them they were in the utmost safety, and that the king of Babylon would not come against them; or, if he did, would not succeed, when his sword was drawn and furbished for the destruction of them:

to bring thee upon the necks of the slain, of the wicked; that is, of the Jews who were slain by the sword of the Chaldeans for their wickedness; and these diviners by their vain divination and lies would bring the Ammonites into the same condition, to be slain as they were; and as it were to fall upon their necks, as one slain person upon another; and so the Targum,

“to deliver thy neck as the necks of the slain, of the wicked:”

it may be rendered, “to put thee to the necks of the slain”^{f330}; or, as Kimchi, “with the necks of the slain”; though some understand it, as if the diviners by their lies, promising peace and prosperity, encouraged the Ammonites to insult the Jews, and as it were to trample upon the necks of the dead:

whose day is come, when their iniquity shall have an end; along with Zedekiah their king; a description of the Jews; (see Gill on “²⁶⁰⁷Ezekiel 21:27”).

Ver. 30. *Shall I cause it to return into his sheath?* &c.] The drawn and furbished sword of the Chaldeans? no, I will not; it shall never return or be put up until the Ammonites are utterly consumed. Some read these words in the imperative, as the Targum,

“return the sword to its sheath;”

so the Vulgate Latin version, “return to thy sheath”; and so may be considered as a direction to the Ammonites to put up their swords, and not stand in their own defence, since it would be to no purpose; though Jerom, and Grotius after him, take the words to be an apostrophe to the drawn sword of the Chaldeans to sheath itself, having done its work upon the Jews and Ammonites; or to the Chaldeans to return to Babylon, and where they also should be punished; and so interpret all that follows of the destruction of the Babylonians by the Medes and Persians; but the first sense is best:

I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy nativity; not in the place where their father Ammon was born, which was at Zoar; but where they first became a kingdom and state, a body politic; or where the present generation of them were born; they should not be carried out of their own land, but destroyed in it.

Ver. 31. *And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee*, &c.] Like a mighty flood, which should sweep them away for their sins and transgressions; and particularly for their reproaches of God and his people, which caused his indignation to rise, and him to pour it out upon them in such a manner:

I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath; as men put metal into a furnace, and then blow upon it, in order to melt it, and consume the dross; and which fire, so blown, is exceeding fierce and very consuming; who can stand against such a blast as that of the wrath of God, not only kindled, but blown with his breath like a stream of brimstone?

and deliver thee into the hand of brutish men; or “burners”^{f331}; that burn with fierce anger, barbarous and inhuman, that would show no mercy nor compassion, such were the Chaldeans, (³⁰⁰⁶Habakkuk 1:6-8):

and skilful to destroy; though like brutes or beasts of prey for their cruelty; yet, like men, rational, cunning, and artful to devise ways and means to destroy men; well versed in the art of war; and thoroughly learned in all the lessons and methods of violence and destruction.

Ver. 32. *Thou shalt be for fuel for the fire*, &c.] Easily consumed, as briars and thorns cast into a furnace; such are wicked men to the fire of God’s wrath:

thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; such large numbers shall be slain everywhere, that the land shall flow with the blood of them; who shall lie unburied, and rot, and putrefy upon the ground:

thou shalt be no more remembered; but lie in everlasting oblivion, as they do to this day; the name of an Ammonite being nowhere mentioned and heard of:

for I the Lord have spoken it; who never alters the thing that is gone out of his lips; and sooner shall heaven and earth pass away than one word of his. The Targum is,

“for I the Lord have decreed by my word;”

and his counsel shall stand, and every purpose and resolution of his shall be accomplished.

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 22

In this chapter a catalogue or list of the sins of the Jews is given; a comparison of them to dross is made, and they are dealt with accordingly; and a complaint is lodged against all ranks and orders of men for their sins; on account of which, there being no intercessor for them, they are threatened with captivity and destruction. The prophet is ordered to judge them, and lay before them their abominable sins, (³²¹¹Ezekiel 22:1,2), of which a long list is given, as murder, idolatry; contempt of parents; oppression of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; negligence of holy things; profanation of the sabbath; tale bearing, lewdness and uncleanness of various sorts; bribery, usury, extortion, and dishonest gain, (³²¹³Ezekiel 22:3-13) for which the Lord threatens to deal with them in a manner that would be intolerable to them; that he would carry them captive, and scatter them among the Heathen, (³²¹⁴Ezekiel 22:14-16), they are compared to dross, and as such should be gathered into a furnace, and melted down, (³²¹⁷Ezekiel 22:17-21), all ranks and orders of men are complained of, because of their sins, and threatened, (³²²³Ezekiel 22:23,24), the prophets for their voraciousness, rapine, murder, and lies, (³²²⁵Ezekiel 22:25,28), the priests, for their violation of the law, neglect of holy things, and profanation of the sabbath, (³²²⁶Ezekiel 22:26), the princes, for their cruelty, murder, and dishonest gain, (³²²⁷Ezekiel 22:27), the people of the land, for their oppression and robbery, (³²²⁹Ezekiel 22:29), and there being none to stand in the gap for them, the Lord threatens to pour out his wrath upon them, and consume them, (³²³⁰Ezekiel 22:30,31).

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me.* &c.] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum, another prophecy:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city?* &c.] Or, “city of bloods”^{f332}? the city of Jerusalem, in which was shed the blood of the prophets sent unto her; the doubling of the word denotes the vehemency with which it was expressed: wilt thou plead for and excuse

such a city as this? surely no; so some: or wilt thou do thy work and office as a prophet? hast thou courage enough to do it? will thou rebuke and reprove? as the Targum; wilt thou examine her case, judge truly, and condemn her, as thou oughtest to do? hast thou an inclination to take this affair in hand? then be directed to it, as follows:

yea, thou shalt show her all her abominations; lay them before her; convict her of them; show her the evil of them, and the punishment they deserve; every kind of sin she was guilty of; for, as for particular acts, it was impossible to reckon them; those sins that were the most flagrant, and most frequently committed, and which were abominable to the Lord, and rendered her so in his sight, are intended.

Ver. 3. *Then say thou, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] For though the prophet was to sit as judge, yet in the name of the King of kings, under whose authority he acted:

the city sheddeth blood in the midst of it; openly and impudently, in the face of all, and in great abundance; even innocent blood, as the Targum has it: murders were frequent and common, either through quarrels, or through unrighteous judgments in courts of judicature:

that her time may come; to fill up the measure of her iniquity, and to receive the just punishment of her sins. So the Targum,

“the time of her destruction:”

and maketh idols against herself, to defile herself; being guilty, not only of murder, but of idolatry; she was an idol maker and an idol worshipper; and which was against herself, as well as against God; to her own ruin and destruction, as well as to his dishonour; and it is no wonder she should be defiled with such dunghill gods as these were, as the word used signifies. The Targum renders it, “in the midst of her”; and Kimchi interprets it, by “her”, or “above her”, upon the mountains and hills.

Ver. 4. *Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed, &c.*] Not only she contracted guilt by the innocent blood she shed, but she was tried and found guilty; her guilt was notorious, plain, and evident, as well as exceeding great, and much aggravated:

and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made: she not only made them, in doing which she sinned; but polluted herself with them, by

worshipping them; her mind and conscience were defiled with them; and which brought such a stain and pollution, as could not be removed by anything that she could do: there are both pollution and guilt in sin, and neither can be removed but by the blood of Christ; and, unless removed that way, punishment must follow:

and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years; to full age, to ripeness for judgment; she had hastened by her sins her days of affliction and distress appointed for her, and was come to years of maturity to suffer for her sins; the years of her captivity, which would soon take place; years in which she would have no pleasure:

therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the Heathen, and a mocking to all countries; who, instead of praising them for their idolatry, would deride them for leaving the God of their fathers, which they did not; and insult over them in their affliction and distress, though they joined with them in idolatrous practices.

Ver. 5. *Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, &c.*] The neighbouring nations, as the Edomites, Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites; and distant ones, as the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians; all that either hear of, or see their misery, shall rejoice at it, and triumph over them:

which art infamous and much vexed; or they shall say, O thou of an infamous name and character; who hast defiled thy name, got a blot upon it, and lost thy credit by thy conduct and behaviour; and now fretting and vexing under the afflictions and calamities that lie upon thee: or whose tumults are many, as the Targum; who hast been full of noise, and factions, and tumults; thou art now come to a righteous end.

Ver. 6. *Behold, the princes of Israel, &c.*] Those that belonged to the royal family, or the nobles of the land, or the members of the grand sanhedrim of the nation:

everyone were in thee to their power to shed blood; everyone exerted himself to the uttermost, according to his ability, to shed blood, or cause it to be shed; everyone strove, as it were, who should shed most, to exceed each other in this abominable sin.

Ver. 7. *In thee have they set light by father and mother, &c.*] Through whom they received their being from God; by whom they were brought

into the world, brought up and educated; and to whom they owed great respect, honour, and obedience; but, on the contrary, they wanted affection to their persons, showed great disrespect to their commands, and treated them with irreverence and contempt; a sin of a very heinous nature, of the first magnitude; reckoned among the very Heathens as next to contempt of God, and disobedience to him; is directly contrary to a law of God, and threatened with a curse, and a severe punishment, (⁽¹²¹¹²⁾Exodus 20:12 ⁽¹⁵⁷¹⁶⁾Deuteronomy 27:16 ⁽¹⁸⁰¹⁷⁾Proverbs 30:17) by the connection of the words with the preceding, the princes of Israel seem intended; the children of the nobles, and the sons and daughters of the king; who, it might have been thought, by the character they bore, the station they were in, and the politeness of their education, would have behaved in another manner; and if this sin prevailed among them, no doubt it did among those of a lower class, who are always influenced by such examples:

in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger; the proselyte, as the Septuagint; him that was converted to me, as the Syriac version; which is an aggravation of the sin, that it was not merely a stranger that came about civil business, but one who came from foreign parts to worship the Lord at Jerusalem, as the Ethiopian eunuch did: now, to oppress such an one, either by private frauds, or by injustice in a court of judicature; to exact upon him for food or lodging; or circumvent and overreach him in trade and commerce; or distress him by vexatious lawsuits, when ignorant of the laws and customs of the country; at a distance from his friends, and in want of money, must be a very great evil; and yet even the princes themselves in Jerusalem were guilty of it:

in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow; that were weak and helpless, and had none to protect them, father and husband being dead; when, according to their first rank and station as princes, they ought to have been the defenders of them; but, instead of that, distressed, afflicted, and grieved them.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast despised mine holy things*, &c.] The holy place, the temple, and the worship of it; holy persons, the priests that officiated there; holy sacrifices offered up by them; the holy word of God read and explained; and all holy ordinances there administered. These words are directed to Jerusalem, the holy city, and to the inhabitants of it, who ought to have been holy men:

and hast profaned my sabbaths; by doing their own work, and neglecting the service of God; and which was an inlet, as it usually is, to all manner of sin.

Ver. 9. *In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood*, &c.] Innocent blood, as the Targum; such who go from house to house, as pedlars do, with their wares or spices, as the word^{f333} signifies; hence the Syriac version renders it “merchants”; and carry tales and lies of innocent persons, and stir up others against them to wrath and revenge, and shed their blood; or that go to the courts of judicature, and there accuse innocent persons, and bear false witness against them, to the taking away of their lives. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it “thieves”: who commonly are murderers: and in thee they eat upon the mountains; that is, there were such in Jerusalem who used to go to the mountains where idols were worshipped, and eat the things that were sacrificed to them; or partook of the feast made to the honour of them. So the Targum,

“in thee they served idols on the mountains:”

in the midst of thee they commit lewdness; a general word for all manner of uncleanness, as adultery, fornication, incest, &c. of which some particulars follow.

Ver. 10. *In thee have they discovered their father’s nakedness*, &c.] Or, “he discovered”^{f334}, or “uncovered”, it being in the singular number; though the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read in the plural; this, though committed, was done but by a few; it being a sin not so much as named among men, as for a man to lie with his father’s wife, (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 5:1) as Reuben did, (^{<432>}Genesis 35:22) and which is expressly forbidden; and is mentioned first as the capital sin of uncleanness, (^{<406>}Leviticus 18:6):

in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution; ravished and deflowered such women who had their menstrues; to lie with such was prohibited by the law of God, (^{<409>}Leviticus 18:19 20:18), so that here was a double sin committed; a rape of a woman, whether married or unmarried, at the time of her purgation or sickness; and such a copulation, which at another time would be lawful, ought to be abstained from at such a time, as prejudicial to themselves, and to their posterity, as well as contrary to the divine law.

Ver. 11. *And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife,* &c.] The sin of adultery, which is an abominable sin; it is so to God, and it should be so to man: or, "a man hath committed"^{f335}; some man of note, a great man; for this sin prevailed among the princes and nobles: or "everyone"; it being a general vice, which obtained among all ranks, high and low, rich and poor:

and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; his wife's daughter, or his son's wife, contrary to (^{4B1815}Leviticus 18:15,17):

and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter: his own sister, begotten of the same father, though it may be not born of the same mother; yet the relation is too near for marriage; and besides, it is a rape that is here intended; and the uncovering of the nakedness of a sister, whether by father or mother's side, whether born at home or abroad, is prohibited, (^{4B1819}Leviticus 18:9), and some have thought that all these acts of uncleanness were committed in honour of their idols, and when they worshipped them on the mountains, (²⁶²¹⁹Ezekiel 22:9).

Ver. 12. *In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood.* &c.] Innocent blood, as the Targum; judges upon the bench, whose office it is to take the part of the innocent, and clear him from unjust charges; and protect him from the violence of wicked and unreasonable men; that lay things to his charge, which, if true, would require blood; and yet men in such offices took bribes to bring in the innocent guilty, and pass sentence of death on him; which is a most shocking iniquity indeed: to take bribes in pecuniary matters is very wicked; but to do it in cases which affect life is most dreadfully cruel: or if it is to be understood of such persons who take bribes to bear false witness against a man, to the taking away of his life, it is a very heinous and detestable sin; for, as for a set of jurymen bribed to bring in a wrong verdict, which would be equally a most enormous crime; such a custom to try causes to be determined by a jury did not obtain among the Jews:

thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion; not content with moderate usury, and increase, and even that were forbid the Jews among themselves; so greedy were they of gain at any rate, that they extorted it of their neighbours, in the most violent and oppressive manner. Kimchi, by her "friends or neighbours", understands the Assyrians and Egyptians; to whom she gave gifts, extorted by oppression from her own people, to get help of them:

and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord; to seek for help from me; or they had forgotten his law, which forbids the above sins; they had forgotten the instructions, cautions, and directions he had given them. The Targum is,

“and hast forsook my worship;”

forgetfulness of God is the cause of all sin.

Ver. 13. *Behold, therefore, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, &c.*] As one amazed at it; or as filled with indignation against it; or as grieved and distressed at it; so Jarchi and Kimchi: or else as rejoicing at the punishment going to be inflicted on them for it. So the Septuagint renders it,

“I will bring my hand upon them;”

and the Targum,

“behold, I will bring my vengeance upon thee for the sins of mammon, &c.

Jarchi and Kimchi observe from their Rabbins, that four and twenty sins are recited by Ezekiel; but the final sentence of punishment is for rapine or dishonest gain, which is the greatest evil of all, (⁵¹⁶⁰1 Timothy 6:10):

and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee; the innocent blood shed in the midst of her; not so much by thieves and cutthroats, as under a pretence of justice which was very abominable indeed; against which the Lord expresses just and strong resentment.

Ver. 14. *Can thine heart endure, &c.*] Or “stand”^{f336}: surely it must fall within thee; become like water, and melt as wax, be it ever so hard and adamantine:

or can thine hands be strong in the days that I shall deal with thee? surely they must become weak, and drop, and not be able to hold a weapon for defence: and, if this would be the case, when God should deal with the Jews for their sins, by sending the Chaldean army to besiege their city, and take it; how will it be with sinners at the day of judgment, and to all eternity, when the awful sentence shall be pronounced, “go ye cursed”; when the wrath of God shall be poured out upon them; when they shall be cast into hell, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched? this

will be intolerable by the most stout hearted sinner; no heart will be strong enough to stand up under it, or hands to keep it off:

I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it; he who is the mighty God, the eternal and unchangeable Jehovah; he has said it, that he will deal with impenitent sinners in a way of wrath, and he will be as good as his word; he will certainly accomplish it; it is in vain for men to flatter themselves to the contrary; or to put away the evil day far from them; it shall surely be. The Targum is,

“I have decreed by my word, and I will establish it.”

Ver. 15. *And I will scatter thee among the Heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, &c.*] Not only cause them to be carried captive to some one place, as Babylon; but to be scattered and dispersed throughout the various provinces of it, and in other nations, as chaff is by the winds; signifying hereby the power by which it would be done; their weakness, who would not be able to hinder it; and the uncomfortable condition they would be in:

and will consume thy filthiness out of thee; by destroying some filthy persons, and reforming others; by bringing them by means of those afflictions to a sense of their sins, and to forsake them; and so would be refined as silver from its dross in a furnace: it may have a particular reference to their idolatry, that filthy sin, which they were cured of, and purged from, by their captivity, and to which they returned no more.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the Heathen, &c.*] No longer be the inheritance of God, but their own; and not have God to be their portion and inheritance, but themselves; and a poor portion and inheritance that must be, being in captivity, poverty, and distress; enjoying neither their civil nor religious liberties, as heretofore; it would be now manifest to the Heathens that they were forsaken of God, and left to themselves. Some render it, “and thou shalt be profaned, or polluted in thyself”^{f337}; shalt be known to be so to thyself, as well as appear so to others. The Targum is,

“I will be sanctified in thee before the people:”

and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; able to do what I say; faithful to my word; omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent; and this thou shalt not only know, but own and acknowledge, when these calamities take place, and have their effect.

Ver. 17. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 18. *Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross, &c.*] Vile, despicable, useless, and unprofitable; to which the wicked of the earth are compared, (⁴⁹¹⁹Psalm 119:119) and here the Lord's professing people, they differing nothing from them, being sadly degenerated; formerly they were as silver, and so they might be reckoned among themselves; but to God, who is omniscient, the searcher of the hearts and reins, who saw all their actions, and knew the spring of them, in his sight they were as dross:

all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace: or "crucible"^{f338}; where they are put together, in order to be set in the furnace, and melted down. It is not usual to put so many different metals together for melting, but separately; but here it seems to intend a mixture of them all together; and so the Targum and Septuagint render it,

"all they as brass, &c. are mixed;"

several metals of the baser sort are here mentioned, by a gradation from the better to the worse; tin being not so good as brass, and iron of less value than either, and lead than any of them. Some think the different characters of the people are here described; impudent persons by "brass"; hypocrites by "tin"; cruel and savage ones by "iron"; and such as were sottish and stupid by "lead"; or, as others, covetous ones:

they are even the dross of silver; once they were like silver, precious and valuable, while they retained the true religion, and the worship of God, and behaved agreeably to their character in the performance of all good works, and were in outward flourishing circumstances; but now degenerated from the pure worship of God, and sunk into idolatry and wickedness, and become poor and miserable.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, because ye are all become dross, &c.*] King, princes, nobles, prophets, priests, as well as the common people; the apostasy was general, in city and country; scarcely any exceptions to be made:

therefore will I gather you into the midst of Jerusalem; from the several parts of the country, thinking they should be safe there, when the design of God by this providence was the destruction of them in it.

Ver. 20. *As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, &c.]* As refiners of metal do; though not together, as here, but each metal apart. Silver is here mentioned, to denote that those who were truly good should suffer in this calamity, and be tried and purified by it:

to blow the fire upon it, and to melt it; the metal being covered with fuel, this is kindled and blown upon, to cause the greater heat, in order to melt it down; expressive of the wrath of God, as follows:

so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury; from the several parts of the land unto the city of Jerusalem: this they thought was for their good and safety, but it was in wrath, and in order to ruin:

and I will leave you there, and melt you; that is, I will leave you in the city of Jerusalem, to the sword, famine, and pestilence, to be destroyed by them; or with fire at the burning of the city: or, “I will rest”^{f339}; as the refiner does; having put his metal into the furnace, and blown the fire, sits still till all is melted.

Ver. 21. *Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, &c.]* Not only gather them in wrath, as before; but blow upon them in wrath, which is often compared to fire in Scripture; and besides, the city and temple of Jerusalem were to be burnt, and were burnt with material fire, in consequence of God’s displeasure against his people:

and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof; of the city of Jerusalem; be destroyed by one judgment or another in it; or perish in the conflagration of it.

Ver. 22. *As silver is melted in the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof, &c.]* This is repeated for the greater confirmation of it; and the people might assure themselves that it would verily be, as was threatened:

and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you; feel it upon them; be sensible of it, and acknowledge it; and that it is the Lord’s doings, and righteously done; these are they who are meant by the silver,

who, though cast into the furnace, were not destroyed, only purified, and made the better and brighter for their afflictions.

Ver. 23. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 24. *Son of man, say unto her, thou land, &c.*] Thou land of Israel, as the Targum:

thou art not cleansed; from filthiness, by the fire of divine judgments; or reformed from sins, by the instructions, cautions, and exhortations of the prophets; none of these things had any effect upon her to make her wiser and better. So the Targum,

“a land not cleansed it is, and good works are not done in it, to protect it in the day of cursing:”

nor rained upon in the day of indignation; no cooling shower to quench the fire of divine wrath; nothing to avert or stop the judgments of God; no refreshment and comfort from the doctrines of the prophets, which fell like rain: it is a judgment upon a people to have no rain, either in a temporal or spiritual sense; (see ^{<347>}Zechariah 14:17,18). In the Talmud^{f340}, this text is brought to prove that the flood did not come upon the land of Israel.

Ver. 25. *There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, &c.*] Not of the prophets of the Lord, but of her prophets; such as were agreeable to her, the false prophets. The Targum renders it,

“a company of scribes;”

the interpreters of the law; these entered into a confederacy together against the true prophets, and agreed to prophesy the same things, to flatter the people with peace and prosperity, when sudden destruction was at hand:

like a roaring lion ravening the prey; that roars when hungry, and while it is tearing the prey in pieces; so these false prophets thundered out their menaces against the true prophets, and those that adhered to them; clamouring against them as enemies to the state; and threatening them with accusations to it; and carrying on a judicial process against them:

they have devoured souls; persecuted men to death, that would not give credit to their prophecies; and destroyed the souls of those that did, with their false doctrines and prophecies:

they have taken the treasure and precious things; of those they destroyed; or of others, for prophesying smooth things to them; filthy lucre being the principal thing they had in view:

they have made her many widows in the midst thereof; by persecuting their husbands to death for not believing their prophecies; or by persuading to hold out the siege, under a notion of deliverance; whereby the lives of many were lost by the sword, famine, and pestilence, to whose death they might be said to be accessory.

Ver. 26. *Her priests have violated my law*, &c.] Or, “forced it”^{f341}; they gave a wrong explanation of it, made it speak what it should not; they wrested the sense and meaning of it, and did and taught things contrary to it; they broke it themselves, who should have instructed others in it, and exhorted them to have kept it, and encouraged them by their own example:

and have profaned my holy things; sacrifices and oblations, which were only to be offered and eaten by holy persons; they made them common to others who should not have partook of them:

they have put no difference between the holy and the profane; between holy persons and things, and profane persons and things; they made no difference in their practice between the one and the other; but promiscuously conversed with holy and profane persons, and used holy and profane things, without distinguishing one from the other:

neither have they showed the difference between the unclean and the clean: they did not show to the people, as was the duty of their office, what was clean or unclean for sacrifice; what was clean and allowed to be eaten, and what was unclean and forbid to be eaten; nor who were clean and who were unclean persons for conversation; who were to be kept company with, and who not:

and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths; were not careful to observe them themselves, and connived at them that broke them; they might have seen men carrying burdens, and doing other servile works on such days, but they turned their eyes another way, and would not look at them; and when they did see them were silent, and would not reprove them:

and I am profaned among them; for the law of God being profaned, his institutions profaned, and his sabbaths profaned, he himself was profaned; inasmuch as he was not sanctified by them, through the just observation of those things. The Targum is,

“my will is profaned among them.”

Ver. 27. *Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey,* &c.] The king and his nobles, those of the first rank and quality, who ought to have protected the persons and property of the meaner sort; these were like “wolves” themselves, subtle, voracious, and cruel, preying upon harmless persons, as those creatures do upon the sheep and lambs:

to shed blood; innocent blood, as the Targum:

and to destroy souls; take away lives, under a pretence of treasonable practices, and all with a view to get dishonest gain; that their estates may be forfeited, their goods confiscated, and got into their hands.

Ver. 28. *And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar,* &c.] Palliated their sins, declared it to be right to shed the blood they did; and seize on the estates of men; but this, though it might for a while satisfy the consciences of these princes, and stop the clamours of the people against them; yet would not last long, but be like the building of a wall with bad stuff, which will not stand; and daubing it with mortar, which will soon wash off. So the Targum,

“and the false prophets which are in the midst of her are like to those that build a wall, and daub it with mere clay, without straw;”

(See Gill on “²⁶³⁰Ezekiel 13:10”).

Seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them; pretending visions from God, when what they see, or pretend to see, is nothing but vanity and emptiness, mere delusions; and prophesying good things, peace and prosperity, when they are all lies; giving out they have messages from God, and are ordered to foretell that happy times will be, when it is all falsehood:

saying, thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken; herein mimicking the true prophets, who came in the name of the Lord, and usually prefaced their prophecies with a thus saith the Lord; and so did these false prophets, when the Lord said nothing to them, and gave them no commission to speak in his name, or say the things they did.

Ver. 29. *The people of the land have used oppression, &c.*] The common people, the more powerful among them, such as were in greatest authority in cities and towns, in neighbourhoods and families, the richest among them; these oppressed the poor, and those that were under them, the servants of them, and tenants to them, and who were not able to defend themselves against them: the Septuagint and Syriac versions understand this of the prophets using the people of the land ill:

and exercised robbery; such who had not the power as others had, became thieves and robbers, went on the highway, and took men's money from them; broke up houses, and plundered them, and stole away their goods:

and have vexed the poor and needy; by their oppressions, rapines, and robberies, when they should rather have relieved them:

yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully; or, “without right or judgment”^{f342}; in a very unjust manner, contrary to the due course of law, against all equity and justice; which the Israelites were warned and ordered not to do, in many passages of Scripture; and for this reason, because they had been strangers in Egypt.

Ver. 30. *And I sought for a man among them, &c.*] among the princes, priests, prophets, and people of the land, who acted the part as above described; for otherwise, no doubt, there were good people in the land, as Jeremiah, Baruch, and others, but not among these:

that should make up the hedge; that was broken down by the transgressions of the people, who exceeded all bounds of law and justice; one that would restrain them from sinning, and reform them, and set them a good example; one, as the Targum has it,

“whose works were good;”

a good man, that would endeavour by his influence to stop the breaking in of sin, and the consequences of it:

and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; in the gap that sin had made, at which the Lord was entering as a man of war to destroy the transgressors; one that should present himself to the Lord on the behalf of the people; seek mercy for them, as the Targum; interpose between God and them, and act the part of an intercessor; pray for them,

as Moses did for the people of Israel, that he would not destroy them; (see ~~19462~~ Psalm 106:23):

but I found none; no reformer of them, no repairer of the breach, nor restorer of paths, to dwell in; no intercessor for them, as Abraham for Sodom, Moses for Israel; or any, like Aaron, that stood between the living and the dead to stay the plague.

Ver. 31. *Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, &c.]* Like a mighty torrent, carrying all before it:

I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; by the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity:

their own way have I recompensed on their heads, saith the Lord; brought just punishment upon them, such as their ways and works deserved;

“the vengeance of their way,”

as the Targum.

CHAPTER 23

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 23

In this chapter the idolatries of Israel and Judah are represented under the metaphor of two harlots, and their lewdness. These harlots are described by their descent; by the place and time in which they committed their whoredoms; by their names, and which are explained, (³²¹⁰Ezekiel 23:1-4), the idolatries of Israel, or the ten tribes, under the name of Aholah, which they committed with the Assyrians, and which they continued from the Egyptians, of whom they had learned them, are exposed, (³²¹⁵Ezekiel 23:5-8), and their punishment for them is declared, (³²¹⁹Ezekiel 23:9,10) then the idolatries of Judah, or the two tribes, under the name of Aholibah, are represented as greater than those of the ten tribes, (³²³¹Ezekiel 23:11), which they committed with the Assyrians, (³²³²Ezekiel 23:12), with the Chaldeans and Babylonians, (³²³³Ezekiel 23:13-18) in imitation of the Egyptians, reviving former idolatries learnt of them, (³²³⁹Ezekiel 23:19-21), wherefore they are threatened, that the Chaldeans, Babylonians, and Assyrians, should come against them, and spoil them, and carry them captive, (³²³²Ezekiel 23:22-35), and the prophet is bid to declare the abominable sin of them both, (³²³⁶Ezekiel 23:36-44), and to signify that they should be judged after the manner of adulteresses, should be stoned, and dispatched with swords, their sons and their daughters, and their houses burnt with fire; by which means their adulteries or idolatries should be made to cease, (³²³⁵Ezekiel 23:45-49).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] The word of prophecy, as the Targum; another prophecy, one upon the same subject, as in (³³⁶⁰Ezekiel 16:1),

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, there were two women, &c.*] Or two nations and kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel or the ten tribes, and the kingdom of Judah or the two tribes. So the Targum,

“son of man, prophesy concerning two provinces, which are as two women:”

the daughters of one mother; either Sarah the wife of Abraham, from whom they sprung; or because they were originally one kingdom and nation; so they were when they came out of Egypt, and during the times of the judges, and in the reigns of David and Solomon; but became two in the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon, from whom ten tribes revolted, and set up a separate kingdom, with Jeroboam at the head of it.

Ver. 3. *And they committed whoredoms in Egypt, &c.*] When they were but one body, one nation; and while they sojourned as strangers in that land they learned and practised the idolatries of it, (^{Q244}Joshua 24:14), and so the Targum,

“and they erred in Egypt, after the worship of their idols they erred, and there they corrupted their works:”

they committed whoredoms in their youth; as soon as they were come out of Egypt, and were formed into a political and ecclesiastical state, had the law of God given them, and promised obedience to him, and were espoused by him, which times are called the days of their youth and espousal, (^{Q111}Jeremiah 2:2 ^{Q125}Hosea 2:15), and then were they guilty of whoredom, or spiritual adultery, which idolatry, in making and worshipping the golden calf, after the manner of Egypt; and in joining themselves to Baalpeor, the god of the Moabites, (^{Q231}Exodus 32:1-4 ^{Q252}Numbers 25:2,3);

there were their breasts pressed, there they bruised the teats of their virginity; that is, the Egyptians, who drew them into idolatry, and with whom they committed it; which is expressed by the actions of adulterous persons, suggesting that, before this, they were as chaste and pure virgins to God, adhered to his worship, and served him only, and were not defiled with the superstition and idolatry of the Heathens: or, “they made^{f343} the teats or paps of their virginity”; that is, made them swell and increase, being impregnated by them, and their idolatry completed; or to move and heave being pressed.

Ver. 4. *And the names of them were Aholah the elder, &c.*] Or, “the greater”^{f344} meaning the ten tribes of Israel, which were more in number than Judah, and greater in power and riches; their name, Aholah, signifies “her tent or tabernacle”, which was entirely their own, and not the Lord’s: their worship, and places of worship, were of their own appointing, namely, their calves at Daniel and Bethel; God had nothing to do with

them, there he did not dwell; his tabernacle was not there, that was at Salem, (^{<970>}Psalm 76:1):

and Aholibah her sister; which name signifies “my tent or tabernacle is in her”: this is the name of Judah or the two tribes, in which stood the temple of the Lord, where he was worshipped, and where he dwelt: some think these were proper names of two Egyptian harlots; others think there is allusion to the wife of Esau, (^{<036>}Genesis 36:2):

and they were mine; or, “I had them^{f345}”; when they were together; they were originally espoused unto him; he avouched them to be his people, and they avouched him to be their God; he chose them for himself above all other people, and they professed themselves to be his, and promised to serve and worship him; and for a while did continue in his service and worship: and they bare sons and daughters; to the Lord, whom they brought up in the fear of God, and taught them to serve him: the phrase is expressive of their increase, and of their happiness and prosperity, while they adhered to the pure worship of God:

thus were their names; this is the application of them: “Samaria is Aholah”; or Aholah signifies Samaria, which was the metropolis of Ephraim, and belonged to the ten tribes, and is put for the whole, (^{<200>}Isaiah 7:9): “and Jerusalem Aholibah”; or Aholibah designs Jerusalem, the head city of Judah, and stands for the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Ver. 5. *And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine, &c.*] His married wife, and so ought to have cleaved to him alone: or, under me^{f346}; under his cover, power, and protection, and therefore it was their interest to serve him only: or, “instead of me”^{f347}; or, as the Syriac version, “besides me”: they worshipped other gods in the room of the true God, or other gods besides him. The Targum is,

“and Aholah erred from my worship;”

the ten tribes fell into idolatry, when they were God’s professing people:

and she doted on her lovers; whom she loved even to madness; she was mad with love, to the idols, temples, altars, and idolatrous worship of the Heathens; particularly doted “on the Assyrians her neighbours”; who were become so by the conquest of Syria; and these they treated as their neighbours, and sought to have them to be their allies and confederates; courted their help and assistance, and gave them much money for that

purpose; as Menahem gave to Pul king of Assyria a thousand talents of silver, to confirm the kingdom in his hand, (⁴²⁵⁹2 Kings 15:19).

Ver. 6. *Which were clothed with blue*, &c.] A colour the Assyrians were fond of, and clothed their soldiers in, and was taking to the eye; and is mentioned, because that men, finely clothed find beautifully arrayed, are more engaging to women, who are fond of dress:

captains and rulers; men of power and authority in military and civil affairs, either in the camp, or in the court; officers either in the army, or in the king's palace; and which was a recommendation of them:

desirable young men; for their youth, strength, beauty, and honourable employments and offices:

horsemen riding upon horses: of which there was a scarcity in Judea; wherefore such were the more desirable to them, as appearing more grand, and being more serviceable and helpful to them.

Ver. 7. *Thus she committed her whoredoms with them*, &c.] Entered into alliance with them, and joined them in their idolatrous worship:

with all them that were the chosen men of Assyria; before described by their habit, office, and age:

and with all on whom she doted; had an insatiable desire and lust after:

with all their idols she defiled herself; worshipped all the idols the Assyrians did; and which were defiling, as they must needs be, since, as the word used signifies, they were dunghill gods.

Ver. 8. *Neither left she her idols brought from Egypt*, &c.] Though the Israelites took in the gods of the Assyrians into their worship, they did not relinquish the golden calves set up at Daniel and Bethel, in imitation of the Egyptian deities; the idolatrous worship of which they learned in Egypt, and brought from thence:

for in her youth they lay with her; the Egyptians enticed the Israelites to idolatry when among them, as soon as they began to be a people; (see Gill on "^{263B}Ezekiel 23:3"):)

and they bruised the breasts of her virginity; who before retained the pure worship of God, and was like a chaste virgin:

and poured their whoredom upon her; expressive of the numerous acts of idolatry committed together by them.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, &c.*] To destruction; their persons, families, riches, and kingdom itself:

into the hand of the Assyrians, on whom she doted; first into the hands of Pul, then Tiglathpileser, then Shalmaneser, all kings of Assyria, by whom they were spoiled or carried captive; by the two first in part, by the last wholly; (see ^{<D159>}2 Kings 15:19,29 17:5-18).

Ver. 10. *These discovered her wickedness, &c.*] That is, stripped them of all their substance:

they took her sons and her daughters; and carried them captive:

and slew her with the sword; put an end to the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes, and which was never recovered to this day:

and she became famous among women; or among the provinces, as the Targum; she became famous, or rather infamous, among other nations; was talked of for her sins, her whoredoms and idolatries, and the vengeance of God upon her for them; she became a byword and a proverb among the kingdoms of the world for her wickedness and her destruction:

for they had executed judgment upon her; that is, the Assyrians, who were the instruments in God's hand in doing justice to her, and inflicting his judgments on her, and for that she became famous.

Ver. 11. *And when her sister Aholibah saw this, &c.*] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, when, they saw the idolatries the ten tribes fell into, and the destruction which came upon them for the same; instead of receiving instruction, and taking caution by all this,

she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she; in courting the friendship, alliance, and help of their Heathen neighbours:

and in her whoredoms more than her sister in her whoredoms; guilty of more idolatries than the ten tribes, as in the times of Manasseh; (see ^{<H128>}Jeremiah 2:28).

Ver. 12. *She doted upon the Assyrians her neighbours, &c.*] As in the times of Ahaz, who sent to Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria, for help; and

from whence he took the pattern of an altar, and had one built like it at Jerusalem, and offered upon it, (^{<2167>}2 Kings 16:7-12),

captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously; or “perfectly”,^{f348}; with all kind of precious garments, and of all manner of colours; not with blue only, but purple, scarlet, crimson, &c.

horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men; (see Gill on “^{<2316>}Ezekiel 23:6”).

Ver. 13. *Then I saw that she was defiled*, &c.] With idols, and the worship of them, (^{<2317>}Ezekiel 23:7):

that they took both one way; the same way of idolatry; worshipped the same idols, lived the same course of life, were guilty of the same sin, both Israel and Judah.

Ver. 14. *And that she increased her whoredoms*, &c.] Added to the number of her idols, increased her idols, and even was guilty of more than her sister:

for when she saw men portrayed on the wall; of the temple, as idols were, (^{<2380>}Ezekiel 8:10) or upon the wall of a private house, where they were worshipped as household gods:

the images of the Chaldeans portrayed with vermilion: the images of their heroes, who after death were deified; and these, being drawn upon the wall with vermilion, which, being mixed with ceruse, made a flesh colour, were worshipped; as Bel, Nebo, Merodach, which are names of their idols, (^{<2341>}Isaiah 46:1 ^{<2402>}Jeremiah 1:2) or these were graven on the walls, or etched out upon them with minium or red lead; or rather were “painted”,^{f349} as some render the word, with minium, vermilion, or cinnabar, which are the same; (see Gill on “^{<2214>}Jeremiah 22:14”), and it may be observed, that it was usual with the Heathens to paint the images and statues of their gods with these. Thus Virgil^{f350} represents Pan, the god of Arcadia, coloured red with minium or vermilion; and Pausanius^{f351} speaks of the statue of Bacchus being besmeared with cinnabar: and Pliny^{f352} says the face of the image of Jupiter used to be anointed with minium or vermilion on festival days; and observes, that the nobles of Ethiopia used to colour themselves all over with it; this being the colour of the images of their gods, which they reckoned more august, majestic, and sacred. Hence the Romans, in their triumphs, used to paint themselves with

vermilion; particularly it is said of Augustus Caesar, that he did this to make himself the more conspicuous and respectable, after the example of the Assyrians and Medes^{f353}: and the triumphers chose to be rubbed all over with a red colour, that they might, according to Isidore^{f354}, resemble the divine fire.

Ver. 15. *Girded with girdles upon their loins*, &c.] As a token of dignity and authority; (see ²³¹¹⁶Isaiah 11:5), which was the peculiar custom of the Babylonians, as Kimchi, from the Talmudists, observes: “exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads”; having turbans of various colours upon their heads, after the manner of the Persians:

all of them princes to look to; bore the resemblance of kings, princes, and the great men of the earth, and whose images indeed they were; even of such who in their lifetime were famous for military exploits, or for some excellency or another, either real or pretended, and after death reckoned among the gods, and worshipped:

after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity; either where these heroes were born whose images were portrayed; or where Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, was born, and so called from thence the land of their nativity; putting them in mind of their original, and of the idolatries of their ancestors, which they were now returning to.

Ver. 16. *And as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them*, &c.] As lustful women, on the sight of the pictures of men, fall in love with them, and are mad after them; such a vehement desire after the idols of the Chaldeans prevailed, upon seeing their images:

and sent messengers unto them in Chaldea; to make alliances with the Chaldeans, and to have their idols, and worship them.

Ver. 17. *And the Babylonians came to her in the bed of love*, &c.] Entered into alliance with the Jews, and worshipped together in the same idols’ temple. Jarchi thinks this refers to the messengers of the king of Babylon to Hezekiah; who were gladly received by him, and to whom he showed all the treasures of his house:

and they defiled her with their whoredom; or with their idols, as the Targum; they drew them into their idolatrous practices; which were defiling them, and by which they were corrupted from the simplicity of the true worship of God:

and she was polluted with them, and her mind was alienated from them: or “plucked”, or “disjoined from them”^{f355}; the Chaldeans, broke league and covenant with them, hating them as much as before they doted upon them; this was done in the times of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, who rebelled against the king of Babylon, (^{<1230>}2 Kings 24:1,20) as it often is the case with lewd women, when they have satisfied their lust with their gallants, loath and despise them, and cast them off.

Ver. 18. *So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness,* &c.] The Jews did not cease from their idolatries when they broke with the Babylonians; but were rather more frequent and impudent in them, and courted the friendship and alliance of other Heathen nations, and their worship; even as a lewd woman, when she has cast off her former lovers, does not leave her lewdness, but seeks after others; and by her impudence in discovering her whoredoms, and her nakedness, and by all the signs of a prostitute, draws in others to commit lewdness with her:

then my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister; as a virtuous husband is alienated from an adulterous wife, and cannot admit her to his bed and board, so the mind of the Lord was alienated from the Jews, because of their idolatries; nor could he favour them with his presence, and the blessings of his providence and goodness, as he had formerly done; even as his mind had been alienated, on the same account, from the ten tribes of Israel, and which he showed by suffering them to be carried captive.

Ver. 19. *Yet she multiplied her whoredoms,* &c.] Though the Lord frowned upon the Jews in the times of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, yet still they went on, and increased their alliances and idolatries with the Heathen nations:

in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt; they called to mind with pleasure the idolatries of their fathers in Egypt, and committed the same themselves; they sent ambassadors to Egypt, in the times of Zedekiah, for help and assistance, and to enter into alliance with them, when they renewed among them the idolatries of that nation; (see ^{<26715>}Ezekiel 17:15).

Ver. 20. *For she doted upon their paramours,* &c.] Or “concubines”^{f356}; the neighbouring nations and allies of the Egyptians, whose friendship the

Jews courted, and whose idols they served: the Septuagint and Arabic versions wrongly read the Chaldeans:

whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is like the issue of horses; by “flesh” is meant the “membrum virile”, which in asses is very large, and therefore dedicated to Priapus by the Heathens; and vast is the profusion of seed in coitus by horses, to which the flesh and issue of the Egyptian paramours are compared; who were very libidinous, and therefore desirable to insatiable women; all which serves to express the eagerness of the people of the Jews after idolatry.

Ver. 21. *Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, &c.*] By committing the same; the same idolatries their fathers committed in Egypt they now committed, being in alliance with the same people: or, *thou causest to be visited the lewdness of thy youth*^{f357}; by the Lord, who remembered their sins, and punished them for them:

in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth: committing spiritual fornication, that is, idolatry with them; signified by pressing and bruising the breasts and paps of virgins, by corporeal fornication with them.

Ver. 22. *Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Or, ye two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, hear what the Lord says unto you:

behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee; the Chaldeans, whom they had formerly loved, and in whose alliance they were, and whose idols they worshipped:

from whom thy mind is alienated; having broke covenant with them, and cast off their yoke, and rebelled against them:

and I will bring them against thee on every side; to besiege and encompass Jerusalem on every side with their army, as they did, so that there was no escaping.

Ver. 23. *The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, &c.*] Both the inhabitants of the city of Babylon, called in the Hebrew text the children of Babylon, and all the inhabitants of the several parts of the country of Chaldean, of which Babylon was the metropolis:

Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa; the Vulgate Latin version, and so Jerom, take these words to be appellatives, and render them noblemen, tyrants, and princes; as some mentioned by Jarchi do, governors, princes, and rulers; and Kimchi^{f358} thinks they are the titles of the Babylonian princes spoken of in Jeremiah, as Nebuzaradan, Nebushasban, Rabsaris, Rabmag, &c. (^{249B}Jeremiah 39:3,13), but with others they are the proper names of persons or places: and so the Targum calls them, Pekodaites, Shoaites, and Koaites; that is, the inhabitants of places so called; and certain it is that Pekod was a province of Babylon, (^{249D}Jeremiah 50:21): which, according to Junius, lay between the two rivers Tigris and Lycus, and in which was the famous city of Nineveh; and, according to him, Shoa, or the Shoaites, lay between the rivers Lycus and Gorgus, among where were the Adiabeni, and the town called Siai by Ptolemy; and the Koaites were situated in the inward part of Assyria, by Arbelitis, where formerly was the fortified town of Koah, by historians called Gauga; and by Strabo Gaugamela. Grotius thinks that Pekod are the Bactriani; and that Shoa is Siai in Armenia with Ptolemy; and that Koa is Choana of Media, with the same Ptolemy; but, be they who they will, they were such people as were to come with the Chaldean army against the Jews:

and all the Assyrians with them: which were now one people with the Chaldeans and Babylonians, by whom formerly the ten tribes were carried captive:

all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses; persons of high rank and dignity, in chief offices at court or in the camp, all in the bloom and strength of youth; men of name and renown for their honour and valour; and all well mounted, a famous cavalry of them; and who before were lovely on these accounts, when they were their gallants and lovers, their confederates and allies, but now formidable and terrible being their enemies; (see ^{252B}Ezekiel 23:5,6,12).

Ver. 24. *And they shall come against thee with chariots, wagons, and wheels, &c.*] With “chariots”, in which were their princes and great men, their chief commanders, generals, and captains, and in which they fought, as was usual in those times; and with “wagons”, to carry their provisions and warlike stores; and with “wheels”, that is, either with chariots and wagons that ran upon wheels, or with wheels for them in case they should break down; the first of these words here, according to some Jewish

interpreters, as Donesh in Jarchi, signifies warlike instruments in general; and the second word is used for chariots: and so the whole is paraphrased by the Targum,

“and they shall come against thee with instruments of war, with chariots and wheels;”

all which denotes how well prepared they should be, and with what swiftness they would come:

and with an assembly of people, which shall set against thee buckler, and shield, and helmet, round about; a multitude of people, a vast army gathered out of all the provinces of Babylon, having bucklers and shields about their bodies, and helmets on their heads to protect and defend them; and these should surround the city of Jerusalem. So the Targum, “an army of people, armed with shields and helmets, shall set themselves against thee round about:”

and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments; that is, I will deliver you into their hands, and they shall judge and condemn you; not according to my laws and yours, but according to their own laws, according to the customs and usages among them, according to the law of nations; they shall deal with you as rebels and covenant breakers, such Zedekiah was; he broke covenant with the king of Babylon, and rebelled against him: and this was fulfilled when he fell into his hands, and when he slew his children before his face, and then put out his eyes.

Ver. 25. *And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee, &c.]* As a jealous husband, enraged against his adulterous wife, falls upon her in his fury, and uses her with great severity; so the Jews having committed spiritual fornication, that is, idolatry, and departed from the Lord, he threatens to stir up the fury of his jealousy, and punish them severely by the Chaldeans, as follows:

they shall take away thy nose and thine ears, and thy remnant shall fall by the sword; as gallants use their harlots when they leave them, or jealous husbands their adulterous wives, disfiguring them, that they may be marked and known what they are, and be despised by others; and as has been the custom in some countries, particularly with the Egyptians, to cut off the noses of adulterous persons; here it is to be understood figuratively: by the “nose”, according to Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, is meant the king,

who is higher than his people, as the nose is the highest part in a man's face; and by the "ears" the priest, who caused a noise to be heard when he entered into the temple with his bells; or rather because it was the priest's office to attend to the word of God, and teach it the people; in general, these denote everything that was excellent among the Jews, their city, temple, king, kingdom, princes, priests, and prophets, which should be demolished and removed; and by the remnant is meant the common people, that should come into the hands of the Chaldeans, and fall by their sword. So the Targum paraphrases it,

"thy princes and thy nobles shall go into captivity, and thy people shall be killed with the sword:"

they shall take thy sons and thy daughters, and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire; take and carry their sons and daughters captive, and burn with fire the city left by them. Thus the Targum,

"they shall carry thy sons and daughters captive, and the beauty of thy land shall be burnt with fire;"

that is, the city of Jerusalem, the temple, the king's palaces, the houses of the great men, and others in it, which were all burnt with fire when taken by the Chaldeans, (^{צב}Jeremiah 52:13).

Ver. 26. *They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes,* &c.] As such who are taken captives are usually served:

and take away, thy fair jewels; their ornaments of every kind: or "the vessels of thy glory"^{f359}; Kimchi observes this may be meant either of the garments of the priests, and the vessels of the sanctuary; or of whole spoil of the city in general, whether in the temple, or in other houses.

Ver. 27. *Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee,* &c.] That is, their idolatry; for, after this captivity, the Jews never were guilty of idolatry any more:

and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt; the idolatry which they learned there, and brought from thence; so the Targum,

"the worship of thine idols, which was with thee when thou wast in the land of Egypt:"

so that thou shall not lift up thine eyes unto them; to the idols of Egypt, to pray unto them, and worship them:

nor remember Egypt any more; with any delight and pleasure, and so as to desire an alliance with them, and help from them, or to join with them in their idolatries: so the Targum,

“and the idols of the Egyptians thou shalt remember no more.”

Ver. 28. *For thus saith the Lord God, I will deliver thee into the hand of them whom thou hatest*, &c.] The Chaldeans and Babylonians, before loved by her, and doted upon, but now hated and rebelled against; and to fall into such hands must be a sore judgment; and this the Lord threatens to bring upon the Jews for their sins; and he having said it, it might be depended upon it would be performed; and, for the greater certainty of it, it is repeated in different words:

into the hand of them from whom thy mind is alienated; (see Gill on “³²³¹⁷Ezekiel 23:17”).

Ver. 29. *And they shall deal with thee hatefully*, &c.] The Chaldeans should hate the Jews as much as before they loved them, when they came into the bed of love to them, (³²³¹⁷Ezekiel 23:17) and as much as the Jews hated them; which they showed by their severe and rigorous usage of them, putting some to the sword, carrying the rest captive, and employing them in hard service and labour; and, which is still worse, and an aggravation of all this:

and shall take away all thy labour; whatever they got by labour, that they should not enjoy, but should be taken away from them:

and shall leave thee naked and bare: stripped of all the necessaries and conveniences of life:

and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms; it shall then be manifest to all that thou hast been guilty of idolatry, and hast departed from the Lord thy God, which has caused him to bring these judgments upon thee for thy sins. The Targum paraphrases the latter part of the clause thus,

“the sins of thy wicked counsels, and thy pride.”

It seems to be a heap of words, to express the grossness of their idolatries, which now should be exposed.

Ver. 30. *And I will do these things unto thee, &c.*] What the Chaldeans did God is said to do, because he suffered them to do these things, as a punishment for their sins; yea, it was according to his will, and by his orders. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, “they have done these things unto thee”; that is, the Chaldeans. The Targum is,

“thy sins are the cause of these things unto thee;”

that is, their idolatry and other iniquities. Hence the Syriac version is very particular,

“for thy whoredoms these things shall be done unto thee;”

and the Arabic version,

“thy whoredom hath done (or is the cause of) these things unto thee,”

as follows:

because thou hast gone a whoring after the Heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols; imitated them in their idolatries; worshipped the same dunghill gods as they did, as the word signifies; with which it was no wonder they should be polluted, and become abominable unto God.

Ver. 31. *Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister, &c.*] Samaria, or the ten tribes of Israel; followed them in their idolatrous practices, were guilty of the same:

therefore will I give her cup into thine hand; the cup of her vengeance, as the Targum; inflict the same punishment on the two tribes as on the ten, and suffer them to be carried captive as they had been.

Ver. 32. *Thus saith the Lord God, thou shall drink of thy sister’s cup deep and large, &c.*] That is, partake of the same punishment, which was very great, signified by a deep and large cup, which holds much:

thou shall be laughed to scorn, and had in derision; by the nations round about, who, instead of pitying them under their troubles, will rejoice at them; just as drunken men are laughed at, when intoxicated and reeling about:

it containeth much; the cup of wrath and vengeance; as much as will last severity years drinking. The Targum connects this with the preceding clause,

“and thou shalt be for derision and for laughter, because of the greatness of the tribulation that shall come upon thee.”

Ver. 33. *Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow*, &c.] Sorrow is the effect of drunkenness; these two generally go together; when a man is filled with the one, he is with the other; this expresses the greatness of the sorrow and distress of the Jews in captivity:

with the cup of astonishment and desolation; their punishment would be so great, and their condition be so desolate, that it should astonish them, and bereave them of their senses; and they should be like mad men, as their actions in the following verse show:

with the cup of thy sister Samaria; the same punishment as inflicted on the ten tribes.

Ver. 34. *Thou shalt even drink it, and suck it out*, &c.] The very dregs of it, that which lies at the bottom, which is the most nauseous and the most pernicious; not through love to it, but through force, shall be obliged to it; (see ^{<1978>}Psalm 75:8):

and thou shall break the sherds thereof; and suck them, so that not a drop of the liquor shall be lost; even what has penetrated into the earthen vessel, which this cup is supposed to be; and therefore it shall be broken to pieces, and these pieces sucked, that all may be got out; suggesting that there will be no abatement of the punishment, it shall be endured to the utmost: or it may be an allusion to drunkards, who, having drunk up their liquor, and become drunk, break their glasses, pots, and cups, and to which the next clause agrees:

and pluck off thine own breasts; as men in their drunken fits, being like mad men, tear their own flesh; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“thou shall tear thy flesh;”

so the Jews, under punishment for sin, and pressed with the guilt of it, through indignation at themselves should tear their flesh, and particularly pluck off their breasts: the allusion is to fornication, to which idolatry is compared, in which those parts are particularly affected; (see ^{<1920>}Ezekiel

23:21), the Syriac version renders this and the former clause thus, “thou shall shave thine hair and cut off thy breasts”; Kimchi thinks by the “breasts” are meant the oral and written laws, which ceased in the time of the captivity; but without any foundation:

for I have spoken it, saith the Lord; and therefore it shall be done.

Ver. 35. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, because thou hast forgotten me, &c.*] His word, worship, and ordinances, and did not attend unto them, but worshipped strange gods: so the Targum,

“because thou hast left my worship:”

and cast me behind thy back; or, as the same paraphrase,

“hast cast the fear of me from before thine eyes;”

or out of thy sight, his laws and statutes; (see ^{<4612>}Nehemiah 9:26 ^{<2153>}Isaiah 5:24), as men cast behind their backs that which they have no value for and loath, and which they do not care to see, and choose to forget:

therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms; that is, the guilt of their sins, the punishment of their idolatries, and shame and confusion for them.

Ver. 36. *The Lord said moreover unto me, son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah? &c.*] Plead the cause of Israel and Judah? say any thing in their defence, and in excuse of them? or intercede and pray for them, that threatened judgments may not come upon them? no, do nothing of this kind; if thou wilt do anything, do as follows:

yea, declare unto them their abominations; their abominable sins, their murders, adulteries, and idolatries; set them in a true light before them, in all their aggravated circumstances; that, if it can be, they may be brought to a true sight and sense of them, to repent of them, be ashamed of them, loath them, confess them, and forsake them.

Ver. 37. *That they have committed adultery, &c.*] Either literally, adultery with their neighbours’ wives, which was a prevailing sin with this people; or figuratively, spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry:

and blood is in their hands; the Targum is,

“they have shed the blood of innocents with their hands;”

the blood of prophets and righteous men, sent unto them; and the blood of their infants in sacrificing to idols, as after mentioned:

and with their idols have they committed adultery; by worshipping them, which is spiritual adultery; and this being so explicitly mentioned, it seems to be distinguished from corporeal adultery in the first clause, which may be only there designed; and so Kimchi thinks:

and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them; their children, who were the Lord's by national adoption, and who ought to have been trained up in the worship and service of God, were, in a most barbarous and unnatural manner, caused to pass through the fire, for or to the idols Molech and Baal; and that not merely by way of lustration and dedication, which was sometimes done by passing between two fires, but so as to be devoured and destroyed by the fire.

Ver. 38. *Moreover this they have done unto me*, &c.]. The following piece of wickedness, which was very provoking to the Lord:

they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day; as they caused their children to pass through the fire to their idols, by entering into the sanctuary when they had so done, and were thus defiled, and by offering sacrifices to their idols in it; or under pretence of serving the Lord, when they had just been guilty of murder and idolatry:

and have profaned my sabbaths; not only by doing their own worldly and civil business, but by slaying their infants on those days, and sacrificing them to idols.

Ver. 39. *For when they had slain their children to their idols*, &c.]. This explains more clearly what is before said, that by causing their children to pass through the fire was a slaying them; and that their passing through it "for them" was for their idols, and unto them; (see ⁴⁶³⁷Ezekiel 23:37), and how when they had been guilty of such shocking wickedness,

then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; not that they came into the temple on purpose to profane it; but coming into it, being themselves defiled with the murder of their infants, and offering sacrifices to idols, or performing a hypocritical service to the Lord, this was in the event a profanation of the sanctuary:

and, lo, thus they have done in the midst of mine house; set up idols there, and worshipped them; as they did in the temple itself, in the times of Ahaz and Manasseh; (see ^{<2470>}Jeremiah 7:30).

Ver. 40. *And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far,* &c.] From Egypt, Assyria, and Chaldea, to treat with them, and enter into alliances and confederacies with them, and to join them in their idolatrous practices; these Heathen nations did not send to the Jews, but the Jews to them; they did not court their friendship and alliance, but the Jews courted theirs:

unto whom a messenger was sent; to court their favour, and solicit a confederacy, and to desire that ambassadors might be sent to reside among them:

and, lo, they came; these Heathen courts listened to the proposal, and accordingly sent their plenipotentiaries and ambassadors to them, who came in their masters' name, and with their credentials; and for the reception of whom great preparations were made, as follows:

for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments; just as harlots do to make themselves agreeable to their lovers; who use washes and paint, as Jezebel did, and dress themselves in their best clothes, and adorn themselves in the best manner they can. Harlots had their particular attire, by which they were known, (^{<2470>}Proverbs 7:10) and they not only used bagnios or baths, but washes for their face, to make them look beautiful; and particularly painted their eyes, to make them look larger; for large eyes in women, in some nations, were reckoned very handsome, particularly among the Greeks: hence Juno, in Homer^{f360}, is called βουπις the ox eyed, as some translate it; or rather the large eyed Juno: and the Grecian women, in order to make their eyes large, made use of a powder mixed with their washes, which shrunk their eyebrows, and caused their eyes to stand out, and look fuller and larger; and such was the paint which Pliny,^{f361} calls stibium, and says, it was by some named "platyophthalmon", because in the beautiful eyebrows of women it dilated the eyes; and it seems that painting with something of this nature was used by the Jewish women, in imitation of the Heathens, for the same purpose, especially by harlots; hence the phrase of rending the face, or rather the eyes, with paint, (^{<2483>}Jeremiah 4:30), so the Moorish women now, as Dr. Shaw^{f362} relates, to add a gracefulness to their complexions, tinge their eye lids with "alkahol", the powder of lead ore; and this is performed by first

dipping into this powder a small wooden bodkin, of the thickness of a quill, and then drawing it afterwards through the eyelids, over the ball of the eye; and which is properly a rending the eyes indeed, as the prophet calls it, with powder of “pouk”, or lead ore: so, for the gratifying these idolatrous ambassadors, idols were set up, altars built, and sacrifices prepared; and, in order to their public entry, and to show how acceptable they were, palaces were fitted up for them; and the streets through which they passed decorated, and all public marks of esteem and affection given them; to this the Targum seems to have respect, paraphrasing the words thus,

“and, lo, they came to the place thou hadst prepared; thou hast adorned the streets, and appointed palaces.”

Ver. 41. *And satest upon a stately bed*, &c.] Or honourable^{f363}, a bed of state: either a throne, a royal seat under a canopy, on which the king of Judah sat to receive foreign ambassadors; or a stately bed at a feast, made for the entertainment of them; it being usual in the eastern nations to sit on beds at eating, to which the next clause agrees. The allusion is to a harlot sitting on a bed decked out by her to allure men to lie with her; (see ^{<2076>}Proverbs 7:16):

and a table prepared before it; before the bed, furnished with the richest provisions to treat the ambassadors with; or this may design an altar built for them to offer on it sacrifices to their idols, according to the customs of their countries:

whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil; which were the gifts of God to this people, and which they should have used in his service; but with these they treated the ministers of Heathen princes; scenting the room where they were entertained with incense, and anointing their heads and feet with oil, for their pleasure and refreshment; or they offered these on the altars of the idols to them.

Ver. 42. *And a voice of a multitude being at ease was with her*, &c.] With Aholibah, with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin: or, “in her”, in Jerusalem; or “in it”, or “about it”^{f364}; the bed, or table, or both: these were either the people of the many nations that came in great numbers with the ambassadors, as their retinue, and for the greater splendour of them; and who came, not to make war, but in a peaceable way, being invited to come; or these were a confluence of the Jewish people, who came from all parts to see the public entry of these ambassadors; who were quite easy with it,

since they came as the ambassadors of their allies and friends, in whose alliance they thought themselves safe and happy; and therefore welcomed them with their loud huzzas:

and with the men of the common sort were brought Sabeans from the wilderness; or, “and with men because of a multitude of men”^{f365}; that is, with those men that came from several parts on this occasion, for the sake of a greater number, and of making a greater appearance, the Sabeans that dwelt in the desert of Arabia were fetched from thence; or their neighbours round about Moab and Ammon, that dwelt in the wilderness, were sent for, and brought to make the solemnity the greater; so Jarchi; and to this sense the Targum renders it,

“because of the multitude of men that came round about on every side from the wilderness,”

Some render it, “drunkards from the wilderness”^{f366}; a parcel of drunken fellows that lived in the wilderness, rustic, brutish, people; these were brought as fit persons to drink healths, and roar on this occasion:

which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads; that is, the Jews put these ornaments upon the hands and heads of these men of the common sort, and the Sabeans with them, and these poor country drunken fellows too, that they might make the better appearance when they met and huzzaed the ambassadors at their entry; or which Sabeans and other foreigners put these ornaments on Aholah and Aholibah, and enticed them to the worship of their idols, and taught them idolatry.

Ver. 43. *Then said I unto her that was old in adulteries, &c.*] That had been an old adulterer or idolater; meaning either Aholah the ten tribes, who from Jeroboam’s time had been guilty of idolatry; or Aholibah the two tribes, who had remained longer in their own country, and had been long given to idolatry; or both of them, as some think, the whole body of the people of Israel, who had been addicted to idolatry ever since they came out of Egypt, and so was like an old harlot indeed: now the Lord said “unto her”, or “concerning her”^{f367}; in his own mind, after the manner of men. So the Targum,

“I said concerning the congregation of Israel, whose people are old in sins:”

will they now commit whoredoms with her, and she with them? will they commit adultery with such an old harlot? are they not weary of her? and will they not rather loath and despise her? as it is common when such prostitutes grow old; and what pleasure can she take, thus advanced in years, in such impurities? suggesting that alliances and confederacies between the Jews and the nations of the world could not be agreeable on either side, especially to the former; but so it was, and so were their idolatries likewise. The Targum is,

“now she will leave her idols, and return to thy worship; but she returned not.”

Ver. 44. *Yet they went in unto her,* &c.] Made a league with one another, and joined in idolatrous worship:

as they go in unto a woman that playeth the harlot; with the same heat of lust, with the same greediness and eager desire as young men do when they go into a brothel house where a beautiful harlot lives:

so went they in unto Aholah and unto Aholibah; the lewd women, the ten tribes of Israel, and the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which apostatized from God, and committed idolatry; with these the Sabeans before mentioned, and other nations, joined in idolatrous worship.

Ver. 45. *And the righteous men,* &c.] Some understand this of the prophets, who were really righteous men; and foretold the righteous judgments of God that should come upon the idolatrous Jews, which was a judging them: others, of righteous men in general, who will one and all agree that persons guilty of such crimes ought to suffer the punishment adequate to them, and usually inflicted on such; but rather the Babylonians are here meant; who, though not righteous in themselves, or truly so, yet were so in comparison of the wicked Jews, who had a divine revelation, and knew better than to commit such idolatries; whereas these were Gentiles that knew not God, nor his will. So the Targum,

“and righteous men in respect (or comparison) of them;”

that is, of Israel and Judah; and they may be also called so, because they were the executioners of justice, the instruments of inflicting God’s righteous judgments on the Jews; and, among other things, for their perfidy and treachery to them; so that they would appear just in the eyes of other nations for treating them as they did:

they shall judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood; that is, according to the law concerning such persons; and shall condemn them to suffer the punishment denounced on such, and shall execute it on them:

because they are adulteresses, the blood is in their hands; are guilty, not only of corporeal uncleanness, but of spiritual adultery; that is, idolatry; and of the murder of their prophets and righteous men, and even of their own children sacrificed to idols; than which nothing can be more unnatural and barbarous for women to do.

Ver. 46. *For thus saith the Lord God, I will bring up a company upon them, &c.*] Or, “do thou bring up a company upon them”^{f368}, or “against them”. The Targum represents it as spoken to the prophet, thus,

“prophesy that armies shall come up against them.”

Kimchi interprets it as we do, “I will bring up”, &c. and so others^{f369}. By this “company” is to be understood the Chaldean army, whom God in his providence, and in righteous judgment, would bring up against the Jews; styled a “convocation”^{f370}, assembly or congregation, in allusion to the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, that took cognizance of such crimes, and judged and condemned for them:

and will give them to be removed and spoiled; or, “for a removing”, and a “spoil”^{f371}; that is, he would give the Jews into the hands of the Chaldean army; their persons to be carried captive into other lands, and their substance to be spoiled and plundered.

Ver. 47. *And the company shall stone them with stones, &c.*] Which was the punishment of adulterers and idolaters, (^{f370}Deuteronomy 13:10 22:24), this seems to refer to the Chaldean army casting out stones from their slings and engines into the city of Jerusalem, when they besieged it, by which they killed some, and beat down the houses, which fell upon others, and destroyed them. So the Targum,

“and the army shall stone them with the stones of a sling:”

and dispatch them with their swords; cut them in pieces with them, such as sallied out of the city upon them, or they found without, or by any means fell into their hands:

they shall slay their sons and their daughters; when they broke into the city, and took it; or when they found them making their escape, and hiding themselves in secret places:

and burn up their houses with fire; as they did; the temple, the king's palace, the houses of noblemen, and all the houses in Jerusalem; (see ^{<4513>}Jeremiah 52:13).

Ver. 48. *Thus will I cause to cease lewdness out of the land, &c.*] There being no opportunity for it, nor any to commit it; what were not destroyed by famine, sword, and pestilence, during the siege, were carried captive; and, when they returned, were never more given to idolatry; (see ^{<4327>}Ezekiel 23:27):

that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness; that is, that all provinces, as the Targum, all kingdoms; states, churches, and people, hearing and reading the judgments of God on this people for their idolatry, may learn to shun it; it is even an instruction to us, at this distance, not to commit idolatry, as they did, (^{<4607>}1 Corinthians 10:7,11). The church of Rome ought to observe this.

Ver. 49. *And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, &c.*] Or, "give your lewdness"^{f372}; the punishment of it; the just recompence of reward for their idolatry:

and ye shall bear the sins of your idols; the shame, and guilt, and punishment of their sins committed in worshipping idols:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord God; the only Lord God who is to be worshipped, and not idols; jealous of my honour and glory, and true to my word; who can and will accomplish all I have said; this the Jews knew and acknowledged when in captivity, and returned from it, as they will more fully when they shall be converted in the latter day.

CHAPTER 24

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 24

Is this chapter the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem is prophesied of; the former under the parable of a boiling pot; the latter is represented by the sudden death of Ezekiel's wife. The time of this prophecy was that very day the king of Babylon began the siege of Jerusalem, (³²⁴⁰Ezekiel 24:1,2), the parable of the boiling pot, (³²⁴³Ezekiel 24:3-5), the explanation and application of it to the city of Jerusalem, (³²⁴⁶Ezekiel 24:6-14), the prophet is told of the death of his wife, and bid not to mourn on that account, which accordingly came to pass, (³²⁴⁵Ezekiel 24:15-18), upon the people's inquiring what these things meant, he informs them that hereby was signified the profanation of the temple; and that their distress should be so great, that they should not use any set forms of mourning, but pine away and die, (³²⁴⁹Ezekiel 24:19-24), and the chapter is closed with assuring the prophet, that the day these things should come to pass, a messenger should be sent him, to whom he should open his mouth, and be no more dumb, (³²⁵⁵Ezekiel 24:25-27).

Ver. 1. *Again, in the ninth year, &c.*] Of Jehoiachin's captivity, from which the dates of Ezekiel are, and of Zedekiah's reign, which commenced together:

in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month; the month Tebet, which answers to part of our December, and part of January; so that it was at the latter end of December when this prophecy was given out; at which time Jerusalem was besieged by the king of Babylon, even in the winter season:

the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, write thee the name of the day, &c.*] That is, what day of the week it was, as well as what day of the month; as whether the first, or second, or third, &c.: for the Jews had no other names for their days, as we have:

even of this same day; according to Bishop Usher^{f373}, it was the 30th of January, and the fifth day of the week (Thursday); A.M. 3414, or 590

before Christ. Mr. Whiston^{f374} places it at 3413 A.M. or 591 before Christ. The prophet is bid to observe it punctually, and write it exactly, that there might be no mistake; to set it down in his pocket book; or it may be in some public register, that it might not only be remembered by him, but known by the people; that so when they should hear the fact afterwards related, and exactly agreeing with this prediction, they would acknowledge him to be a true prophet; since this would be a confirmation of the word of the Lord coming to him:

the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day; or “drew nigh”^{f375}; brought up his army to it, and laid siege against it, and prepared everything to carry it on; which he very probably did in person, though he afterwards retired, and left the command of his army with his generals; and this was exactly the day before mentioned; (see ^{<1291>}2 Kings 25:1 ^{<2911>}Jeremiah 39:1 52:4). The Prophet Ezekiel was now in Chaldea, many miles from Judea, and yet had this account the very selfsame day, even from the Lord himself, who is omniscient and omnipresent.

Ver. 3. *And utter a parable to the rebellious house, &c.*] The people of the Jews so called, not so much on account of their rebellion against the king of Babylon, which caused him to come against them, as on account of their rebellion against God, and the breach of his laws; (see ^{<3111>}Ezekiel 2:3,5-8). The prophet is bid to represent to them, in a figurative and emblematic way, the miseries that were coming upon them for their wickedness, namely, under the parable of a boiling pot:

and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God; speaking in his name, and as coming from him, and clothed with his authority; that the following parable might not be thought to be a fancy and chimera of his own: “set on a pot, set it on”; set a pot on the fire, and do it quickly. This “pot” is the city of Jerusalem, which was to be brought into great distress and ruin; not a cauldron of brass, wherein the inhabitants should be as safe as if they had walls of brass about them, as they vainly boasted, (^{<2111>}Ezekiel 11:3), but a seething pot, such an one as Jeremiah saw, to which, it may be, reference is here had, (^{<2111>}Jeremiah 1:13), in which the people should be destroyed:

and also pour water into it; which, as it is some time a boiling, may denote the length of the siege of the city, which held two years; and of the troubles and miseries attending it; and of the greatness of them, which were as intolerable as boiling water. The Targum is,

“prophesy that armies shall come against this city; and also there shall be given unto it length of time to receive the siege.”

Ver. 4. *Gather the pieces thereof into it*, &c.] fire being made, and the pot set on, and water poured into it, the next thing is, to put in the pieces that are to be boiled; and these are to be gathered; meaning the people of the land, that were to be gathered from the several parts of it, for their security, as they thought; but the event proved it was for their ruin: even

every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder; the princes and gentry, the great and the mighty, the rich and wealthy of the people; who, upon the invasion, got together in Jerusalem, to secure their persons and substance:

fill it with the choice bones; or with those pieces that have the choice bones, that are full of marrow; the strongest among the people; the soldiers, or such as were fit for war; the best of their militia, brought hither to defend the city; but, in fact, to be slain, as they were. The Targum is,

“gather the princes thereof into the midst of her, every terrible man and warrior; fill her with the army of the people.”

Ver. 5. *Take the choice of the flock*, &c.] King, princes, nobles, magistrates, priests and rulers of the people:

and burn also the bones under it: or, “put a pile of bones under it”^{f376}; the bones of them that are slain in it; denoting the great slaughter of them; or the bones of the innocent that had been murdered in it; which were the cause of these judgments coming upon them; and caused the wrath of God to burn the more hotly against them; or the bones of the wicked:

and make it boil well; the pot; that the water may be very hot and boiling; denoting the severity of the judgments of God in the city, to the destruction of many by sword, famine, and pestilence:

and let them seethe the bones of it therein; that the strongest among them may be weakened and destroyed by the length and severity of the siege, and the judgments attending it. The Targum is,

“bring near the kings of the people, and even join auxiliaries with them; hasten the time of it yea, let her slain be cast in the midst of her.”

Ver. 6. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, woe to the bloody city, &c.*]

Here the parable begins to be explained; and shows that by the pot is meant the city of Jerusalem, called the bloody city, because of the blood of the prophets, and of righteous persons, and of innocent babes, that was shed in it; and which was the cause of the judgments of God coming upon her, which would issue in her destruction, and therefore “woe unto her”; (see ~~4157~~ Matthew 23:37):

to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it; when a pot boils, a scum arises, and appears upon the top of the water, which the cook usually takes off: this denotes the filthiness and wickedness of the people of the Jews, which would work up and be seen by the judgments of God upon them; yet should not be removed, but continue on them, unrepented of, and unpardoned. It signifies that they would remain hardened in their sins; and that the judgments of God would have no effect upon them to bring them to repentance; and that God would have no mercy on them, or pardon their sins:

bring it out piece by piece: the people that were in Jerusalem, of every class and rank, of every age and sex; suggesting that they should not be all destroyed at once, but some at one time, and some at another; some in one way, and some in another; some by famine, others by the pestilence, and others by the sword; some by sallying out upon the enemy; others by endeavouring to make their escape privately, and fall into their hands:

let no lot fall upon it; to save some, and destroy others, as is often done in war; signifying that all were destined to destruction, some way or another; and none should be spared; they that escaped the pestilence should die by famine; and they that escaped them both should die by the sword; and they that escaped all three should be carried into captivity. The Targum is,

“captivity upon captivity shall go out with her, because repentance was not in her.”

Ver. 7. *For her blood is in the midst of her, &c.*] The blood of innocent persons shed in the midst of her, openly and publicly, cried for vengeance:

she set it upon the top of a rock; where it could not soak in, as when spilled upon soft earth: this denotes her openness and impudence in shedding blood, as not being ashamed of it, or afraid of punishment for it, but as rather glorying in it; perhaps there may be some allusion to the tops

of hills and mountains, where idolatry was committed, attended with shedding human blood:

she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; she did not take any methods to hide her sin; having no sense of the heinousness of it, nor any consciousness of guilt, or any remorse or repentance; respect is had to a law which obliged to cover blood shed with dust, (⁽¹⁸¹⁷¹³⁾Leviticus 17:13). The Targum of the whole is,

“because innocent blood which is shed in the midst of her; with pride and with a high arm she shed it; she shed it not through ignorance, that she might repent of it.”

Ver. 8. *That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance, &c.*] Into the heart and mind of God, into his face, speaking after the manner of men; observing such gross and open wickedness, he determined within himself to show his resentment, manifest his wrath and displeasure, and take vengeance on such capital and impudent offenders:

I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it might not be covered; by way of just retaliation; that as her sin was publicly committed, and no repentance shown for it, so her punishment should be open and manifest to all the world, and no forgiveness should be granted her. The Targum is,

“I have revealed their sins, because they have shed innocent blood openly, that it might not be forgiven.”

Ver. 9. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, woe to the bloody city, &c.*] (see Gill on “⁽²⁶¹⁰⁶⁾Ezekiel 24:6”):

I will even make the pile for fire great; a large pile of wood, a great quantity of fuel to maintain the fire, and keep the pot boiling; meaning the vast army of the Chaldeans, which the Lord would bring against Jerusalem, which should closely besiege it, and vigorously attack it, until it had executed the fury of the wrath of God, comparable to fire, and of his judgments upon it. The Targum is,

“even I will multiply her destruction.”

Ver. 10. *Heap on wood, kindle the fire, &c.*] This is said either to the prophet, to do this in an emblematic way; or to the Chaldean army, to prepare for the siege, encompass the city, begin their attacks, and throw in their stones out of their slings and engines, and arrows from their bows:

consume the flesh; not entirely, since it is afterwards to be spiced; but thoroughly boil it; denoting the severe sufferings the inhabitants should undergo before their utter ruin:

spice it well; pepper them off; batter their walls, beat down their houses, distress them by all manner of ways and means; signifying that this would be grateful to the Lord, as his justice would be glorified in the destruction of this people; and as the plunder of them would be like a spiced and sweet morsel to the enemy; whose appetites would hereby be sharpened and become keen, and to whom the sacking and plundering the city would be as agreeable as well seasoned meat to a hungry man:

and let the bones be burnt; either under it, or rather in it; even the strongest and most powerful among the people destroyed, who should hold out the longest in the siege. The Targum of the whole is,

“multiply kings; gather an army; order the auxiliaries, and prepare against her warriors, and let her mighty ones be confounded.”

Ver. 11. *Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, &c.*] The city, when emptied of its inhabitants and substance, like a pot that is boiled over, and all in it boiled away, or taken out; burn it with fire, as the city of Jerusalem when taken and plundered was:

that the brass of it may be hot, and burn; as brass will when set on coals: or, “the bottom of it”¹³⁷⁷; so Ben Melech observes, from the Misnah, that the lower part or bottom of a pot, cauldron, or furnace, is called the brass of it; and so the sense is, make the fire burn so fierce as to burn the bottom of the pot; or the canker and rust of it, which the following words explain:

and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed; the abominable wickedness of this people; since they were not reformed and brought to repentance for it by the admonitions and instructions given them, and by the chastisements and corrections laid upon them, they with their sins should be consumed in this terrible manner. The Targum is,

“I will leave the land desolate, that they may become desolate; and that the gates of her city may be consumed; and that those that work uncleanness in the midst of her may melt away, and her sins be consumed.”

Ver. 12. *She hath wearied herself with lies, &c.*] With serving idols, which were lying vanities; by trusting to the alliances of neighbouring nations, which deceived her; or by committing sin, in which there was no satisfaction; or it may be understood of wearying of God with their sins, and particularly with her lying promises of repentance and reformation:

and her great scum went not forth out of her; notwithstanding her promises; or notwithstanding the admonitions given, and the chastisements inflicted on her, yet she continued hardened in her sins, impenitent and unreformed:

her scum shall be in the fire; like a pot that boils over, its scum falls into the fire, and is consumed there; and in no other way, but by the fire of divine judgments, or the burning of the city, could the wickedness thereof be consumed. The Targum is,

“and they shall not go out of her that work iniquity; in the fire shall she be burnt, because of the multitude of her sins.”

Ver. 13. *In thy filthiness is lewdness, &c.*] Consummate wickedness joined with impudence, and an obstinate persisting in it; though her sins were so abominable and filthy, yet she was not ashamed of them, nor could be reclaimed from them; but, like a lewd woman, or an old harlot, was bold and impudent:

because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged; made use of means for the purgation of them, by his prophets, and by exhortations and instructions given by them, and by various corrections and chastisements; but all in vain, and to no purpose, they were all without effect:

thou shall not be purged from thy filthiness any more till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee; there was no other way left to purge her from her sins, but by the fire of his wrath, and the fury of his anger, in her utter destruction.

Ver. 14. *I the Lord have spoken it; it shall come to pass, &c.*] What God has said shall be accomplished; his word shall not return void and empty, or be without effect:

and I will do it; being God omnipotent and unchangeable:

I will not go back; from his word, or the thing threatened and denounced; nothing should prevail upon him to act such a part:

neither will I spare; show any mercy or compassion, or abate of the punishment due:

neither will I repent; or change the course and method of Providence; but abide by the decree gone forth, and the sentence pronounced, and thoroughly execute it; a heap of words ascertaining the truth of what is predicted:

according to thy ways and according to thy doings shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God; that is, the Chaldeans shall judge and condemn thee, and execute my judgments on thee in a just and righteous manner, as thy evil ways and works deserve.

Ver. 15. *Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Next follows the other sign, by which the Lord shows the destruction of the temple.

Ver. 16. *Son of man, behold, &c.*] This is said to raise the attention of the prophet, something strange and unusual, interesting and affecting, being about to be delivered:

I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; meaning his wife; who very probably was of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to; however, of an amiable disposition, and in her conjugal relation very agreeable to the prophet; and, no doubt, a truly religious woman, and upon all account's desirable to him. This lovely object of his affection the Lord, who is the sovereign disposer of all persons, signifies he would take away from him by death unto himself; that is, suddenly and at once; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "with a sudden stroke"; as sometimes persons are struck with death at once with an apoplexy or palsy. The Targum renders it, with the pestilence; it was what the Jews call death by the hand of heaven, by the immediate hand of God; and, it may be, without any intervening disease; or, however, without any train of disorders which lead on to death:

yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep; on account of the dead; neither privately nor publicly, inwardly or outwardly, though so near and dear a relation; and though it would seem strange, and be charged with want of natural affection, and with a brutish insensibility:

neither shall thy tears run down; his cheeks, by which vent would be given to his grief, and his mind somewhat eased; but all care was to be taken to prevent any gushing of them out of his eyes, and especially that they did

not run down in any quantity on his cheeks, and to be seen; though they might seem to be but a proper tribute to the dead.

Ver. 17. *Forbear to cry*, &c.] Groan or howl, or make any doleful noise: or, “be silent”^{f378}: which the Talmudists^{f379} interpret of not greeting any person:

make no mourning for the dead; use none of those rites and ceremonies commonly observed for deceased relations and friends, particularly and especially for a wife; who is one of the seven persons for whom mourning is to be made, according to the Jewish canons^{f380}; and which the ties of nature, nearness of relation, and especially mutual and cordial affection, where that has taken place, require; and though a wife is not expressly mentioned among those, for whom a priest might defile himself by attending their funerals, yet must be included among those akin to him, if not solely designed, as Jarchi thinks; whose note on (~~<R20>~~Leviticus 21:2), is, there are none his kin but his wife; so that Ezekiel, though a priest, was not exempted from the observation of funeral rites, but obliged to them, had he not been forbid by a special order from the Lord: the particulars of which follow:

bind the tire of thine head upon thee; cap or turban, wore on the head, as a covering of it, and ornament to it, as the word used signifies; and the priests’ bonnets were for glory and beauty, (~~<R20>~~Exodus 28:40), and such was the tire about the prophet’s head, since he was a priest; and which, in time of mourning, was taken off, and it was customary for mourners to be bare headed; and though the high priest might not uncover his head and rend his clothes for the dead, (~~<R20>~~Leviticus 21:10), yet other priests might, unless they had a particular and special prohibition, as Ezekiel here; (see ~~<R06>~~Leviticus 10:6) and yet it seems, by some instances, particularly that of David’s mourning for Absalom, that the head was covered at such a time, (~~<R06>~~2 Samuel 19:5) and Kimchi on the place expressly says, that it was the way and custom of mourners to cover themselves; and certain it is, that in later times, however, it has been the usage of the Jews to cover their heads in mourning; for this is one of the things expressly forbid in the Jewish canons, as Maimonides^{f381} says, to be used in mourning for the dead, namely, making bare the head; and covering the head is what mourners are obliged to^{f382}; this Gejerus^{f383} reconciles, by observing, that at the first of the mourning they used to take off of their heads what they wore for the sake of ornament, such as the tire, or bonnet here; but after a while

covered themselves with veils when they went abroad, or others came to them. Jarchi interprets this of the “tephillim”, or phylacteries the Jews wore about their heads; and so the Talmud^{f384}; and the Targum is,

“let thy “totaphot” or frontlets be upon thee;”

of which interpretation Jerom makes mention; but these things do not appear to be in use in Ezekiel’s time:

and put on thy shoes upon thy feet: which used to be taken off, and persons walked barefoot in times of mourning, (~~150~~2 Samuel 15:30), and this custom continues with the Jews to this day; and which they say is confirmed by this passage. One of their canons^{f385} runs thus,

“they do not rend garments, nor pluck off the shoe for any, until he is dead;”

which supposes they do, and should do, when he is dead: and this is one of the things, their writers^{f386} say, is forbidden a mourner for the dead, namely, to put on his shoes; and they ask, from whence it appears that a mourner is forbid to put on his shoes? the answer is, from what is said to Ezekiel, “put on thy shoes upon thy feet”: which shows that in common it was not right nor usual to do it; and it is their custom now for mourners, when they return from the grave, to sit seven days on the ground with their feet naked^{f387}:

and cover not thy lips; as the leper did in the time of his separation and distress, who put a covering upon his upper lip, (~~135~~Leviticus 13:45) and as mourners did, who put a veil upon their faces:

and eat not the bread of men: of other men; or “of mourners”^{f388}, as the Targum; such as used to be sent to mourners by their friends, in order to refresh and revive their spirits; and who, they supposed, through their great grief, were not careful to provide food for themselves; and this they did to comfort them, and let them know that, though they had lost a relation, there were others left, who had a cordial respect for them, and heartily sympathized with them: and, according to the traditions of the Jews^{f389}, a mourner might not eat of his own bread; but was obliged to eat the bread of others, at least his first meal, and on the first day of his mourning; though he might on the second, and on the following days; and this they endeavour to establish from this place of Scripture. What their friends used to send them at such a time were usually hard eggs and wine. Eggs,

because round and spherical, and so a proper emblem of death, and might serve to put in mind of it, which goes round, is with one today, and with another tomorrow; and wine, to cheer their spirits, that they might forget their sorrow^{f390}. They also used to eat at such times a sort of pulse, called lentiles, to show by what sort of food they lost their birthright, or firstborn^{f391}. And such like things were used by the Romans in their funeral feasts, as beans, parsley, lettuce, lentiles, eggs, &c.^{f392}, and as the Romans had their “parentalia”, and the Greeks their *παραδειπνα*, so the Jews had also very sumptuous feasts on such occasions: not only great personages, as kings and nobles, made them; so Archelaus, made a magnificent one for the people, on the death of his father Herod^{f393}, after the custom of the country; but even the common people were very profuse and lavish in them; and which, as Josephus^{f394} observes, was the cause of great poverty among them; for so prevalent was the custom, that there was a necessity of doing it, or otherwise a man would not have been reckoned a holy man; (see ~~2447~~ Jeremiah 16:7).

Ver. 18. *So I spake unto the people in the morning, &c.*] Did the duty of his office as a prophet; exhorted and instructed the people, particularly informed them of what had been said to him by the Lord, the evening or night before, concerning the death of his wife, and how he was to behave under such a providence; which he told them of before hand, that, when it came to pass, they might have a further proof of his being a true prophet of the Lord:

and at even my wife died; suddenly, as it was said she should; this shows who is meant by the desire of his eyes, and what by the taking it away;

and I did in the morning as I was commanded; neither moaned, nor sighed, nor wept, nor shed a tear, nor used any of the common ceremonies of mourning, but dressed and ate as at other times, as he was ordered to do; this was the next morning after his wife died. So the Syriac version,

“in the morning of the other day;”

and the Arabic version,

“in the morning of the following day.”

Thus whatever the Lord commands is to be done, though ever so contrary to the customs of men, or to natural inclinations and affections.

Ver. 19. *And the people said unto me, &c.*] Either seriously, as being desirous of knowing what was meant by all this; since they had reason to believe that it was not out of want of affection in Ezekiel to his wife that he so behaved; and therefore there must be some hidden meaning in it, which they should be glad to be informed of: or in a ludicrous manner, deriding the prophet for his conduct, and despising what he meant to instruct them in hereby:

wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so? for they suspected it was not on his own account, but to signify something to them, that these things were done; and laughing at him, they say, to what purpose are these things done? if you do not tell us for what reason they are done, instruct us by words, and not by actions; these were his fellow captives in Babylon.

Ver. 20. *Then I answered them, &c.*] And gave them an account of the design of the whole, and what was signified hereby:

the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; ordering him to do all he did; for he did nothing of himself, but all according to the divine will; and who also directed him to say the following things to the people, by way of explanation.

Ver. 21. *Speak unto the house of Israel, &c.*] By word of mouth, to those who were upon the spot with him in Chaldea: and by a messenger, or a letter, to them that were in Judea:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold, I will profane my sanctuary; the temple, built for him, and where he dwelt, and was worshipped; where duties performed and holy sacrifices offered up formerly; this he now says he would profane, that is, would bring the Chaldeans against Jerusalem, who should take it, and enter into the temple, and so profane it, and make it common, yea, utterly destroy it:

the excellency of your strength, desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; all which is said of the temple; it was the pride and glory of the Jews, what they boasted of, and put their confidence in, and reckoned their strength and security; it was as dear and as desirable to them as Ezekiel's wife was to him, the emblem of it; the destruction and desolation of which would be pitied by them, and would sensibly affect them upon hearing of it, even in prophecy:

and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword; whom they had left behind them in Judea, when they were carried captive with Jehoiakim, and to whom they hoped to return, as their false prophets had assured them; but so it should not be, for these should die by the sword of the Chaldeans, when the city of Jerusalem should be taken, and the temple profaned; and this should be the case of the sons and daughters of those who then should be carried captive, that should be left in the land; as was the case of Gedaliah, and those that were with him.

Ver. 22. *And ye shall do as I have done*, &c.] When his wife died, and as he was ordered by the Lord; the meaning of Which they were now inquiring:

ye shall not cover your lips; as a token of mourning; nor use any other of their country rites and ceremonies, for fear of provoking their enemies, in whose hands they shall be:

nor eat the bread of men; or “of mourners”, as the Targum; there shall be none to comfort them, or send bread to them; they shall all be alike mourners.

Ver. 23. *And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet*. &c.] As will be necessary while travelling, and when carrying captive to a foreign country, as now will be their case:

ye shall not mourn nor weep; shall not dare to do it, because of their enemies; and, moreover, so great should be their miseries and calamities, that they should be struck dumb, and quite astonished and stupefied with them; that they should not be able to vent their sorrow by an outward act of mourning:

but ye shall pine away for your iniquities; without any true sense of them, or godly sorrow for them, but in wretched hardness of heart, and black despair:

and mourn one towards another; not to God, confessing their sins, being contrite and penitent; but to one another, fretting, murmuring, and complaining at the hand of God upon them: this seems to denote the private way of mourning they should use for fear of the enemy, when they could get together by themselves, as well as their disregard to God, against whom they had sinned.

Ver. 24. *Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign*, &c.] These are the words of the prophet concerning himself; observing that in all the above things he was a sign to the Jews of what should befall them, and what should be their case:

and according to all that he hath done shall ye do; however it might be then a matter of scorn and derision:

and when this cometh: when this prophecy comes to pass, and all these calamities come upon the city and temple:

ye shall know that I am the Lord God; omniscient, omnipotent, true, and faithful.

Ver. 25. *Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day*, &c.] This question is to be answered in the affirmative:

when I take from them their strength; their king and kingdom, their princes and nobles, their soldiers and men of might and war, their wealth and substance, their city and the inhabitants of it; or rather their temple, in which they placed their strong confidence: so the Targum,

“in the day when I shall take from them the house of their sanctuary;”

and which is called “the joy of their glory”; what they rejoiced and gloried in:

the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their mind, their sons and their daughters; for to these may those phrases be applied; as well as to the temple; they being desirable to them, to be spared and continued, and on whom the affections of their hearts were set, and for whose welfare they were very solicitous. So some render it “the burden or care of their souls”^{f395}; though the Targum applies this, as the other to the temple, paraphrasing it,

“and the delight of their eyes shall be taken from them, and the beloved of their souls, which is better to them than their sons and their daughters.”

Ver. 26. *That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee*, &c.] That is, that one that should escape the hands of the Chaldeans, when the city should be taken, should directly make the best of his way to the prophet:

to cause thee to hear it with thine ears; all the particulars of the destruction of the city and temple, as it had been represented to him in vision; when he would see the exact agreement between prophecy and facts; (see ~~אזכיר~~ Ezekiel 33:21).

Ver. 27. *In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, &c.]* And shall freely converse with him about the several facts and circumstances of taking and burning the city and temple, and of the usage of the inhabitants:

and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb; for from this time to the taking of Jerusalem, which was about eighteen months, the prophet had nothing to say to the people of the Jews, and so was dumb with respect to them; but was employed in prophesying against other nations, as the following chapters show, unto chapter thirty three, in which we have an account of the messenger that escaped to him; but after that his mouth was opened, and he prophesied to them again:

and thou shalt be a sign unto them; as they will then own and acknowledge:

and they shall own that I am the Lord; who have foretold these things, and accomplished them.

CHAPTER 25

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 25

In this chapter the prophet foretells the judgments of God upon the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines, for their ill usage of the Jews; on the Ammonites, (^{<321>}Ezekiel 25:1-7), on the Moabites, (^{<3218>}Ezekiel 25:8-11), on the Edomites, (^{<3212>}Ezekiel 25:12-14), on the Philistines, (^{<3215>}Ezekiel 25:15-17).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] After he had done prophesying to the Jews, he is bid to prophesy against the Gentiles, the nations that lay nearest the Jews: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites*, &c.] Who were of the posterity of Lot, implacable enemies of the Jews; who hated their religion, and envied their wealth and happiness; against these the prophet is bid to “set his face”; to look that way where they lived, and to put on a frowning countenance, and a menacing aspect: “strengthen thy face”, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it; look boldly at them:

and prophesy against them; deliver out the following prophecy concerning them.

Ver. 3. *And say unto the Ammonites*, &c.] Either to their ambassadors at Babylon, or merchants there; or by letters to them, the prophet being in Chaldea, at a distance from them:

hear the word of the Lord God; not Chemosh their idol, nor their lying oracles, but the word of the true and living God; which is always accomplished, and is never frustrated:

thus saith the Lord God, because thou saidst, aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; that is, expressed joy, as the Targum paraphrases it, at the destruction of the temple, when it was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar; it was foreknown by the Lord that they would do so, and are here threatened before hand; for as yet the temple was not destroyed; a proof this of God’s prescience of future contingencies:

and against the land of when it was desolate; the country of the ten tribes, which had been desolate from the sixth year of Hezekiah, when the people of it were carried captive by Shalmaneser king of Assyria; this also was matter of joy to the Ammonites:

and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity; the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; part of which had already been carried captive under Jeconiah, and the rest would be, and were, under Zedekiah; which completed the destruction of Israel and Judah, and gave the utmost pleasure to their enemies the Ammonites; who were so impious as to rejoice at the destruction of their temple, the place of their religious worship, which they abhorred; and so inhuman as to express the delight and satisfaction they had in the ruin of their fellow creatures and neighbours, and who were originally related to them; this brutish and barbarous behaviour of theirs is resented by the Lord.

Ver. 4. *Behold, therefore, I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, &c.*] The Chaldeans and Syrians, which were on the east side, as Jarchi; or the Medes and Persians, as Kimchi, which lay more eastward; or it may be the Arabians, who are commonly called the men of the east; who were a part of Nebuchadnezzar's army, and whom he might reward with this country, when taken by him; for this prophecy, according to Josephus^{f396}, was fulfilled five years after the destruction of Jerusalem:

and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee; or, "their camps and their tents"^{f397}; and so the Syriac version renders it, their armies and their tents; who should subdue them, and take possession of their cities and fields, and enjoy what they found there:

they shall eat thy fruit, and drink thy milk; the fruit of their land, their vineyards and fields, and the milk of their flocks and herds, which was commonly drank in those countries; these are put for the whole of their substance. So the Targum,

"they shall eat the good of thy land, and spoil thy substance."

Ver. 5. *And I will make Rabbath a stable for camels, &c.*] Creatures much used by the eastern nations, especially the Arabians; who pitching their tents about Rabbath, the royal city, the metropolis of the children of Ammon, would convert the houses, and even palaces in it, into stables for

their camels. This city, in Jerom's time, as he says, was called Philadelphia, from Ptolemy Philadelphus, who rebuilt it.

And the Ammonites a couching place for flocks; that is, the land of the Ammonites should be made a place for flocks of sheep to lie down in, which the Arabians would bring and feed upon it:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord; omniscient, and sees and observes all your insults upon the children of Israel and Judah; and omnipotent, able to perform all that is threatened; and immutable, bringing about all that is here prophesied of.

Ver. 6. *For thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Their sin and punishment are further enlarged upon:

because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with thy feet: gestures expressive of joy and gladness, (²³⁵¹²Isaiah 55:12 ²³⁵¹⁵Lamentations 2:15 ²⁴⁸²⁷Jeremiah 48:27), the Ammonites clapped their hands together, and leaped and skipped for joy, when they heard of the calamities of the Jews; who yet had more reason to be sorrowful, since they might expect their turn would be next; for the king of Babylon had a design against them, at the same time he came against Jerusalem, and was in doubt for a while which he should attack first; (see ³⁵²¹¹Ezekiel 21:20):

and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel; they had a secret joy in their heart, which they expressed by gestures, in the most spiteful and scornful manner they were capable of; which showed the wretched malignity of their dispositions against the children of Israel; they hated them with a perfect hatred.

Ver. 7. *Behold, therefore, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee,* &c.] In just retaliation for clapping their hands against his people; and which hand of the Lord they would find to be a heavy one, and which they would not be able either to resist or bear. The Targum is,

“I will lift up the stroke of my power upon thee:”

and will deliver thee for a spoil to the Heathen; to the Chaldeans first, and then to the Arabians, to be spoiled and plundered by them of their wealth and substance: some render it, “for meat”^{f398} unto them; to be devoured and consumed by them:

and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries; so as to be no more a people and a country; or be reckoned among the people and countries; or have any alliance with them, or help from them:

I will destroy thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; who has said and done all this; (see Gill on “³²¹⁵Ezekiel 25:5”).

Ver. 8. *Thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] By his servant the prophet, to whom the word of the Lord came; as concerning the Ammonites, so likewise concerning the Moabites, as follows:

because that Moab and Seir do say; that is, the Moabites, and the Edomites, which latter are meant by Seir, that being the seat of them; these lived near one another, and bore a like enmity to the Israelites and Jews, and had the same sentiments concerning them, and said the same things of them: only Moab is mentioned in the Septuagint and Arabic versions: the Moabites are first prophesied of, and then the Edomites, who both joined in saying, behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the Heathen; it fares no better with them than with the rest of the nations, who do not profess and serve the same God they do; they are fallen into the hands of the king of Babylon, as well as others; and have no more security against him, nor protection from him, than other people; they pretend to serve and worship the one only living and true God, and to be his covenant people, and to be favoured with privileges above all other nations; and yet are brought into the same miserable circumstances, and left in them, as others are; where is the God they boast of, and their superior excellence to the rest of the world? thus blasphemously, as well as wickedly, did they insult them, which was provoking to the Lord. The Targum renders it interrogatively,

“in what do the house of Judah differ from all people?”

and so the Septuagint,

“behold, are not the house of Israel and Judah in like manner as all nations?”

Jerom, on the place, relates a fable of the Jews, that when the city and temple were opened, the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, went into the temple, and saw the cherubim over the mercy seat, and said, as all nations worship images, so Judah hath the idols of their religion. Jarchi makes mention of such a Midrash, but with some difference.

Ver. 9. *Therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, &c.]* Or, “the shoulder of Moab”^{f399}; that part of their country where their greatest strength lay, So the Targum renders it,

“the strength of Moab;”

where their principal cities were, their frontier towns, and fortified places, as appears by what follows:

from his cities which are on his frontiers; or, “from his Ars”^{f400},

from his cities which are at his end; at the extreme part of the land, upon the borders of his countries; the two cities of Ar and Aroer, (^{<0628>}Numbers 21:28 ^{<0626>}Deuteronomy 2:36):

the glory of the country; as the above cities were, and what follow:

Bethjeshimoth; this was formerly in the tribe of Reuben, now in the possession of the Moabites, and one of their principal cities, (^{<0633>}Joshua 13:20):

Baalmeon; the same with Bethbaalmeon, and which was also of the tribe of Reuben, (^{<0637>}Joshua 13:17 ^{<0628>}Numbers 32:38), in Jerom’s time it was a large village in Moab, about nine miles from Heshbon: some think by Meon is meant Menes, or Osiris the god of the Egyptians, and so this might be a temple of his; or at least he might have a temple in it, from whence it had its name:

and Kirjathaim; or the double city, built also by the Reubenites, (^{<0627>}Numbers 32:37 ^{<0639>}Joshua 13:19), now in the hands of the Moabites, ten miles from Medeba; on this side of the country of Moab, and through these cities, the Lord threatens to open a way for their enemies to enter in and destroy them, as follows:

Ver. 10. *Unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and I will give them in possession, &c.]* Or, “against the Ammonites”, as the Targum; that is, way should be made for the same people of the east, the Chaldeans or Arabians, that came against the Ammonites and destroyed them, to enter into the land of Moab and possess it, as they had done the land of Ammon:

that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations: the name of that people, which is entirely lost; and Moab likewise, which underwent the same fate.

Ver. 11. *I will execute judgments upon Moab, &c.*] For though the Chaldeans and Arabians were the instruments of their ruin, their destruction was of the Lord; it was his hand that was upon them, and his vengeance that was executed on them, for their hard sayings against his people; for though he had spoke against them in his providence, and chastised them for their sins, yet he will not suffer others to speak against them:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; that takes part with Judah, and will avenge himself of all their enemies.

Ver. 12. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Concerning Seir or the Edomites, the prophecy concerning the Moabites being finished:

because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance: or, “revenging a revenge”^{f401}; the Edomites bore an old grudge against the Jews, not only because their father Jacob had got the birthright and blessing from their father Esau; but because they were made tributaries to them in David’s time, and afterwards severely chastised by Amaziah; these things they laid up in their minds, and vowed revenge whenever they had an opportunity; and now one offered at the destruction of Jerusalem, which they took:

and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them: not only by rejoicing at the destruction of the Jews, but by encouraging the Babylonians in it; assisting them therein, joining with them in plundering the city, and in cutting off those with the sword who endeavoured to make their escape; (see ^{<4370>}Psalm 137:7 Obidiah 1:12-14).

Ver. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Because of such base and barbarous usage, from a people that were originally brethren:

I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; by the army of Nebuchadnezzar, by the sword of the Chaldeans, and by famine and pestilence, and such like sore judgments; in which the hand of God is manifestly seen:

and I will make it desolate from Teman; a very principal city of Edom, so called from Teman, the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, (^{<4135>}Genesis 36:15) it lay in the south of the land of Idumea; the Targum renders it, “from the south”:

and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword; of the Babylonians; this was another city of Edom, it lay in the north of that country; so that hereby is signified that destruction should go through it from the southern to the northern parts of it.

Ver. 14. *And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel*, &c.] This was fulfilled in the times of the Maccabees, when Judas Maccabins overthrew and conquered them, ``Then Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea at Arabattine, because they besieged Gael: and he gave them a great overthrow, and abated their courage, and took their spoils.” (1 Maccabees 5:3)

and when Hyrcanus took their cities, and subdued them, and they became Jews, as Josephus^{f402} relates; though Kimchi thinks this refers to future time, and is yet to be accomplished; and it is, by the ancient Jews^{f403}, understood of the times of the Messiah: some choose to understand the phrase,

by the hand of my people Israel, the same hand by which judgment was inflicted upon Israel; suggesting that by the same hand vengeance would be inflicted on the Edomites, namely, by the Babylonians:

and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; that is, shall execute all the anger and fury, or all that punishment in anger and fury, which the Lord in righteous judgment has appointed them to, and has determined shall be performed upon them, by the children of Israel or the Babylonians, as his instruments:

and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord God; the meaning is, they shall feel it, and be sensible of it, and know that it comes from the Lord himself; full of resentment against them, and highly displeased at their behaviour towards his people Israel.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Once more, and concerning another enemy of the people of Israel, and who had been of old an implacable one:

because the Philistines have dealt by revenge: for what they suffered in the times of Saul, when Goliath was slain by David, and their army was discomfited; and for the overthrow of them by David, when he came to throne; and for his burning their images, and subduing them, (<075>1 Samuel 17:51,52 <075>2 Samuel 5:20,21,25 8:1), this revenge they took in the time

of Ahaz, (^{<488>}2 Chronicles 28:18), and very probably also showed their spite at the time of Jerusalem's destruction:

and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; which they bore to the people of Israel, from their first settlement in Canaan; from the times of the judges, particularly Samson; and from the times of Saul and David: it was an old grudge they bore, they had spite and malice in their hearts, and wanted an opportunity to vent it; having determined to take vengeance when they could, and utterly destroy them from being a people; very likely, through despite, they assisted the Chaldean army: or, this they did "with a perpetual hatred"^{f404}; they did everything they could, in a spiteful and malicious way, to perpetuate the hatred between them and Israel.

Ver. 16. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Because of such wretched malice and despiteful usage:

behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines; as is foretold, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:1),

and I will cut off the Cherethims: one of the tribes of the Philistines, a principal part of their country, which lay to the south, (^{<0814>}1 Samuel 30:14 ^{<3415>}Zephaniah 2:5), there is a beautiful play on words^{f405} in the Hebrew:

and destroy the remnant of the seacoast; as that of Ashdod, Caphtor, and Ashkelon, formerly spoiled by other persons; what they left should now be utterly destroyed; (see ^{<2301>}Isaiah 20:1 ^{<2520>}Jeremiah 25:20 47:4,5)

Ver. 17. *And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes, &c.*] By way of retaliation for their vengeance and fury, wrath and malice, against his people; suggesting, that the judgments inflicted on them, for quantity and quality, should be very great:

and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them; they shall see the hand of God in it, acknowledge his justice, and confess that their gods were idols, and that the God of Israel is the only true God.

CHAPTER 26

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 26

This chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of Tyre. The time of the prophecy, (^{<3301>}Ezekiel 26:1), the cause of the destruction of it, rejoicing at the ruin of Jerusalem, (^{<3302>}Ezekiel 26:2), the instruments of it, many nations, particularly the king of Babylon, (^{<3303>}Ezekiel 26:3-7), the manner in which it shall be done, (^{<3308>}Ezekiel 26:8-14), the lamentation of other isles, and the princes of them, on account of it, (^{<3305>}Ezekiel 26:15-18), the utter destruction of it, so as never to be found any more, (^{<3309>}Ezekiel 26:19-21).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the eleventh year, &c.*] Of Jehoiachin's captivity and Zedekiah's reign, the same year that Jerusalem was taken:

in the first day of the month; but what month is not mentioned; some have thought the first month, and so it was the first day of the year; others the fourth, the same in which the city of Jerusalem was taken; but more probably the fifth, the first of which was twenty days after the taking it; in which time the news of it might be brought to Tyre, at which she rejoiced; and for which her destruction is threatened, and here prophesied of:

that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, aha, &c.*] As rejoicing at her destruction, and insulting over her in it; which was barbarous and inhuman, and resented by the Lord:

she is broken that was the gates of the people; through whose gates the people went in and out in great numbers; a city to which there was very popular, not only for religion, from all parts, at their solemn feasts, but for merchandise from several parts of the world; and was now full of people before its destruction, the inhabitants of Judea having fled thither for safety, upon the invasion made by the king of Babylon; but now the city was broken up, as it is said it was, by the Chaldean army, (^{<2607>}Jeremiah 52:7), its gates and walls were broken down, and lay in a ruinous condition. The Targum is,

“she is broken down that afforded merchandise to all people.”

She is turned unto me; either the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which escaped and fled to Tyre for refuge; or the spoil taken out of it, which was carried there to be sold; and even the captives themselves to be sold for slaves, which was one part of the merchandise of Tyre; (see ^{<327B>}Ezekiel 27:3), or the business, trade, and merchandise carried on in Jerusalem, were brought to Tyre upon its destruction; so Jarchi and Kimchi. The Targum is,

“she is turned to come unto me;”

which favours the first sense; all may be intended.

I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste; or, “I shall be filled”^{f406}; with inhabitants, riches, and wealth, with merchants and merchandise, Jerusalem her rival being destroyed; this was what gave her joy; and is a common thing for persons to rejoice at the fall or death of those of the same trade with them; hoping for an increase of theirs by means of it, which yet is sinful.

Ver. 3. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Who knew the thoughts of the inhabitants of Tyre, and what joy possessed their hearts, and which their lips expressed; and who informs the prophet of it, though at a great distance, and declares his resentment at it:

behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus; and nothing can be more dreadful and formidable than to have God against a nation, city, or a particular person: Tyre was a type of antichrist, who will express a like joy at the death of the witnesses; thinking that the merchandise of Rome will be increased greatly, and there will be nothing to interrupt it, (^{<6110>}Revelation 11:10), but God will show his displeasure, and bring sudden destruction on it:

and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up; the Chaldean army, consisting of soldiers of many nations; who for their number, noise, and fury, are compared to the raging waves of the sea. So the Targum,

“I will bring up against thee an army of many people, as the sea ascendeth in the raging of its waves;”

the ten kings shall hate the whore, and destroy her, even those very people she reigns over, compared to many waters, (^{<6175>}Revelation 17:15,16).

Ver. 4. *And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus* &c.] Undermining them, or breaking them down with their battering rams:

and break down her towers; with axes, (^{צביון}Ezekiel 26:9) built upon the walls; erected for the defence of the city, and for watchmen to stand in, to look out from them for the enemy, and observe his motions, as well as for soldiers to fight from:

and I will scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock; a bare smooth rock, which has not any surface of earth upon it. So the Targum,

“I will give her for the smoothness of an open rock.”

Tyre was built upon a rock; and whereas the inhabitants had brought earth thither, and laid it upon it, in order to make gardens and orchards, and plant flowers and trees; this should be all removed, and it should become a bare rock, as it was at first. It denotes the utter destruction of it. It has its name from a word which signifies a rock; (See Gill on “^{צביון}Isaiah 23:1”).

Ver. 5. *It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea,* &c.] Where only fishermen would be seen washing their nets, and then spreading them upon this rock, where Tyre stood, to dry them and this has been confirmed by travellers, who have seen fishermen spreading and drying their nets, and having no other habitations on it but the huts of these men. Huetius^{f407} relates, that he remembered one Hadrian Parvillarius, a Jesuit, a candid and learned man, particularly in the Arabic language, who lived ten years in Syria; and to have heard him say, that when he saw the ruins of Tyre, its rocks to the sea, and scattered stones on the shore, and made clean smooth by the sun, waves, and wind, and only used for drying fishermen’s nets, it brought to his mind this passage of the prophet; as it did to Mr. Maundrell^{f408} when on the spot, a few years ago; who says,

“you see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. there being not so much as one entire house left; its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing; who seem to be preserved in this place by divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, viz. “that it should be as the top of a rock”, &c.”:

so Dr. Shaw^{f409} says, this port, small as it at present, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of these poor fishermen, who now and then visit this once renowned emporium and “dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins”, can with great difficulty only be admitted:

for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and therefore it should certainly come to pass, as it has:

and it shall become a spoil to the nations; the army of many nations, that besieged it for thirteen years under Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 6. *And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword*, &c.] That is, the inhabitants of the cities, towns, and villages, on the shore near it, and which were subject to it; as such cities are frequently in Scripture called the daughters of the place to which they belong: or their daughters literally, that should get out of the city, and endeavour to make their escape; yet should fall into the enemies’ hands, who would not spare them on account of their sex or age. The Targum favours the former sense, as most of the Jewish writers do, which is,

“and the inhabitants of the villages which are in the field shall be killed by the sword:”

and they shall know that I am the Lord: the true God, and not Hercules or Apollo, or any other idols they worshipped; when they shall see all these things exactly accomplished, now prophesied of; which none but the omniscient God could foretell.

Ver. 7. *For thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] What follows; and declares by name the person that should be the instrument of this ruin, and the manner in which it should be brought about:

I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon; a prince whose name was terrible, having conquered many nations: the Lord is said to bring him against Tyre, because, he inclined his heart to steer his course this way; encouraged him to this work; led and protected his army; and, at last, gave him success: it held out thirteen years against him, and then was taken. The siege began, according to Mr. Whiston^{f410}, A.M. 3650 or before Christ 586; and was taken A.M. 3663 or before Christ 573; according to Bishop Usher,^{f411} it began A.M. 3419 or before Christ 585; and was taken A.M. 3432 or before Christ 572. The Phoenician historians make mention of the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar; and Berossus speaks of his

subduing the whole country of Phoenicia, in which Tyre was; with whom agree Philostratus and Megasthenes^{f412}:

a king of kings from the north; who had many kings tributaries to him; the metropolis of whose kingdom lay somewhat, though not fully, north to Tyre:

with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people: with a very numerous army, consisting of a large cavalry; horses being very numerous in the countries subject to him; and which he mounted his men on, both for their more easy travelling, and for their better fighting, and for the terror of their enemies.

Ver. 8. *He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field, &c.*] The first thing he would do would be to destroy the cities, towns and villages on the continent, near to Tyre, and dependent on it, as in (~~צמב~~ Ezekiel 26:6), and so the Targum is here, as there:

and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee; a fort built of wood, and a mount made of earth, from which stones might be cast out of their engines, and arrows shot from their bows into the city, to the damaging of the houses, and the hurt of the inhabitants:

and lift up the buckler against thee; or “shield”; that is, as the Targum paraphrases it,

“set against thee such who are armed with shields;”

to repel the arrows shot out from the city, and so defeat the design of them.

Ver. 9. *And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, &c.*] Which some Jewish writers understand of crossbows, out of which stones or arrows were cast; but rather, according to Kimchi and Jarchi, they were warlike machines, invented to throw large stones against the walls of a place, to beat them down. Some think they were the same with the battering rams, used in sieges for the demolishing of walls; which was a late invention of those times, Ezekiel being the first writer, it is said, that makes mention of them:

and with his axes he shall break down thy towers; the word here used signifies anything made of iron, as swords, spears, hammers, and axes; the latter, being more proper to demolish towers, is here pitched on by our

translators. The Targum renders it, “with stones of iron”; that is, with iron balls cast out of their engines.

Ver. 10. *By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee, &c.*] The dust raised by the feet of the horses so numerous, should rise in such quantities, and to such a height, as to be like a cloud, which should cover the city; an hyperbolical way of speaking, as Kimchi observes; as is also the following clause:

thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots; at the shouts of the horsemen upon every attack, and the rattling of the chariot wheels running to and fro, in carrying on their designs:

when ye shall enter into thy gates; that is, then particularly shall such a shout be made by the horsemen, and such rattling of the chariots, as will even make the walls of the city to shake; an excess of expression, signifying the prodigious noise made at their entrance into it: as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach; or, “according to the entrance of a city broken up”^{f413}; when its walls are broken down, and a gap is made; at which men rush in in great numbers, and with great force and clamour.

Ver. 11. *With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets, &c.*] Such a number of horses running to and fro in the streets, and prancing upon the pavements, shall break them up, and destroy them, so that they shall be mere mire and dirt:

he shall slay thy people by the sword; such as would not lay down their arms and submit; or their principal ones, who encouraged the inhabitants to hold out the siege to such a length of time as they did; which might provoke Nebuchadnezzar to use them with more severity:

and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground: where their soldiers were placed for defence; their citadel and other towers: or, “the statues of thy strengths”^{f414}; their strong statues made of marble, &c. erected as trophies of victories obtained by them; or to the honour of some worthy magistrates, and principal citizens; or of their confederates and allies; or rather of their deities, such as Hercules and Apollo, their tutelar gods; which, though chained as they were, that they might not depart, shall now fall to the ground, unable to protect themselves or their worshippers: all that is here said, concerning the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar,

seems to be understood of old Tyre, which was upon the continent; for this account agrees not with the isle.

Ver. 12. *And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, &c.*] The Chaldean army, when they entered the city, and got possession of it, would plunder it, and divide the riches of it among them:

and make a prey of thy merchandise; of the merchants' goods, laid up in their warehouses for sale, which was greatly hindered by this long siege; compare with this (⁴⁶⁸¹Revelation 18:11,12):

and they shall break down thy walls; the walls of their houses; mention being made before of breaking down the walls of the city, towers, and garrisons:

and destroy thy pleasant houses; or, "houses of thy desire"^{f415}; the most desirable ones in the city; the houses of their princes and chief magistrates; their summer houses; or which were most delightfully situated towards the sea, to have the prospect and advantage of that:

and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water; of the sea, near unto or about it; into which they cast the rubbish of the demolished houses, stones, timber, and dust, and so left it bare and naked: or rather this was fulfilled when Alexander, with the ruins of old Tyre, its stones, timber, and rubbish, and trees from Lebanon, made a causeway from the continent to the island; and by that means took it, after seven months' toil and labour of this sort^{f416}.

Ver. 13. *And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease, &c.*] As this city abounded with riches, so with carnal mirth and pleasure; it was a "joyous city", (²³⁰⁷Isaiah 23:7), the inhabitants lived merrily and jovially; were much given to music, which was very diverting and amusing to foreigners that traded with them; but now it would be all over with them; there would be no more songs, nor any to sing them:

and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard; neither vocal nor instrumental music; and this will be one day the case of Rome, of which Tyre was a type, (⁴⁶⁸²Revelation 18:22).

Ver. 14. *And I will make thee like the top of a rock, &c.*] Smooth and bare; (See Gill on "²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 26:4"):

and thou shall be a place to spread nets upon; (see Gill on “³³¹⁶Ezekiel 26:5”):

thou shalt be built no more: this must be understood with some restriction and limitation; as that it should not be built any more in the same stately manner; or be raised to royal dignity, and be governed in the grand manner it had been; or be built upon the same spot; or after its last destruction, to which the prophecy may have respect; it being usual in Scripture for prophecies to regard what is more remote as well as more near; for, upon the destruction of it by Nebuchadnezzar, it was to be restored after seventy years, according to Isaiah’s prophecy, (²³¹⁵Isaiah 23:15,17) and, many years after this, new Tyre was besieged, taken, and destroyed by Alexander; and after this it was rebuilt; we read of it in the New Testament; (see Gill on “⁴²⁰³Acts 21:3”), and in Jerom’s time it was a most noble and beautiful city, as he on this passage observes; indeed, as Kimchi says, who lived near a thousand years after Jerom, the city then built in his time called Tyre was built upon the continent near the seashore; whereas Tyre destroyed by Alexander was built in the midst of the sea, and was as the top of a rock. It has since been destroyed by Saladine, in the year 1291; and now quite uninhabited, unless by fishermen, who wash, dry, and mend their nets here:

for I the Lord have spoken it, saith, the Lord God; and therefore it shall be accomplished, as it has been; no more of his returning void, and becoming of no effect. The Targum is,

“because I the Lord have decreed by my word, saith the Lord God;”

it is a determination and resolution of his, and none can disannul it. Abendana thinks that hitherto the prophecy is concerning the first destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, and what follows is concerning the destruction of it by Alexander.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God to Tyrus,* &c.] By his prophet, who very probably delivered this prophecy to the ambassadors of Tyre at Babylon; or to some of their merchants that traded there; or sent it in a letter to them:

shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall; when they hear the noise of Tyre being taken, it will make them tremble, as fearing their turn will be next; that if a city so well fortified by nature and art, so well supplied with men and money, that had held out the siege so long, should at last

surrender; what should they, the neighbouring isles, do, if attacked, who were so inferior to it? and besides, they might have much of their goods in it, in which they traded with the inhabitants of it, trusting to its great strength, and which would now give them a sensible concern. The Targum renders it, the suburbs; and another Jewish^{f417} writer, the villages; those that were near to Tyre:

when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? upon the enemy's entrance, putting to the sword all they meet with; when those that are wounded shall cry, either to have their lives spared, or through the pain and distress occasioned by their wounds.

Ver. 16. *Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones*, &c.] The kings of the islands of the sea shall lay aside their regalia, all their royal grandeur, and the ensigns of it; leave their thrones of state, and sit in an humble posture:

and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments; their royal robes and raiment of needlework curiously embroidered, and richly wrought, such as princes wear; so did the king of Nineveh in token of humiliation, (Jon 3:6). The Septuagint and Arabic versions understand the first clause of their taking their mitres, or diadems, from their heads:

they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall tremble from head to foot in every joint, as if they were covered with it, as with a garment; or, being clothed with sackcloth, as mourners used to be, shall shake and tremble, being used to other and better clothing:

they shall sit upon the ground; as Job did, and his friends, with dust and ashes on their heads, as persons in distress were wont to do, (~~1818~~ Job 2:8,13):

and shall tremble at every moment; continually, every hour, minute, and moment of the day: or, "at the breaches"^{f418}; so Jarchi; that is, those made upon Tyre; fearing lest the same should be made upon them; so the Targum, "because of their breaches"; or at the ruin and destruction they fear will be their case also:

and be astonished at thee; that a city so wealthy and mighty should be brought so low; (see ~~6818~~ Revelation 18:9,10).

Ver. 17. *And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say unto thee,* &c.] The following mournful song:

how art thou destroyed that wast inhabited of seafaring men; or, “of the seas”: by men who used the seas, and traded by sea to different parts of the world; and was frequented by persons that came by sea thither, by the great ocean, by the Red sea, the Mediterranean sea, and others; or, which was surrounded by the sea. So the Targum,

“that dwellest in the midst of the sea:”

“the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea”; fortified by the sea, and against it; strong in shipping and naval stores; so as to be formidable to others, and mistress of the sea. The Targum is,

“which dwell in the strength of the sea;”

and had the strength and riches of it brought unto it; and so was famous all the world over for its commerce, wealth, and power; but now ruined and undone:

she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it! the sea; on all that used the seas; or on all the inhabitants of the islands of the sea; who all stood in fear of Tyre and her inhabitants, and were obliged to strike their sails to their ships.

Ver. 18. *Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall,* &c.] The isles near unto it, the isles of the Mediterranean sea; the inhabitants of them, the merchants who from thence traded with Tyre, the seafaring men of those places; partly on account of losses sustained hereby, and partly through fear of the same calamities coming upon themselves; (see ^{6681P} Revelation 18:11,15,17): yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure; as at the cry of the wounded, and the number of the slain; so on account of those that should be carried away captive by the Babylonians; as well as at the departure of those that should be obliged to fly to other colonies, (²³¹⁶ Isaiah 23:6), so that, upon one account or another, it shall be entirely stripped of its inhabitants.

Ver. 19. *For thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Both to the terror of Tyre, and for the comfort of his people:

when I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; whose trade is ruined, whose inhabitants are destroyed, and

whose walls are broken down, and become a mere waste and desert; where no person or anything of value are to be seen:

when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and the great waters shall cover thee: the waters of the sea shall rush in and overflow the city, the walls of it being broken down; just as the old world, and the cities of it, were overflowed with the deluge, to which the allusion may be; whether this was literally accomplished on Tyre is not certain; perhaps it is to be taken in a figurative sense, and to be understood of the large army of the Chaldeans that should come up against it, and overpower it. So the Targum,

“when I shall bring up against them an army of people, who are many as the waters of the deep, and many people shall cover thee; (see ⁴⁶⁷⁵Revelation 17:15,16).”

Ver. 20. *When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, &c.]* The grave, and make thee like to them:

with the people of old time; either the people of the old world, or, however, who have been dead long ago:

and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth; where the dead are laid:

in places desolate of old: long ago unfrequented by men; as such places be as are for the burial of the dead:

with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; all the inhabitants being free among the dead; a heap of words made use of to express the same thing, for the confirmation of it; namely, that the condition of Tyre should be like that of dead men, who have been of old dead, and are remembered no more. Jarchi interprets the “pit”, of hell; as if this respected their everlasting perdition, as well as temporal ruin; it may be applied to the beast which goeth into perdition, (⁴⁶⁷⁸Revelation 17:8):

and I shall set glory in the land of the living; in the land of Israel; so the Targum; and it is interpreted by the Jewish expositors and others the same way; and which may be called “the land of the living”; because the living God was worshipped in it; living men in a spiritual sense dwelt there, who offered up living sacrifices unto God, and who had the promise and pledge of eternal life; and which was the “glory” of all lands, as it is sometimes called, where the same word is used as here, (⁴³¹⁶Ezekiel 20:6), which had its accomplishment in some respects at the Jews’ return from Babylon; but,

as Tyre here is a type of antichrist, it may be observed, that, at the time of his fall and destruction, God will put a glory upon his church and people, upon which there shall be a defence; (see ²⁰⁴⁵Isaiah 4:5 60:1). This is interpreted by the Talmudists ^{f419} of the resurrection of the dead, when they that die in the land of Israel shall live.

Ver. 21. *I will make thee a terror*, &c.] To all the isles round about, who shall shake and tremble at the ruin of Tyre, as before observed; or to herself, being brought into a most terrible and distressed condition:

and thou shall be no more: in the same place and situation, in the same happy state and condition:

though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God: this is true of the antitype, Babylon, or antichrist, (~~682~~ Revelation 18:21).

CHAPTER 27

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 27

This chapter contains a lamentation on Tyre; setting forth her former grandeur, riches, and commerce; her ruin and destruction; and the concern of others on that account. The prophet is bid to take up his lamentation concerning it, (^{27:1,2}Ezekiel 27:1,2), observing her situation and magnificence, of which she boasted, (^{27:3,4}Ezekiel 27:3,4), describing the excellency of her shipping and naval stores, (^{27:5-7}Ezekiel 27:5-7), declaring who were her mariners, pilots, and caulkers, (^{27:8,9}Ezekiel 27:8,9), her military men, (^{27:10,11}Ezekiel 27:10,11) her several merchants, and the things they traded in with her in her fairs and markets, (^{27:12-25}Ezekiel 27:12-25), then follows an account of her destruction, (^{27:26,27}Ezekiel 27:26,27), the lamentation of pilots and mariners because of it, (^{27:28-32}Ezekiel 27:28-32), and of the kings and inhabitants of the isles, and merchants of the people, (^{27:33-36}Ezekiel 27:33-36).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came again unto me, &c.*] Upon the same subject, the destruction of Tyre:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Now, thou son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyrus.*] Compose an elegy, and sing it; make a mournful noise, and deliver out a funeral ditty; such as the “*præficiae*”, or mournful women, made at funerals, in which they said all they could in praise of the dead, and made very doleful lamentations for them: this the prophet was to do in a prophetic manner, for the confirmation of what was prophesied of by him; and it may teach us, that even wicked men are to be pitied, when in distress and calamity.

Ver. 3. *And say unto Tyrus, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, &c.*] Of the Mediterranean sea; at the eastern part of it, not above half a mile from the continent; and so fit for a seaport, and a harbour for shipping; so mystical Tyre sits on many waters, (^{17:1}Revelation 17:1):

which art a merchant of the people for many isles; the inhabitants of many isles brought the produce of them to her; who took them off their hands, or

sold them for them to others; these came from several quarters to trade with her in her markets; and who supplied other isles and countries with all sorts of commodities, for which they either resorted to her, or she sent by ships unto them; so Rome is represented as the seat of merchandise, (~~f687~~ Revelation 18:7,11-13):

thus saith the Lord God, O Tyrus, thou hast said; in thine heart, in the pride of it, and with thy mouth, praising and commending thyself; which is not right:

I am of perfect beauty: built on a good foundation, a rock; surrounded with walls and towers; the streets arranged in order, and filled with goodly houses; having a good harbour for shipping, and being a mart for all manner of merchandise, Jerusalem being destroyed, Tyre assumes her character, (~~f982~~ Psalm 48:2 50:2 ~~f1015~~ Lamentations 2:15).

Ver. 4. *Thy borders are in the midst of the seas,* Fixed by the Lord himself, and which could never be removed. Tyre stood about half a mile from the continent, surrounded with the waters of the sea, till it was made a peninsula by Alexander:

thy builders have perfected thy beauty. The Sidonians were the first builders of the city, as Justin ^{f420} says; who began and carried on the building of it to the utmost of their knowledge and skill; and which was afterwards perfected by other builders, who made it the most beautiful city in all those parts; unless this is to be understood of her shipbuilders, who brought the art of building ships in her to such a perfection, as made her famous throughout the world; since they are immediately spoken of without any other antecedent.

Ver. 5. *They have made all thy ship boards of fir trees of Senir,* &c.] The same with Sion and Hermon, which the Sidonians called Sirion, and the Amorites Shenir, (~~f889~~ Deuteronomy 3:9 4:48) here, it seems, grew the best of fir trees, of which the Tyrians made boards and planks for shipping; of these the two sides of the ship, as the word ^{f421} here used in the dual number is thought to signify, or the fore and hind decks, were made. The Targum is,

“with fir trees of Senir they built for thee all thy bridges;”

the planks from which they went from one ship to another; but these are of too small consequence to be mentioned; rather the main of the ship is

intended, which was built of fir planks; but ours made of oak are much preferable:

they have taken cedars from Lebanon, to make masts for thee; large poles for the yards and sails to be fastened to, for receiving the wind necessary in navigation; called the main mast, the foremast, the mizzenmast, and the boltsprit; all these are only in large vessels; whether the Tyrians had all of these is not certain; some they had, and which were made of the cedars of Lebanon; which, being large tall trees, were fit for this purpose. The Tyrians^{f422} are said to be the first inventors of navigation.

Ver. 6. *Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars, &c.*] To row the ships with; for their ships probably were no other than galleys, which were rowed with oars, as were the ships of first invention. Bashan was a country in Judea where oaks grew; (see ^{<2313>}Isaiah 2:13). The country of Judea in general was famous for oaks; it abounded with them in the times of Homer^{f423}, who speaks of Typho being buried in a country abounding with oaks, among the rich or fat people of Judea; and he seems to design Bashan particularly, of which Og was king, whom he calls Typho, and of whose bed he makes mention in the same place; hence several places in Judea had their names from the oaks which grew, there, as Elonmoreh, Allonbachuth, Elonmeonenim, Elontabor, and Elonbethhanan, (^{<0126>}Genesis 12:6 35:8 ^{<0087>}Judges 9:37 ^{<0018>}1 Samuel 10:3 ^{<1049>}1 Kings 4:9) and which one would have thought were fitter to make their ships of; but of these only their oars were made:

the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim; the benches for the towers to sit on, or for others in the cabin and decks; but that these should be wholly of ivory is not very probable; nor was ivory brought from the isles of Chittim, but from other parts; nor is it easy to say who the company of the Ashurites were; some say the Assyrians; but why they should be so called is not plain. Jarchi makes **pyrça tb** to be but one word, which signifies box trees, as it is used in (^{<2419>}Isaiah 41:19) and he supposes that these benches, or be they what they will, were made of box trees covered or inlaid with ivory. So the Targum,

“the lintels of thy gates (the hatches) were planks of box tree inlaid with ivory;”

which box, and not the ivory, was brought from the isles of Chittim; either from Cyprus, where was a place called Citium; or from Macedonia, from whence box was fetched; or from the province of Apulia, as the Targum; where there might be plenty of it, as in Corsica, and other places, where particularly the best box grows, as Pliny^{f424} says. Jerom interprets Cittin of Italy; and Ben Gorion says^{f425} that Cittim are the Romans.

Ver. 7. *Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt, &c.*] From whence came the finest and whitest linen; and which they embroidered with needlework, which looked very beautiful. Pliny^{f426} says there were four sorts of linen in Egypt, called Tanitic, Pelusiatic, Butic, and Tentyritic, from the names and provinces where they were produced; of the second sort the garments of the high priest among the Jews were made; for they say^{f427}, on the day of atonement he was in the morning clothed with Pelusiatic garments; that is, with garments made of linen which came from Pelusium, a well known city in Egypt; and which Jarchi^{f428} says was the best, and in the greatest esteem; and one of the Misnic commentators says^{f429} that the linen from Pelusium is fine and beautiful, and comes from the land of Raamses; and observes, that, in the Jerusalem Targum, Raamses is said to be Pelusium; but though they are not one and the same place, yet they are both in the same country, Egypt, and near one another; and with this sort of linen the priests of Hercules were clothed, according to Silius^{f430}; and so the **שש**, “shesh”, or linen, of which the garments of the Jewish priests in common were made, was linen from Egypt; and which their Rabbins^{f431} say is the best, and is only found there. The Phoenicians, of which Tyre was a principal city, took linen of Egypt, and traded with other nations with it, as well as made use of it for themselves; particularly with the Ethiopians, the inhabitants of the isle of Cernes, now called the Canaries, who took of them Egyptian goods, as linen, &c.; in lieu of which they had of them elephants’ teeth, the skins of lions, leopards, deer, and other creatures^{f432}: now such fine linen as this

was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail: not content with canvass or coarse linen, which would have done as well, they must have the finest Egyptian linen, and this very curiously embroidered, to make their sails of they spread upon their masts, to receive the wind; at least this they spread “for a flag”,^{f433} standard or ensign, as, the word may be rendered; when they hoisted up their colours on any occasion, they were such as these: “blue and purple, from the isles of Elishah, was that which covered thee”; meaning not garments made of cloth of these colours,

which the master of the vessel or mariners wore; but the tilts, or tents, or canopies erected on the decks, where they sat sheltered from the rain, wind, or sun; these were made of stuff died of a violet and purple colour, the best they could get; and which they fetched from the isles of Elishah, or the Aegean sea, from Coa, Rhodia, Nisyru, and other places famous for purple, as Tyre itself afterwards was. The Targum is,

“from the province of Italy;”

or of Apulia, as others^{f434}; (see ~~682~~ Revelation 18:12,16).

Ver. 8. *The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners, &c.*] Zidon was a city in Phoenicia, near to Tyre, and older than that, by whose inhabitants it was built; see the notes on (~~2232~~ Isaiah 23:2,4) and Arvad was an island in Phoenicia, to the south of Zidon, not far from Tyre. Mr. Maundrell^{f435} says it is about a league distant from the shore; and is now called by the Turks Ruad. It seemed to the eye to be not above four to six hundred yards long, and wholly filled up with tall buildings like castles: its ancient inhabitants, he observes, were famous for navigation, and had a command upon the continent as far as Gabale later mentioned, Dr. Shaw^{f436} says it is at present called Rouwadde; and that the prospect of it from the continent is wonderfully magnificent; promising at a distance a continued train of fine buildings and impregnable fortifications; but this is entirely owing to the height and rockiness of its situation; for at present all the strength and beauty it can boast of lies in a weak unfortified castle, with a few small cannon to defend it; so that the prophecy of Jeremiah appears to be fulfilled,

Arpad is confounded, (~~2423~~ Jeremiah 49:23). This is the Aradus of Strabo, and other writers; and which he says is distant from the land, two and an half miles, and is about a mile in circumference; and is said to be built by the Sidonians^{f437}; the inhabitants of it are the same with the Arvadite, (~~0108~~ Genesis 10:18), these places brought up abundance of seafaring men, and which furnished Tyre with rowers, as the word^{f438} signifies; which was the most slavish work in navigation:

thy wise men, O Tyrus, that were in thee, were thy pilots; such, as had learnt the art of navigation; were well versed in geography; understood the charts; knew the shores of different places; where were creeks and promontories, rocks and sands; these were brought up among themselves, and made pilots or governors, as the Targum renders it; who have their

names here from the “ropes”^{f439} the sails are fastened to; and which they loosened or contracted, as they saw fit.

Ver. 9. *The ancients of Gebal*, &c.] A promontory of the Phoenicians, the same with the Gabale of Pliny^{f440}, and with the land of the Giblites, (^{<0635>}Joshua 13:5 ^{<1058>}1 Kings 5:18 ^{<0807>}Psalms 83:7). It was by the Greeks called Byblus; and so the Septuagint here render the words, the elders of Bybli or Byblus, a place once famous for the birth and temple of Adonis; it is now called Gibyle. Mr. Maundrell^{f441} says it is pleasantly situated by the seaside, and that at present it contains but a little extent of ground, yet more than enough for the small number of its inhabitants; it is compassed with a dry ditch, and a wall with square towers in it, at about every forty yards’ distance; on its south side it has an old castle; within it is a church; besides which it has nothing remarkable; though anciently it was a place of no mean extent, as well as beauty, as may appear from the many heaps of ruins, and the fine pillars that are scattered up and down in the gardens near the town. The old experienced workmen of this place were employed by the Tyrians in mending and refitting their ships, and in the caulking of them, as follows:

the wise men thereof were in thee thy caulkers; or, “the strengtheners of thy breaches”^{f442}, or “chinks”; the seams and commissures of the planks; which they stopped with tow, oakum, or such like stuff; at least this is what is used now, whatever might be by those wise men; and it seems by this that it was reckoned a very great art and mystery, and which only wise men were masters of, at least such the Tyrians employed. The Targum renders it,

“providing thy necessaries;”

as if they were the ships’ husbands:

all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise; ships from all parts were in her harbours, which brought goods into her, and carried goods out of her, by way of merchandise. So the Targum,

“all that go down into the sea, and the ships; they were rowers, and they brought merchandise into the midst of thee;”

the goods of merchants from divers places; and carried back commodities again they traded for at Tyre; (see ^{<0619>}Revelation 18:19).

fissuras tuas”, Munster, Tigurine version; “rimas tuas”, Vatablus; “instauratores rupturaram tuarum”, Piscator.

Ver. 10. *They of Persia, and of Lud, and of Phut, were in thine army, thy men of war, &c.]* As the Tryrians were a trading people, they hired foreign troops into their service, to fill their garrisons, defend their city, and fight for them in time of war; and these were of various nations, and the most famous for military skill and valour; as the Persians, a people well known, and famous for war in the times of Cyrus, and before, and well skilled in shooting arrows; and they of Lud, or the Lydians, a people in Greece, renowned for war before the times of Croesus their king, as well as in his time; and they of Phut, the Lybians, a people in Africa, skilful in drawing the bow, (²³⁶⁹Isaiah 66:19):

they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; in their garrisons and towers, or places of armoury; which were defensive weapons, the one for the body, the other for the head; this they did in times of peace, when there was no occasion to use them, or when they were off their guard, and not on duty; (see ²³⁰⁴Song of Solomon 4:4):

they set forth thy comeliness; it being an honour to the Tyrians to have such soldiers in their service. The Targum is,

“they increased thy splendour;”

added to their glory.

Ver. 11. *The men of Arvad, with thine army were upon thy walls round about, &c.]* Placed there for the defence of the city, to watch against an enemy, lest it should be surprised; here they were upon the patrol day and night; (see ²⁵¹⁶Isaiah 62:6), these were the men of the same place before mentioned, (³²⁷⁸Ezekiel 27:8) which furnished Tyre both with mariners and soldiers:

and the Gammadims were in thy towers: not the Medes, as Symmachus renders it; nor the Cappadocians, as the Targum; much less were they images of their tutelar gods, as Spencer thinks, of a cubit long; nor “pygmies”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; which to mention would not be to the honour of their militia; though Kimchi and Ben Melech call them dwarfs, men of a small stature, of a cubit high, from whence they are supposed to have their name; so Schindler^{f443}: rather they were the inhabitants of some place in Phoenicia; either of Ancon; which in Greek

signifies a cubit, as Gamad does in Hebrew; or of Gammade, the same which Pliny^{f444} corruptly calls Gamale. Hillerus^{f445} thinks the word signifies “ambidexters”, or left handed men, such as Ehud:

they hanged their shields upon thy walls roundabout. Kimchi and Ben Melech observe it was a custom in some places to hang such weapons upon the tops of towers, and upon the walls of them; which might be done, either that they might be ready to take up and make use of, whenever occasion required; or to dismay their enemies, and to show them that they were provided for them:

they have made thy beauty perfect; besides the beauty of her buildings and shipping, there was the beauty of her militia; which was increased by the soldiers from Persia, Lydia, and Lybia, and added to by the men of Arvad, but completed by the Gammadim; and particularly being glided, as probably they were, looked very glittering and beautiful in the rays of the sun.

Ver. 12. *Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches, &c.]* Some understand this of the sea, which is sometimes called Tarshish; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it here: and the Targum,

“from the sea, or they of the sea bring merchandise into the midst of thee:”

that is, those who lived upon the coasts, or on the isles, of the Mediterranean sea. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it the Carthaginians, who were a colony of the Tyrians, and no doubt traded with them; but it seems most likely, with others, to intend Tartessus in Spain, a place not far from that where Cadiz now stands; a country which abounded with riches, and with the following things:

with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs; Pliny^{f446} says, that almost all Spain abounded in metals of lead, iron, brass, silver, and gold; which takes in the several things here mentioned, excepting tin; and that the Spaniards might have from our Cornwall, which they might import into Tyre: though the Phoenicians carried on a commerce with our isle of Britain themselves, whither they came for tin, and disposed of other goods they brought with them. Gussetius^{f447} observes, that the word *Æynwbz* [does not signify the place of trade and traffic, as it is commonly rendered; but respects the goods traded in, and the manner of trafficking with them,

by way of “exchange”, as the word should be rendered; and the sense is, that the things before mentioned were what they gave in exchange, battered, and “left”, with the Tyrians, for other goods they took of them; and so it is to be understood in all the following places where the word is used. So Ben Melech says it is expressive of merchandise.

Ver. 13 *Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they [were] thy merchants, &c.*] Javan designs Greece, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it; especially that part of it called Ionia, from Javan the son of Japheth, (⁽⁻⁰¹¹⁰⁾Genesis 10:2) and Tubal, and Meshech, were also sons of Japheth; the former are the Iberi and Albanians, as Jerom and others, among whom were a city called Thabilaca, by Ptolemy^{f448}; and the latter the Cappadocians, with whom is a city called Mazaca^{f449}.

They traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy markets; or, “the souls of men”^{f450}; they bought up men and women in the several countries to which they belonged, or where they traded, and brought them to Tyre, and sold them for slaves; and the Ionian and Grecian slaves were had in great esteem: and the best brass, of which vessels were made, was had from Corinth, Delus, and Aeginetus; according to Pliny^{f451}, Cappadocia was famous for it also: in the first of these merchandises Tyrus was remarkably a type of antichrist, who is said to deal in such wares, the souls of men, (⁽⁻⁶⁶⁸³⁾Revelation 18:13). The word here rendered “markets”, Gussetius^{f452} also observes, does not design the place of commerce, but the act of negotiation or trade; and so it is rendered by many^{f453}.

Ver. 14. *They of the house of Togarmah, &c.*] The Targum is,
“they of the province or country of Germany.”

Jerom understands it of Phrygia, near to which was Cappadocia; and perhaps is here meant, since it abounded with what these people are said to trade with Tyre in:

these traded in thy fairs with horses, horsemen, and mules; for the Cappadocians paid for their yearly tribute to the Persians fifteen hundred horses, and two thousand mules, as Bochart^{f454} from Strabo observes; and as they sold horses and mules to the Tyrians, so likewise horsemen, men that were skilled in riding and taking care of horses; and these were sold along with the horses, as servants for that purpose.

Ver. 15. *The men of Dedan were thy merchants, &c.*] Not Dedan in Idumea or Edom, but in Arabia, from Dedan the son of Raamah, (^{<1007>}Genesis 10:7):

many isles were the merchandise of thine hands; that is, many isles took off their manufactures from them, in lieu of what they brought them, which were as follow:

they brought thee for a present; that they might have the liberty of trading in their fairs and markets; or rather for a reward, or as a price, for the goods they had of them:

horns of ivory and ebony; Kimchi reads them as separate things; and which the Targum confirms, “horns, ivory, and ebony”; elks’ horns, or horns of goats, as the Targum; and “ivory”, or the teeth of elephants; and “ebony”, which is a wood of a very black colour, hard and heavy, and of which many things are made. The Targum takes it for the name of a fowl, and renders it peacocks; so Jarchi; (see ^{<4921>}2 Chronicles 9:21), but Ben Melech much better interprets it of a tree, called in Arabia “ebenus”. Solinus makes it peculiar to India^{f455}; and so Virgil^{f456}.

Ver. 16. *Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making, &c.*] Which they took off of their hands, and for them brought the following things:

they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds; precious stones of a green colour: Jarchi renders it “carbuncles”, other precious stones of a different colour; and so the word is translated by Pagninus, Montanus, Grotius, the French, and Diodate; sometimes called “carchedonies”, and which the Apostle John calls the “chalcedony”, (^{<6219>}Revelation 21:19), the same with rubies; and so the word here used is rendered by Luther; and, by Abarbinel, precious stones of great value; (see ^{<2185>}Proverbs 3:15), from whence the Syrians had these to trade with at Tyre cannot be easily said; the modern rubies, which are thought to be the true and genuine carbuncles of the ancients, seldom exceed the weight of twenty carats; yet some say the Emperor Rudolphus the second had a ruby as big as a little hen’s egg, bought at sixty thousand ducats, and supposed to be worth more; and that Regulus Decan had one of thirty four carats, bought at six minas of gold, that is, a hundred and ninety two pounds of gold; and that the great Mogul had one, which cost a million four hundred and twenty five thousand florins; and that there are some which exceed the weight of fifty carats^{f457};

but there were few, if any of these, that came to the market of Tyre; however, no doubt, some valuable ones were here sold.

Purple, and broidered work, and fine linen; cloth of purple colour, raiment of needlework curiously embroidered, and linen of the best sort. So the Targum,

“purple clothes, and wrought with a needle, and linen of different colours;”

and of such they made their sails, tilts, and tents; (see ^{<3270>}Ezekiel 27:7).

And coral, and agate; the first is a sea plant.

“This opinion is now so well established, that all other sentiments seem almost precluded. P. Kircher supposes entire forests of it at the bottom of the sea; and M. Tournefort, that able botanist, maintains, that it evidently multiplies by seed, though neither its flower nor seed be known. However, the count de Marsigli has discovered some parts therein, which seem to serve the purpose of seeds and flower, it vegetates the contrary way to all other plants; its foot adhering to the top of the grotto, and its branches shooting downwards, there are properly but three kinds of coral, red, white, and black; the white is the rarest and most esteemed; but it is the red that is ordinarily used in medicine; the places for fishing it are the Persian gulf, Red sea, coasts of Africa towards the bastion of France, the isles of Majorca and Corsica, and the coasts of Provence and Catalonia^{f458}.”

Perhaps the Syrians might have theirs from the Red sea, or the Mediterranean. The other, the “agate”, is a precious stone, the same with the “achates”, first found in Sicily, as Isidore says^{f459}, by a river of the same name; is of a black colour, according to him, having in the middle black and white circles joined and variegated; but they are of different colours, and of different degrees of transparency. The word is variously rendered; by some the ruby; by others the carbuncle; by others the chalcedony; and by others crystal; it is hard to say what is meant. Now the Phoenicians or Tyrians were so deeply engaged in trade with the Syrians, that it became a common proverb, the Phonicians against the Syrians^{f460}; when like are set against like, as the Egyptians against the Egyptians, (^{<2390>}Isaiah 19:2).

Ver. 17. *Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants, &c.*] The inhabitants of Judah and Israel; the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the other ten tribes of Israel, they all merchandised with the Tyrians, being near unto them:

they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith; the name of a place, (^{<0113>}Judges 11:33), where probably the best wheat grew; so the Targum renders it; the Tyrians were supplied with wheat from the land of Israel, in the times of Solomon, long before this, (^{<1051>}1 Kings 5:11) as they were in the times of Herod, long after, (^{<4421>}Acts 12:20), it was four miles from Ebus or Heshbon, in the way to Philadelphia, according to Eusebius:

and Pannag; which some take to be the name of a place, where the best wheat also was; which some say was Phoenicia, or the land of Canaan. The Septuagint render it “ointments”: and the Latin interpreter of the Targum “balsam”; with which agrees Josephus ben Gorion^{f461}, who says that at Jericho grew the balsam tree, from whence came a precious oil, which oil is “pannag”: and Hillerus^{f462} translates it balsam: it follows,

and honey, and oil: with which the land of Canaan abounded; for it was a land of oil olive and honey, a land that flowed with milk and honey, (^{<0888>}Deuteronomy 8:8) so that they had enough for themselves, and to spare for their neighbours, and which they carried to the market of Tyre:

and balm; or balsam, of which there was plenty at Gilead, and near Jericho, however at the latter; we read of the balm of Gilead, (^{<3482>}Jeremiah 8:22 46:11). The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it “rosin”; and so the Targum; and this the Tyrians might make use of in their ships^{f463}. The balm, or balsam plant, was peculiar to Judea, as Pliny^{f464}; at least it was the place of it until transplanted into other countries; and so says Solinus^{f465}.

Ver. 18. *Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, &c.*] Of the many things manufactured at Tyre, the inhabitants of Damascus, once the chief city of Syria, took some:

for the multitude of all riches: in lieu of the vast quantity of rich things there made, they traded with them for them:

in the wine of Helbon, and white wool; Helbon very probably is the same with the Chalybon of Ptolemy^{f466}, which he places in Syria; a place famous for wine, as Strabo^{f467} reports; the kings of Persia, he says, through riches fell into luxury, so that they would have wheat brought from Assos in

Aeolia, and Chalybonian wine out of Syria, and water from Eulaeus (the river Ulai in (^{278B}Daniel 8:2)), which was lightest of all; and so Athenaeus^{f468} says, the kings of the Persians drink only Chalybonian wine; which, says Posidonius, was made at Damascus in Syria, from whence the Persians transplant vines: Helbon is thought to be the same with Aleppo; the grapes there are all white, and make a strong wine, as Monsieur Thevenot^{f469} relates; and who also observes, that the wines of Damascus are treacherous and strong: and the wool they bought was such as it came off of the backs of the sheep, and the purer and whiter sort of it; which was brought to Tyre, and by them bought, and dyed purple, for which dye the Tyrians were famous.

Ver. 19. *Daniel also and Javan, going to and fro, occupied in thy fairs,* &c.] Either the inhabitants of the tribe of Daniel in general; or of Laish, sometime called Dan, and in later times Caesarea Philippi, which was in that tribe: though Grotius thinks that Taprobane, or the isle of Zeilan, is meant, where, and not in Dan, were the things after mentioned, in plenty; and where also, according to Ptolemy^{f470}, was a city called Dana or Dagana: and Bochart takes Javan not to be Greece, but a people of a country in Arabia, the metropolis of which was Uzal; and so he renders it, as some of the Greek versions do, Javan of Uzal, or Asel, to distinguish it from the other Javan, (^{373B}Ezekiel 27:13), where also, and not in Greece, the sweet spices grew, which these are said to trade in:

bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market; brought from the above places; polished iron or steel, and the sweet spices of cassia and calamus, or the aromatic cane or reed, which came from afar, (^{218B}Jeremiah 6:20).

Ver. 20. *Dedan was thy merchant in precious cloths for chariots.*] Or, “cloths of freedom”^{f471}; such as freemen and even nobles wore; and yet so extravagant were the Tyrians, that they bought these to line or cover their chariots with; this is different from the Dedan in (^{375B}Ezekiel 27:15), and is either Dedan in Edom or Idumea, (^{318B}Jeremiah 49:8), or in Arabia, the inhabitants of which descended from Dedan, a grandson of Abraham, (^{128B}Genesis 25:3), which agrees with the following.

Ver. 21. *Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar,* &c.] Arabia was a large country, divided into three parts, Arabia Deserts, or the desert; Arabia Petraea, or the rocky; and Arabia Felix, or the happy. Kedar was in Arabia Petraea; its inhabitants were called Kedarenes, descended from Kedar, a son

of Ishmael, (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:13), they were chiefly shepherds, and dwelt in tents, to which the allusion is in (^{<2005>}Song of Solomon 1:5), these princes were the rich and wealthy among them, who bought up the cattle of the meaner sort, and brought them to Tyre. In Jerom's time Kedar was the country of the Saracens. The Targum calls them the princes of Nebat, the same with Nebajoth, the firstborn of Ishmael, and brother of Kedar, (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:13).

They occupied with thee: or, "they were the merchants of thine hand^{f472}"; that took off her manufactures from her, in lieu of "the lambs, and rams, and goats", they brought to market, for her food and sacrifices; keeping of sheep being their chief employment: "in these were they thy merchants": they supplied them with their cattle, and took their wares of them for them.

Ver. 22. *The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants,* &c.] This Sheba was the son of Raamah, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:7) who settled in Arabia Felix; where, according to Ptolemy^{f473}, is a city called Rhagma; and so Raamah is pronounced in the Septuagint version of (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:7):

they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices; as with myrrh and frankincense, with which they abounded: Pliny^{f474} says that the Arabians paid annually to the kings of Persia a thousand talents of frankincense; and that the Sabaeans^{f475} boiled their food, some with wood of frankincense, and others with wood of myrrh:

and with all precious stones, and gold; as jaspers, emeralds, carbuncles, and others, which Pliny^{f476} says are found in Arabia; and mention is made of the gold of Sheba, (^{<0925>}Psalms 72:15) and Bochart thinks that Ophir, from whence the famous gold of that name was fetched, was in Arabia Felix; and it may be observed, that the queen of Sheba gave great quantities of gold, of spices, and of precious stones, to Solomon; and that he had much of these kinds yearly from the spice merchants, and kings of Arabia, (^{<1100>}1 Kings 10:10,14,15), (see Gill on "^{<2306>}Isaiah 60:6").

Ver. 23. *Haran, and Canneh, and Eden,* &c.] Haran was a city of Mesopotamia, the same with Haran, where Abraham dwelt awhile, (^{<4100>}Acts 7:2), the Charrae of the Parthians, famous for the defeat of Crassus. Canneh is thought to be the same with Calneh, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:10), afterwards called Ctesiphon; and here, by the Targum, Netzibin, a place not far from Tigris; and Eden also was between Tigris and Euphrates.

All three places seem to be in Mesopotamia, and not far from each other; the latter is thought by some to be the place where the garden of Eden was.

The merchants of Sheba; this was another Sheba, distinct from that in (³⁵⁷²Ezekiel 27:22), this Sheba was the son of Jokshan, a son of Abraham by Keturah, (⁰²³⁸Genesis 25:3), these were the Sabaeans, who were not far from the former, and dwelt near the Persian sea.

Ashur and Chilmad were thy merchants; or dealt in “thy merchandise”; took goods of them. Ashur designs the Assyrians, who had their name from Ashur, the builder of Nineveh, (⁰¹⁰¹Genesis 10:11) and Chilmad is by the Targum rendered Media; and by Grotius thought to be the Gaala of Media in Ptolemy^{f477}; and so Hillerus^{f478} takes it to be a city of Media.

Ver. 24. *These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, &c.*] Either all before mentioned throughout the chapter, or rather those only in the preceding verse; also these were merchants in various things after mentioned, and which were the best and most perfect of the kind, as the word^{f479} used signifies:

in blue cloths, and broidered work; these the Assyrians took of them, a colour in which they much delighted; (see ³⁵³⁶Ezekiel 23:6):

and in chests of rich apparel bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise; rich apparel, such as scarlet cloaks, as the Targum, and blue cloths as before; these were well packed up in chests made of “cedar”, which they had from Lebanon, and so fit to be put on board a ship, and carried into any part of the world. The Targum adds,

“and sealed with a signet;”

as things well packed up and bound sometimes are, being of worth and value. Some render it, “in chains”; or, “chains were among thy merchandise”^{f480}; such as chains of gold, wore about the neck; and take the word to be of the sam meaning with that in (²¹¹⁰Song of Solomon 1:10).

Ver. 25. *The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in market, &c.*] The ships of the sea in general; for Tarshish is used for the sea; these from all parts came to Tyre with their several wares, the product of their country from whence they came, and, finding a good market for them at Tyre, spoke greatly in her praise, or, “were thy princes”, or “thy chief ones, in thy

market”^{f481}; these brought the principal things into it, and took off the chief that were in it, which were of the produce of Tyre:

and thou wast replenished; with goods from all parts, with every thing for their necessity, convenience, pleasure, and delight, and to carry on a traffic with all nations:

and made very glorious in the midst of the seas; with great riches, stately towers and buildings. Here ends the account of Tyre’s greatness; next follows her ruin and destruction.

Ver. 26. *Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters, &c.*] Here the city of Tyre is compared to a vessel at sea, with great propriety, it being built in the sea, and its trade chiefly there; and its rulers and governors, or the inhabitants of it, to rowers; literally the men of Zidon and Arvad were her rowers, (^{<227B>}Ezekiel 27:8), the straits, difficulties, and distresses these brought Tyre into, are compared to great waters; who, by some unadvised step or another, provoked the king of Babylon to come against them with his army, and lay siege unto them:

the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas; a wind very fatal to ships and mariners; (see ^{<198B>}Psalm 48:7), by it are meant Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army; so called, because of their great force and fury; and because Babylon, from whence they came, lay somewhat to the east of Tyre. So the Targum,

“a king who is strong as the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas.”

Ver. 27. *Thy riches, &c.*] That vast mass of wealth Tyre had got by her trade and merchandise, were all lost, at once, and came to nought, which had been many years gathering; (see ^{<168B>}Revelation 18:17):

and thy fairs; to which there were such great resorts from all parts, and where such a prodigious traffic was carried on, were now interrupted by the siege, and put to an end upon the ruin of the city:

thy merchandise; the goods both imported and exported; the wares that were brought in from foreign parts, and sold in her, and what was taken from her in lieu of them; now nothing more of this kind; and what goods were in her, whether her own or others, were all lost and destroyed:

thy mariners; who were the inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad, (³²⁷⁸Ezekiel 27:8), these perished with her:

and thy pilots; who were the wisest, most skilful, and best learned in the art of navigation, and who were of the city itself, these were no more, (³²⁷⁸Ezekiel 27:8):

thy calkers: the wise and ancient men of Gebal, (³²⁷⁹Ezekiel 27:9):

and the occupiers of the merchandise; that traded in her markets and fairs, mentioned from (³²⁷⁹Ezekiel 27:12-25):

and all thy men of war that are in thee: to fight for her and defend her; the Persians, Lydiaus, and Lybians, the men of Arvad, and the Gammadims, (³²⁷⁹Ezekiel 27:10,11):

and in all thy company, which is in the midst of thee; the great concourse of people, whether natives or foreigners:

these all shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin: the walls and banks being demolished, the sea broke in upon it, and washed all away in it, and left it a bare rock; (see ³²⁸⁰Ezekiel 26:4,12,14).

Ver. 28. *The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.*] Or governors, as the Targum; and so the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions: the allegory of a ship wrecked is still continued: the sense is, that such should be the cry of the principal men of the city when it should be taken, that the noise of it would be heard upon the continent, and in the towns and villages belonging to Tyre, which would make the inhabitants of them tremble: or,

at the sound of the cry of thy pilots the waves are moved, or “tremble”^{f482}; which beat very strong at the time of her fall into the sea.

Ver. 29. *And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, &c.*] Inferior officers, and the common people; though this may be literally understood of all sorts of seafaring people, differently employed in ships; some at the oar; some at the sails; and others at the helm; but all shall quit their posts,

and shall come down from their ships; either there being no further business for them, an entire stop being put to trade, through the fall of

Tyre; or because of danger, and to save themselves, would leave the ship, and betake to their boats, and make for land: hence it follows,

they shall stand upon the land; upon the continent, being safely arrived; looking upon the shipwrecks, and bewailing the loss of Tyre, as in the next verse.

Ver. 30. *And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee*, &c.] The rulers and governors of the city, for having taken a false step in provoking the enemy, and then holding out the siege no longer, as it was thought they might and would: or rather “over thee”, or, “for thee”^[483]; mourning over the city, and lamenting its sad case; see (⁶⁶⁸⁹ Revelation 18:9,11):

and shall cry bitterly; with great weeping, howling, and shrieking:

and they shall cast dust upon their heads; a custom used in the eastern countries, in time of mourning and sorrow; (see ⁶⁶⁸⁹ Revelation 18:19):

and they shall wallow themselves in ashes: or roll themselves in them, another custom used in mourning; (see ²⁴⁰⁵ Jeremiah 6:26 ³³⁰⁰ Micah 1:10).

Ver. 31. *And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee*, &c.] Either by shaving their heads, or tearing off their hair, as mourners in distress have been used to do:

and gird them with sackcloth; about their loins, as was very customary in such distressed cases:

and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing; not in show only, but in reality; not like the “preficae” or mourning women, though the allusion may be to them, who only mourned outwardly; but these from the very heart, and in great bitterness of spirit this is expressive of the inward grief of their minds on this melancholy occasion, as what follows declares the lamentation they expressed vocally; (see ⁶⁶⁸⁹ Revelation 18:19).

Ver. 32. *And in their wailing they shall takes up a lamentation for thee*, &c.] A mournful song, such as was used at funerals, or in times of calamity; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it:

and lament over thee; saying the following ditty;

what city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea? as there was none like it a few years ago for riches, splendour, and glory, so now

there is none like it for misery and ruin; (see ^{תריסר} Revelation 18:18). The Targum is,

“who is as Tyre? there is none like unto her in the midst of the sea;”

she is not now Tyre the renowned, but Tyre the destroyed; destroyed in the midst of the sea, from whence she had her riches and her glory: or, “as one dumb or silent in the midst of the sea”; she, in whom was heard the voice of joy and singing, is now mute, and nothing more of that kind is heard in her (see ^{תריסר} Revelation 18:22).

Ver. 33. *When thy wares went forth out of the seas, &c.*] When they were took out of ships, which came to Tyre from all parts, and were landed on the shore, and put up in warehouses, and exposed in markets and The Targum is,

“when thy merchandise went out from among the nations;”

being brought from all parts thither:

thou filledst many people; by selling them in their markets commodities they wanted, for which they came from all quarters; and by sending them to others in ships, where they knew they stood in need of them, and would fetch them a good price; and they had enough to answer the demands of all, and to supply them to the full:

thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and pithy merchandise; by taking off the goods of their subjects, whereby they were able the better to pay their taxes, and support them in their grandeur and dignity; as well as by furnishing them gold and silver, and precious stones, which they gave for the produce of their country; or by the toll and custom of the goods imported or exported.

Ver. 34. *In the time when thou shall be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters. &c.*] By the Chaldean army, which came upon them like the waves of the sea, (^{תריסר} Ezekiel 26:3) by which they were overpowered and destroyed; just as a ship on the mighty waters is dashed and broke to pieces by the waves thereof:

thy merchandise, and all thy company in the midst of thee, shall fall; trade shall cease, and the mixed multitude of traders from all parts shall be seen no more; the natives of the place shall perish; mariners and soldiers, and persons of every rank and degree, age, and sex. The Targum renders it,

“all thine armies.”

Abendana suggests that this respects the destruction of Tyre by Alexander the great.

Ver. 35. *All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, &c.*] Both near and afar off; and not only the inhabitants of the isles, properly so called, but all that dwelt on the continent by the seaside; who would all be amazed when they heard of the ruin of Tyro, which they thought inexpugnable, by reason of its natural and artificial strength:

and their kings shall be sore afraid; that it will be their turn next; and as well knowing that they were less able to contend with so mighty a monarch as the king of Babylon, or Alexander the great, than Tyre was; (see ^{<668D>}Revelation 18:9,10):

they shall be troubled in their countenance; their inward passions of grief and fear shall be seen in their countenances; which will wax pale, be dejected, distorted, and furrowed.

Ver. 36. *The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee, &c.*] As Tyre had done at Jerusalem, (^{<268D>}Ezekiel 26:2) as she hoped to make better markets upon the fall of Jerusalem, and therefore rejoiced at it; so these merchants upon her fall will hope that her trade will come into their hands, and therefore despise her, hiss, and laugh at her in her abject state. The Targum is,

“shall be astonished at thee;”

struck with wonder, and even with a stupor at her fall: “and thou shalt be a terror”; not only to thyself, but to kings and merchants, and to all the inhabitants of the isles, and to all that trade by sea; who will be struck with surprise and dread when they hear of thy destruction; (see ^{<668D>}Revelation 18:9-11,15,17):

and never shall be any more; upon the same spot, and in the same grandeur and glory: some understand this only of a long time, as seventy years, when it was rebuilt; (see ^{<23215>}Isaiah 23:15,17), it may respect its last destruction, since which it has not been, nor now is, or ever will be: this will be true of mystical Babylon, the antitype of Tyre, (^{<66821>}Revelation 18:21).

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 28

This chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of the prince of Tyre; a lamentation for the king of Tyre; a denunciation of judgments on Zidon, and a promise of peace and safety to Israel. The order given the prophet to prophesy of the ruin of the prince of Tyre, (²⁸⁰¹Ezekiel 28:1,2), the cause of his ruin, his pride on account of his wisdom and riches, which rose to such a pitch, as to make himself God, (²⁸⁰²Ezekiel 28:2-6), the manner in which his destruction shall be accomplished, (²⁸⁰⁷Ezekiel 28:7-10), the lamentation for the king of Tyre begins (²⁸¹¹Ezekiel 28:11,12), setting forth his former grandeur and dignity, (²⁸¹³Ezekiel 28:13-15), his fall, and the cause of it, injustice and violence in merchandise, pride because of beauty and wisdom, and profanation of sanctuaries, (²⁸¹⁶Ezekiel 28:16-19), next follow the judgments on Zidon, (²⁸²⁰Ezekiel 28:20-23), and the chapter is concluded with a promise of the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and of great tranquillity and safety in it, (²⁸²⁴Ezekiel 28:24-26).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came again unto me*, &c.] With another prophecy; as before against the city of Tyre, now against the king of Tyre:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre*, &c.] Whose name was Ethbaal, or Ithobalus, as he is called in Josephus; for that this was Hiram that was in the days of Solomon, and lived a thousand years, is a fable of the Jewish Rabbins, as Jerom relates: this prince of Tyre is thought by some to be an emblem of the devil; but rather of antichrist; and between them there is a great agreement, and it seems to have a prophetic respect to him:

thus saith the Lord God, because thine heart is lifted up: with pride, on account of his wisdom and knowledge, wealth and riches, as later mentioned:

and thou hast said, I am a god; this he said in his heart, in the pride of it, and perhaps expressed it with his lips, and required divine homage to be

given him by his subjects, as some insolent, proud, and haughty monarchs have done; in which he was a lively type of antichrist, who shows himself, and behaves, as if he was God, taking upon him what belongs to God; pardoning the sins of men; opening and shutting the gates of heaven; binding men's consciences with laws of his own making, and dispensing with the laws of God and man; and calling himself or suffering himself to be called God, and to be worshipped as such; (see Gill on "^² Thessalonians 2:4"):

I sit in the seat of God; in a place as delightful, safe and happy, as heaven itself, where the throne of God is; so antichrist is said to sit in the temple of God, in the house and church of God; where he assumes a power that does not belong to him, calling himself God's vicegerent, and Christ's vicar; (see ^² Thessalonians 2:4), and the Arabic version here renders it "in the house of God": it follows,

in the midst of the seas; surrounded with them as Tyre was, and lord of them as its king was; sending his ships into all parts, and to whom all brought their wares; thus the whore of Rome is said to sit upon many waters, (^² Revelation 17:2):

yet thou art a man, and not God; a frail, weak, mortal man, and not the mighty God, as his later destruction shows; and as the popes of Rome appear to be, by their dying as other men; and as antichrist will plainly be seen to be when he shall be destroyed with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming:

though thou set thine heart as the heart of God; as if it was as full of wisdom and knowledge as his; and thinkest as well of thyself, that thou art a sovereign as he, and to be feared, obeyed, and submitted to by all.

Ver. 3. *Behold; thou art wiser than Daniel*, &c.] That is, in his own opinion; or it is ironically said. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it by way of interrogation, "art thou not wiser than Daniel?" who was now at the court of Babylon, and was famous throughout all Chaldea for his knowledge in politics, his wisdom and prudence in government, as well as his skill in interpreting dreams. The Jews have a saying, that

"if all the wise men of the nations were in one scale, and Daniel in the other, he would weigh them all down."

And perhaps the fame of him had reached the king of Tyre, and yet he thought himself wiser than he; (see ^{<380>}Zechariah 9:2), antichrist thinks himself wiser than Daniel, or any of the prophets and apostles; he is wise above that which is written, and takes upon him the sole interpretation of the Scriptures, and to fix the sense of them:

there is no secret that they can hide from thee; as he fancied; he had sagacity to penetrate into the councils of neighbouring princes, and discover all plots and intrigues against him; he understood all the “arcana” and secrets of government, and could counterwork the designs of his enemies. Antichrist pretends to know all mysteries, and solve all difficulties, and pass an infallible judgment on things; as if he was of the privy council of heaven, and nothing was transacted there but he was acquainted with it, and had full knowledge of the mind of God in all things.

Ver. 4. *With thy wisdom and with thy understanding thou hast gotten thee riches*, &c.] Through skill in navigation and trade, for which the Tyrians and their princes were famous, they acquired great wealth: so antichrist, by carnal policy, and hellish subtlety, has amassed vast treasures together; the sale of pardons and indulgences has brought immense riches into the pope’s coffers:

and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures; in great quantities; (see ^{<681>}Revelation 18:3,17).

Ver. 5. *By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic*, &c.] Or, “by thy great wisdom in thy traffic”^{f484}; through great skill in trade and commerce:

hast thou increased thy riches; to a very great degree, a prodigious bulk; so antichrist has done, especially through trafficking with the souls of men, which is one part of his merchandise, as it was of Tyre, (^{<681>}Revelation 18:13 ^{<571>}Ezekiel 27:13):

and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches; which are apt to puff up and make men highminded, and swell them with a vain opinion of themselves, and to make haughty, insolent, and scornful, in their behaviour to others; thus elated with worldly grandeur and riches, the whore of Rome is represented as proud, vain, and haughty, (^{<681>}Revelation 18:7).

Ver. 6. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Now follows the punishment threatened, because of all this pride, haughtiness, and blasphemy:

because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; seeking thine own glory; setting up thyself above all others; assuming that to thyself which belongs to God; and making thyself equal to him, or showing thyself as if thou wast God; (see Gill on “^{<3280>}Ezekiel 28:2”).

Ver. 7. *Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon thee*, &c.] The Chaldean army, who not only lived at a distance from Tyre, but were unknown to them, not trading with them; nor are they mentioned among the merchants of Tyre: these, in the mystical sense, may design the angels that shall pour out the vials on the antichristian states, the kings of Protestant nations:

the terrible of the nations; as the Babylonians were, very formidable to the world, having conquered many countries, and their armies consisting of men of all nations, mighty, courageous, and expert in war; and alike formidable will the Protestant princes be to the antichristian powers, when they shall with their united strength attack them:

and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom; their beautiful city and spacious buildings, the palaces of their king and nobles, their walls and towers erected with so much art and skill; or their forces, the men of war within their city, which made their beauty complete, so well skilled in military affairs, (^{<3270>}Ezekiel 27:10,11), or their ships, and the merchandise of them, and the curious things brought in them: even everything that was rich and valuable, the effect of their art and wisdom: all which may be applied to the city of Rome, when it will be taken, ransacked, and burnt, (^{<6688>}Revelation 18:8-19):

and they shall defile thy brightness; profane thy crown, cast down thy throne, destroy thy kingdom, and all that is great and glorious in thee; thus the whore of Rome shall be made bare and desolate, (^{<6676>}Revelation 17:16). The Targum renders it,

“the brightness of thy terror;”

which shall no more strike the nations, or affect them.

Ver. 8. *They shall bring thee down to the pit*, &c.] Or, “to corruption”^{f485}; to the grave, the pit of corruption and destruction; so antichrist shall go into perdition, into the bottomless pit from whence he came, (^{<6678>}Revelation 17:8):

and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas; that die in a sea fight, whose carcasses are thrown overboard, and devoured by fishes.

Ver. 9. *Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God?* &c.] When thou art in the enemies' hands, and just going to be put to death, wilt thou then confidently assert thy deity, and to his face tell him that thou art God? surely thy courage and thy confidence, thy blasphemy and impiety, will leave thee then; a bitter sarcasm this! and so the pope of Rome, the antichristian beast, when taken, and just going to be cast into the lake of fire along with the false prophet, will not have the impudence to style himself God, or to call himself Christ's vicar on earth:

but thou shalt be a man, and no god, in the hand of him that slayeth thee; that is, thou shalt appear to be a poor, weak, frail, mortal, trembling, dying man, when got into the hand of the enemy, and he is just going to put an end to thy life; where will be then thy boasted deity?

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised,* &c.] Or the death of the wicked, as the Targum; the first and second death, temporal and eternal: the former

by the hand of strangers, the Chaldeans, in various shapes; and the latter will follow upon it: it may denote the various kinds of death which the inhabitants of Rome will die when destroyed, some by famine, some by pestilence, and others by fire; when these plagues shall come upon her in one day, (~~68B~~ Revelation 18:8).

for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and therefore it shall surely come to pass; strong is the Lord that will judge, condemn, and destroy mystical Babylon, or Tyre.

Ver. 11. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] After the prophecy concerning the ruin of the prince of Tyre, the word of the Lord came to the prophet, ordering him to take up a lamentation on the king of Tyre:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 12. *Take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus,* &c.] Who is before called the prince of Tyre; and who he was (see Gill on "~~268B~~ Ezekiel 28:2"), the bishop of Rome was first only a "nagid", a prince, ruler,

governor, and leader in the church; afterwards he became a king, a head, even over other kings, princes, and states; perhaps this may also point to his twofold power, secular and ecclesiastical, and so he is represented by two beasts, (~~6130~~ Revelation 13:1,11), here a lamentation or funeral ditty is ordered to be taken up and said for him, to denote his certain destruction and ruin; though some have thought the fall of the angels, and others the fall of Adam, is referred to; several passages are interpreted of Adam in the Talmud^{f486}:

and say unto him, thus saith the Lord God, thou sealest up the sum; or “pattern”^{f487}; of everything that is excellent; thou art in all things, consummately so, as that nothing could be added; that is, in his own esteem and account. Junius thinks it refers to the sealing of goods exported, for which a duty was to be paid, without doing which merchandise was not allowed. Antichrist would not suffer any to buy or sell but such as receive his mark or seal on their right hand, or in their forehead, (~~6136~~ Revelation 13:16,17). Cocceius renders it, “the sealer of the measure”^{f488}; and takes it to be an allusion to the custom of sealing measures, used in buying and selling; and that it respects the man of sin, who takes upon him the power of making rules and canons for faith and practice:

full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty; a most accomplished man for parts and person in his own conceit: antichrist assumes to himself a perfect knowledge of the Scriptures, and sets up himself as an infallible judge of controversies; and glories in the splendour and order of his church, and the government of it.

Ver. 13. *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God, &c.*] Not only in Eden, but in the garden which was in Eden, and was of the Lord’s immediate planting; and therefore called the garden of God, as well as because of its excellency, fragrancy, and delight; not that the king of Tyre was literally there, or ever dwelt in it; but his situation in Tyre was as safe, and as pleasant and delightful, as Adam’s was in the garden of Eden, at least in his own imagination. So the Targum,

“thou delightest thyself with plenty of all good things and delectable ones, as if thou dwellest in the garden of God;”

in the mystical sense, this designs the church of God, which is an Eden, a garden, a paradise; (see ~~2042~~ Song of Solomon 4:12,13) and where antichrist

first appeared, and took his seat, and seated himself as if he was God, (^{<3111>}2 Thessalonians 2:4):

every precious stone was thy covering; not only the covering of his head, his crown, was decked with jewels and precious stones of all sorts; but his clothes, the covering of his body, were adorned with them. So the Targum,

“all precious stones were set in order upon thy garments.”

Kimchi renders it “thine hedge”, or “fence”^{f489}; and takes it to be an hyperbole, as if his house, or garden, or vineyard, were fenced with precious stones. This fitly describes the whore of Rome arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, (^{<6670>}Revelation 17:4). The pope’s triple crown is stuck with them, and a cross of precious stones is upon his slipper, when he holds out his toe to be kissed:

the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold. Writers differ very much about these stones; and it is difficult to say what answer to the Hebrew words here used. The stone “sardius”, or the sardine stone, is of a blood colour, commonly called a cornelian, and is found in Sardis and Sardinia, from whence some say it has its name. The “topaz” is a hard transparent stone, said to be of a beautiful yellow or gold colour by those who confound it with the chrysolite; otherwise the true topaz is of a fine green colour, as Pliny^{f490} and Isidore^{f491}; the best is what is found in Ethopia, (^{<1889>}Job 28:19). The “diamond” is a precious stone, the first in rank, value, hardness and lustre; the most perfect colour is the white. The “beryl” is a stone of a pale green colour, thought to be the diamond of the ancients: the word is “tarshish”, and thought by some the “chrysolite”. The “onyx” resembles a man’s nail, from whence it has its name: the word “shoham” here used is supposed to mean the “sardonyx”, a compound of the “sardian” and “onyx” stones. The “jasper” is a stone of various colours and spots, variegated like a panther; hence the Targum here renders it “pantherin”; the most valuable is the green spotted with red or purple. The “sapphire” is a stone of an azure colour or sky blue, exceeding hard and transparent. The “emerald” is of an exceeding fine green colour, very bright, and clear, and delightful to the eye; but is rather intended by the next word, as the “carbuncle” by this, which is a stone of the ruby kind, and very rare; (see ^{<2842>}Isaiah 54:12). “Gold” is mentioned along with them, and last of all, as being less valuable; but chiefly because these stones were

set in gold, as the Targum paraphrases it; these are nine of the stones which were in the breastplate of the Jewish high priest^{f492}, whom the king of Tyre might have knowledge of and imitate, as it is certain the pope of Rome does in some things:

the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created; either born into the world; or made a crowned king; against which time, drums, and pipes, and such like instruments of music, were prepared in Tyre, and at them made use of by way of rejoicing: and as this was literally true of the king of Tyre at his coronation, so of the bishop of Rome at his creation and inauguration, which is attended with bells ringing, drums beating, trumpets sounding; and so in mystical Babylon is heard, though the time is coming when it will not be heard, the voice of harpers, musicians, pipers, and trumpeters, (~~f682~~ Revelation 18:22).

Ver. 14. *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth*, &c.] In allusion to the cherubim over the mercy seat, which covered it with their wings; and which, as the ark of the testimony and all the vessels of the tabernacle were anointed, were so likewise; in all probability the king of Tyre is called a “cherub” because of his wisdom and power; “anointed”, because of his royal dignity; and “that covereth”, because of his office, which was to protect his people; all which he either was, or ought to be, or was in his own opinion so: antichrist makes great boasts of his wisdom, power, and authority, as a teacher, pastor, or bishop, the cherubim being symbolical of the ministers of the word; and of his being anointed by men, that he may be the cover and shield of the church; and of his being the Lord’s anointed, and the vicar of Christ, and head and protector of the church, as he calls himself^{f493}. The Targum understands all this of regal power, and renders it,

“thou art a king anointed for a kingdom:”

and I have set thee so; from whom all kings have their sceptres, crowns, and kingdoms; and by whom they reign; and who can put them down as well as set them up at his pleasure. It may be rendered, “I have given thee”^{f494}; or suffered thee to be so, as the word “give” is often used; it is by divine permission that antichrist has taken such power to himself, and in judgment to them over whom he rules, who are given up to believe a lie; yea, God “put”, or, as it is in the original text, “gave” it into the hearts of the kings to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, (~~f677~~ Revelation 17:17):

thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; not on Sinai, nor on Zion; on neither of which was the king of Tyre; nor was this literally true of him; for to say, as Kimchi does to illustrate it, that Hiram king of Tyre assisted Solomon with materials to build the temple, is very foreign; but this is true of the antitype of the king of Tyre, antichrist; who has set his foot on God's holy mountain the church; here he first appeared and stood, as before observed on the preceding verse:

thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire; which some understand of the precious stones with which the king of Tyre was adorned, which glittered like fire; though rather they design the people of God, those living lively stones of which the spiritual house is built; who, for their clear light, and burning zeal and love, may be said to be as stones of fire; and among these the bishop of Rome, or the antichristian king of Tyre, first walked: so Kimchi interprets them of the Israelites, who were a holy people; and Jarchi of the kings of Israel, who were as the ministering angels; the seraphim perhaps he means, so called from their burning and flaming love. The Targum is,

“and over the holy people thou hast thought to rule.”

Ver. 15. *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created*, &c.] From the time that Tyre became a kingdom, or this king was set over it, everything was wisely conducted, and all things happily succeeded; so when the church of Rome was first formed in the times of the apostles, it was laid on a good foundation; it was set up according to the rule of the word; its bishop or pastor was one of a sound judgment, a good life and conversation, and so continued in succession for a considerable time; these held the true faith and doctrine of Christ, and kept it incorrupt, and lived holy lives:

till iniquity was found in thee; pride, blasphemy against God, and contempt of his people, as well as violence and deceit; all this was found in the king of Tyre in later times: so in the church of Rome, when the man of sin was revealed, there were pride, haughtiness, and ambition, found in it; blasphemy against God and Christ, and the saints: false doctrine, false worship, superstition, and idolatry.

Ver. 16. *By the multitude of thy merchandise*, &c.] With the several nations of the earth, who came to the markets and fairs of Tyre, and to whom she sent her goods:

they have filled the midst of thee with violence; or, as the Targum,

“thy treasures are filled with rapine;”

with ill gotten goods, as the pope’s coffers are through his merchandise of the souls of men, and the great trade that is driven in pardons and indulgences:

and thou hast sinned; by this unjust and ungodly way of dealing:

therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; Mount Zion, the church of the living God, where he dwells, and is worshipped, and on which the Lamb stands with his hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name and his Father’s on their foreheads, (⁶⁶⁴¹Revelation 14:1), these will have no communion with the church and pope of Rome; will not receive his mark, nor worship his image; from this mountain, and the inhabitants of it, he stands excluded as a profane person, with whom they will have nothing to do; and hence he persecutes them to the utmost of his power:

and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire; from among the people of God, who have the clear light of the Gospel, and a sincere love for Christ; these withdrew themselves from his jurisdiction and government; and with whom his name, power, and authority perish, especially when they shall have got the victory over him, (⁶⁶⁵¹Revelation 15:1). Kimchi paraphrases it,

“from the midst of the saints who are the Israelites, comparable to stones of fire;”

and Jarchi’s note is,

“that thou mayest not take a portion with the righteous;”

have no part, lot, or fellowship with them. The Targum is,

“I will destroy thee, O king that art anointed, because thou thoughtest to rule over the holy people.”

Ver. 17. *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty*, &c.] Riches, wealth, power, and authority; (see ⁶⁶³⁶Ezekiel 28:5), as the pope of Rome is, because of his dignity, the pomp and splendour of the Roman church, and the gaudy appearance it makes:

thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness; outward lustre and glory, which dazzled his eyes so that he could not see things in a true light; but neglecting the word of God, and setting up his own infallibility, corrupted his doctrine and worship, and became foolish, stupid, and sottish:

I will cast thee to the ground; from the throne and pinnacle of honour, to the lowest state and condition:

and I will lay thee before kings: prostrate at the feet of them, who heretofore has set his feet on the necks of them; or he shall fall before them, and be destroyed by them, when they shall hate the whore, and make her desolate, and burn her flesh with fire, (⁴⁶⁷¹⁶Revelation 17:16): that they may behold thee; with contempt and disdain, and as an instance and example of divine vengeance.

Ver. 18. *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, &c.*] Or, “thy palaces”, as Kimchi; the palace of the king, and the palaces of the nobles, where much iniquity was committed, and which was the cause of their being defiled or destroyed by the Chaldeans; or it may design their sacred places, their temples, where their gods were worshipped, and idolatry committed. This may be applied to the places of religious worship among the Papists, their churches; which, instead of being adorned, are defiled with their images and image worship, and other acts of superstition and will worship:

by the iniquity of thy traffic; as by bringing in ill gotten goods into the sacred places of Tyre, as they were accounted, so by selling pardons; praying souls out of purgatory for money; by simony, or buying and selling ecclesiastical benefices; and such like spiritual merchandise in Roman churches:

therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee; sin, and the punishment of it, as Kimchi; which, for sin committed in the midst of them, should consume as fire; or some from among themselves, that should stir up and cause internal divisions, which should issue in their ruin; as the unclean spirit that shall go out of the mouth of the beast, dragon, and false prophet, to gather the antichristian kings to battle, will end in their ruin, (⁴⁶¹⁴⁴Revelation 16:14,16). The Targum is,

“I will bring people who are strong as fire, because of the sins of thy pride they shall destroy thee.”

Alexander, when he took Tyre, ordered all the inhabitants to be slain, excepting those that fled to the temples, and the houses to be set on fire^{f495}; which literally fulfilled this prophecy; and which may also have respect to the destruction of Rome by fire, because of the sins committed in it, (~~f688~~ Revelation 18:8):

and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee; the kings and merchants of the earth, who shall stand and look on the city as it is burning, and when reduced to ashes; which denotes the utter destruction of it, (~~f689~~ Revelation 18:9-11,18). The Targum is,

“I will give thee as ashes on the earth, &c.’

and shall be no more accounted of.

Ver. 19. *All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee, &c.*] At thy fall; that such a mighty city, and powerful prince, should be destroyed at once; that, from such a height of prosperity, they should be brought to so low an estate of adversity; this will be the astonishment of kings, merchants, and others, that knew the riches, power, and flourishing estate of Rome, as before observed:

thou shalt be a terror; to the said persons, who will be afraid to come nigh for fear of the same torments and punishment, (~~f680~~ Revelation 18:10,15), or, though thou “hast been a terror”; or “terrors”; exceeding terrible to others in time past, yet now, as the Targum,

“I will give thee (or make thee) as if thou wast not.”

and never shalt thou be any more; as thou hast been, or after thy last destruction; so mystical Tyre or Babylon shall be no more, when once destroyed, (~~f682~~ Revelation 18:21).

Ver. 20. *Again, the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the prophecy of the destruction of the prince and king of Tyre, concerning a neighbouring city:

saying as follows:

Ver. 21. *Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, &c.*] An ancient city, near to Tyre, and in confederacy with it, greatly given to idolatry and superstition; and may design all the antichristian states in the communion of the church of Rome:

and prophesy against it; the prophet is bid to look towards this place with a stern countenance, as before against Tyre; threatening it with ruin, and prophesying of it, in the following manner.

Ver. 22 *And say, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] The eternal Jehovah, the only true God, the Maker of heaven and earth; this is said by way of preface to the prophecy, and to assure of the fulfilment of it, as well as in opposition to the gods of the Zidonians:

behold, I am against thee, O Zidon; angry with thee, and will come out against thee in my wrath, because of thine idolatries and impieties. The Targum is,

“behold, I send my fury upon thee, O Zidon:”

I will be glorified in the midst of thee; not by the conversion of them; nor by acts of religious worship truly performed by them: by prayer, confession of sin, or thanksgiving; but by his judgments executed in the midst of them; by pouring out the vials of his wrath on them, as it follows:

and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her; for the Lord is known, by the judgments he executes, to be that pure, holy, just, and sin avenging God he is, as well as omniscient and omnipotent; and this even Heathens and antichristian persons are obliged to acknowledge, (⁴⁹⁵Psalm 9:15,16):

and shall be sanctified in her; that is, shall appear, be declared and owned, to be a God, just and holy, in all his ways and works.

Ver. 23. *And I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets, &c.*] The plague and the sword, which are two of God’s sore judgments, and often go together; the pestilence slays them that are within, and the sword those the enemy meets with in the streets:

and the wounded shall be judged; that is, punished; or “shall fall”^{f496}, die and perish:

in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; this was literally fulfilled in Zidon, either by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army, which besieged it on every side; or by Artaxerxes Ochus the Persian, who took it, and destroyed it; and will have its accomplishment on the antichristian states, eastern and western, when the vials shall be poured out upon them, (⁴⁹⁶Revelation 16:1):

and they shall know that I am the Lord God; who am able to foretell things to come, and to accomplish them.

Ver. 24. *And there shall be no more a pricking brier to the house of Israel, &c.]* To the church of God, Jews or Gentiles, particularly to the Jews, who will now be converted; all the enemies of Christ and his people will now be destroyed, who have been very grievous and distressing to them by their furious persecutions; the pope and Turk will be no more, nor any of the antichristian powers; the beast and false prophet will be taken and cast into the lake of fire; and there will be none to hurt and destroy in all the holy mountain, (⁶⁶⁰¹Revelation 19:20 ²³¹⁰⁹Isaiah 11:9):

nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them that despised them; the same thing in other words as before; wicked men, especially tyrannical princes, furious persecutors of the saints, are like thorns and briars, not only unfruitful, useless, and unprofitable, but pricking, grieving, and hurtful to good men, by their persecutions, revilings, and reproaches, and whose end is to be burned. The Targum of the whole is,

“and there shall be no more to the house of Israel a king that doth evil (or hurt), or a governor that oppresses all round about them that spoil them:”

and they shall know that I am the Lord; the house of Israel, the Jews now converted, they shall know the Lord Christ, and acknowledge him to be their Lord and King.

Ver. 25. *Thus saith the Lord God, when I shall have gathered the house of Israel, &c.]* Not at the return of them from captivity in Babylon; for the ten tribes or house of Israel did not then return; though there might some few of those tribes, as a pledge of what would be hereafter; but in the latter day, upon the destruction of antichrist, when all Israel shall be saved: and when they will be collected

from the people among whom they are scattered; in the several nations of the world, in Asia, Africa, and Europe:

and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the Heathen; being believed in by them; prayed unto and worshipped in a spiritual manner by them; professed and owned to be their Saviour and Redeemer in the face of the whole world, Christians and even Heathens, whom before they rejected: then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob; the

land of Canaan, given by promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; which last is only here mentioned, because it was his posterity that was to possess it; not all Abraham's, only those in the line of Isaac; nor all Isaac's, only those in the line of Jacob; but all his; and this they will do when they are converted in the latter day, and be no more a vagabond people, as they now are.

Ver. 26. *And they shall dwell safely therein*, &c.] There being none to make them afraid, all their enemies being destroyed, and they also under the protection of Christian princes:

and they shall build houses and plant vineyards; signifying their continuance in their land, and their enjoyment of the blessings of it. Cocceius understands this of churches gathered in the name of Christ; of which no doubt there will be many in Judea, as in the first times of the Gospel, and more abundantly:

yea, they shall dwell with confidence: in the utmost safety and security, having nothing to fear from any quarter:

when I have executed judgment upon all those that despise them round about them; took vengeance on them, and utterly destroyed them that despised or spoiled them, even all around them; they will all be cut off, so that there will be none to give them the least disturbance:

and they shall know that I am the Lord their God: not only God, as before, (~~2384~~ Ezekiel 28:24), but their God, their Lord and their God, their Redeemer and Saviour, whom they formerly denied, persecuted, and pierced.

CHAPTER 29

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 29

This chapter contains a prophecy against Pharaoh king of Egypt; and of the destruction of the land of Egypt; and of the restoration of it after a certain time. The time of prophecy is noted, (³²⁰¹Ezekiel 29:1), the order to prophesy against Pharaoh, who is described as a large fish, lying in his rivers, and boasting of them, (³²⁰²Ezekiel 29:2,3), his destruction and the manner of it, (³²⁰⁴Ezekiel 29:4,5), the reason of it, his treachery to the Jews, (³²⁰⁶Ezekiel 29:6,7), hence the whole land of Egypt is threatened with desolation, from one end to the other, so as to be uninhabited by man or beast for the space of forty years, (³²⁰⁸Ezekiel 29:8-14), but shall not arrive to their former glory as a kingdom, nor be any more the confidence of the house of Israel, (³²⁰⁵Ezekiel 29:15,16), then follows a prophecy seventeen years after this, showing the reason why Egypt was given to the king of Babylon, (³²⁰⁷Ezekiel 29:17-20), and the chapter is closed with a promise of happiness to Israel, (³²⁰⁹Ezekiel 29:21).

Ver. 1. *In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, &c.]* In the tenth year Jeconiah's captivity, and Zedekiah's reign. The Septuagint version has it, the twelfth year; and the Arabic version, the twelfth month; and the Septuagint version again, the first day of the month; and the Vulgate Latin, the eleventh day of it. This month was the month Tebet, and answers to part of December, and part of January. This prophecy was delivered before that concerning Tyre, though placed after it, because fulfilled after it, which gave Nebuchadnezzar Egypt as a reward for besieging and taking Tyre:

the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, &c.]* Pharaoh was a name common to all the kings of Egypt; the name of this king was Pharaohhophra, (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 44:30), and who, by Herodotus^{f497}, is called Apries:

and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt; prophesy of his destruction, and of the destruction of the whole land that is under his dominion.

Ver. 3. *Speak, and say, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] The one only, living, and true God, the almighty, eternal, and unchangeable Jehovah, which the gods of Egypt were not:

behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt; who, though so great a king, was not a match for God, yea, nothing in his hands; nor could he stand before him, or contend with him; or,

I am above thee^{f498}; though the king of Egypt was so high above others, and thought so highly of himself, as if he was a god; yet the Lord was higher than he:

the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers; the chief river of Egypt was the Nile, which opened in seven mouths or gates into the sea, and out of which canals were made to water the whole land; and which abounding with rivers and watery places, hence the king of it is compared to a great fish, a dragon or whale, or rather a crocodile, which was a fish very common, and almost peculiar to Egypt; and with which the description here agrees, as Bochart observes; and who also remarks that Pharaoh in the Arabic language signifies a crocodile; and to which he may be compared for his cruel, voracious, and mischievous nature; and is here represented as lying at ease, and rolling himself in the enjoyment of his power, riches, and pleasures:

which hath said, my river is mine own, and I have made it for myself; alluding to the river Nile, which his predecessors had by their wisdom cut out into canals, for the better watering of the land; and which he might have improved, so that it stood in no need of rain, nor of the supplies of other countries, having a sufficiency from its own product; though he chiefly designs his kingdom, which was his own, and he had established it, and made himself great in it; for the last clause may be rendered, either, “I have made it”, as the Syriac version, the river Nile, ascribing that to himself which belonged to God; or, “I have made them”, the rivers among whom he lay, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; or, “I have made myself”, as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, a great king. So the Targum,

“the kingdom is mine, and I have subdued it.”

Herodotus says of this king, that he was so lifted up with pride, and so secure of his happy state, that he said there was no God could deprive him of his kingdom^{f499}. This proud tyrannical monarch was an emblem of that beast that received his power from the dragon, and who himself spake like one; of the whore of Babylon that sits upon many waters, and boasts of her sovereignty and power, of her wealth and riches, of her ease, peace, pleasure, prosperity, and settled estate, (~~611D~~ Revelation 13:2,11 17:1 18:7).

Ver. 4. *But I will put hooks in thy jaws, &c.]* The allusion is to fishhooks, which are taken by fishes with the bait into their mouths, and stick in their jaws, by which they are drawn out of the river, and taken. The king of Egypt being before compared to a fish, these hooks design some powerful princes and armies, which should be the ruin of Pharaoh; one of them, according to Junius and Grotius, was Amasis, at the head of the Cyreneans and Greeks; and another was Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; (see ~~840D~~ Job 41:1,2 ~~2372D~~ Isaiah 37:29):

and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales; the people of his kingdom, especially his soldiers, generals, princes, and great men, to cleave to him, follow him, and go out with him in his expedition against Amasis. The Targum is,

“I will kill the princes of thy strength with thy mighty ones:”

and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers: alluding to the crocodile, to which he is compared, which sometimes comes out of the river, and goes on dry land. The king of Egypt was brought out of his kingdom by the following means: Amasis, with the Cyreneans and Greeks, having seized upon Lybia, and drove the king of it from thence, he applied to Pharaoh for help, who gathered a large army of Egyptians, and led them out into the fields of Cyrene, where they were defeated by Amasis, and almost all perished, and the king saved himself by flight; upon which the Egyptians mutinied and rebelled against him, and Amasis became their king:

and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales; the common people of Egypt; for the above numerous army consisted only of Egyptians, whom he gathered from all parts, drained his rivers of them, and almost exhausted his country hereby; he had indeed in an army, after this battle with Amasis, thirty thousand auxiliaries, Carians and Ionians; but these were not the fish of his rivers. The Targum is,

“I will make thy kingdom to cease from thee, and all the princes of thy strength with thy mighty ones shall be killed;”

with which the history agrees. The allusion to the crocodile is here very just and pertinent, which is a fish full of scales. Monsieur Thevenot^{f500}, who saw many of them, says, that

“the body of this fish is large, and all of a size; the back is covered with high scales, like the heads of nails in a court gate, of a greenish colour, and so hard that they are proof against a halberd; and it has a long tail covered with scales like the body;”

and another traveller says^{f501} they have scales on their back musket proof, and therefore must be wounded in the belly; but another traveller^{f502} says, this is a vulgar report that a musket shot will not pierce the skins of the crocodiles, for upon trial it is found false; yet all writers, ancient and modern, allow it to have very firm scales on its back, which render it capable of bearing the heaviest strokes, and to be in a measure impenetrable and invincible; so Herodotus^{f503} says, it has a skin full of scales, on the back infrangible; or, as Pliny^{f504} expresses it, invincible against all blows and strokes it may be stricken with; and so says Aristotle^{f505}, with which Aelian^{f506} agrees, who says that the crocodile has by nature a back and tail impenetrable; for it is covered with scales, as if it was armed as one might say, not unlike to hard shells.

Ver. 5. *And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee, and all the fish of thy rivers, &c.]* Where fish in common cannot live, but die as soon almost as out of the water, and on dry land, excepting those that are of the amphibious kind. This wilderness designs the deserts of Lybia and Cyrene, where the battle was fought between Hophra and Amasis; and where the Egyptian army perished, only their king, before compared to a crocodile, which lives on land, as well as in water, escaped. The Targum is,

“I will cast thee into a wilderness, and all the princes of thy strength:”

thou shalt fall upon the open fields thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered, this is to be understood of his army; for what is proper to an army is sometimes ascribed to the head or general of it; which fell by the sword in the fields of Lybia and Cyrene and was so discomfited, that the remains of it could not be brought and gathered together again: or the sense is, that those that were slain were left in the open fields, and had no

burial; they were not gathered to the grave, as Kimchi interprets it; and so the Targum,

“upon the face of the field thy carcass shall be cast; it shall not be gathered, nor shall it be buried:”

this was only true of the carcasses of the soldiers slain in battle, not of the king, who fled, and afterwards in another battle was taken by Amasis, and strangled in the city of Sais, where he was buried among his ancestors, as Herodotus^{f507} relates:

I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven; that is, his army; as the armies of the kings, beast, and false prophet, will be at the battle of Armageddon, when the two latter will be taken and cast alive into the burning lake, of which this monarch was an emblem, (⁶⁹¹⁷Revelation 19:17-20).

Ver. 6. *And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord,* &c.] Who could eject their king from his kingdom, and deliver him into the hands of his enemy; though he thought no God could, as he boastingly said, before observed:

because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel; alluding to the country of Egypt, which abounded with reeds that grew upon the banks of the river Nile, and other rivers. This signifies that either the Egyptians were weak, and could not help the people of Israel when they applied to them; or rather that they were treacherous and deceitful, and would not assist them, according to agreement; and were even pernicious and hurtful to them, as a broken reed; (see ²³¹⁶Isaiah 36:6). The Targum renders it,

“the staff of a reed broken.”

Ver. 7. *When they took hold of thee by thy hand,* &c.] When the Israelites entered into an alliance and confederacy with the Egyptians, called for their assistance according to treaty, and put their confidence in them:

thou didst break and rend all their shoulder; as a reed which a man puts under his armhole, and leans upon, and it breaks under him, the splinters run into the flesh up to the very shoulder, and tear the flesh to pieces; so, through Zedekiah’s trusting to the king of Egypt, he rebelled against the king of Babylon, which brought on his ruin, and the destruction of his kingdom:

and when they leaned upon thee thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand; when they put their confidence in the king of Egypt, and sent to him for help when besieged by the king of Babylon, and he failed them, they were obliged to raise up themselves, as a man is forced to do when his staff breaks under him, whose loins before were bowed, but now erects himself, and stands and walks as well as he can without it; so the Jews were forced to stand upon their own legs, and exert all the force they had, and make all the efforts they could against the king of Babylon, being left in the lurch by the king of Egypt; in which, though they were rightly served for their vain confidence and not trusting in the Lord, yet the treachery of the Egyptians was resented by him, as follows:

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Because of the pride of the king of Egypt, asserting the river to be his own, and made by him for himself; and because of his perfidy to the house of Israel:

behold, I will bring a sword upon thee; or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; first a civil war, occasioned by the murmurs of the people, on account of the defeat of their army at Cyrene; which issued in the dethroning and strangling of this king, as before observed and setting up another; which civil commotions Nebuchadnezzar took the advantage of, and came against Egypt with a large army:

and cut off man and beast out of thee; for what with the civil wars among themselves, and what with the devastations of the king of Babylon's army, putting men to the sword, and seizing upon the beasts for their food, to support such an army in a foreign land, it was pretty well stripped of both.

Ver. 9. *And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste, &c.*] Men few or none being left in it, to till it, nor cattle found upon it:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; by these judgments executed upon them, now foretold; and which when come to pass, they will be obliged to acknowledge the omniscience and omnipotence of Jehovah:

because thou hast said, the river is mine, and I have made it; (see Gill on ³³⁰⁸Ezekiel 29:3"); this insolent expression was highly resented by the Lord, as appears by the repetition of it. The Targum is here, as before,

“the kingdom is mine, and I have subdued it;”

but, notwithstanding this vaunt, he could not keep it.

Ver. 10. *Behold, therefore, I am against thee, and against thy rivers, &c.]* Against the king of Egypt, and against his subjects, the many people he ruled over; as the Lord is against spiritual Egypt, and the head of it, and the antichristian states, signified by many waters, rivers, and fountains; (see ^{<6118>}Revelation 11:8 17:1,15 16:4):

and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate; partly by a civil war, and partly by a foreign enemy; especially those parts of it which were the seat of war:

from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia; or the tower of Seveneh; according to Herodotus^{f508}, Syene was a city of Thebais, where he was told were two mountains, which gave rise to the Nile. Pliny^{f509} says it was six hundred twenty five miles from Alexandria; and it is by him, as well as Strabo^{f510}, placed under the tropic of Cancer; who both say, in the summer solstice, at noon, no shadow is cast there; to which the poet Lucan^{f511} refers, It is now called Essuaen; which city, as Mr. Norden^{f512} says, who lately travelled in those parts, is situated on the eastern shore of the Nile; and he relates that there remain still some marks of the place where the ancient city stood; as to the rest, it is so covered with earth, that there is nothing but rubbish, from which, in some places, one would judge that there were formerly magnificent buildings here. The utter destruction of which, with the rest of Egypt prophesied of, appears to have been fulfilled. This place is famous for being the place of the banishment of Juvenal the poet, where he died, being eighty years of age. The tower of Syene, Jerom says, remained to his days, and was subject to the Roman government, where are the cataracts of the Nile; and to which place, from our sea, he says, the Nile is navigable: but, according to Pliny.^{f513} Syene itself was on the border of Ethiopia; and so say Pausanias^{f514} and Solinus^{f515}: and, according to Seneca^{f516}, it was the extreme part of Egypt. So Josephus^{f517} says the south border of Egypt is Syene, which separates it from Ethiopia; and that between Pelusium (the entrance of Egypt) and Syene are two hundred and fifty miles. It lay between Egypt and Ethiopia, so that it might seem doubtful to which it belonged. It seems better therefore to take “Migdol”, rendered a “tower”, for the proper name of a place, as the Septuagint do; and such a place there was in Egypt, (^{<2441>}Jeremiah 44:1 46:4), a town on the Red sea, (^{<1242>}Exodus 14:2), so that the one was on the border of Egypt on one side, and the other on the other: and the words may be rendered^{f518}, “from Migdol to Syene, even to the border of Ethiopia”; from one end of it to the other: it denotes the utter

desolation of the country, from one end to the other. Unless by Cush, rendered “Ethiopia”, is meant Arabia, as it often is, and is thought by some to be intended here; which was on the northern border of Egypt, as Syene was, a city in Thebais, near to Ethiopia, on the southern border of it; so that this describes Egypt from south to north; but the former account seems best.

Ver. 11. *No foot of man shall pass through it, &c.*] This must be understood not strictly, but with some limitation; it cannot be thought that Egypt was so depopulated as that there should not be a single passenger in it; but that there should be few inhabitants in it, or that there should be scarce any that should come into it for traffic; it should not be frequented as it had been at least there should be very few that travelled in it, in comparison of what had:

no foot of beast shall pass through it: no droves of sheep and oxen, and such like useful cattle, only beasts of prey should dwell in it:

neither shall it be inhabited forty years: afterwards, (^{צפ}Ezekiel 29:17), a prophecy is given out concerning the destruction of it by Nebuchadnezzar, which was in the twenty seventh year, that is, of Jeconiah’s captivity; now allowing three years for the fulfilment of that prophecy, or forty years, a round number put for forty three years, they will end about the time that Cyrus conquered Babylon, at which time the seventy years’ captivity of the Jews ended; and very likely the captivity of the Egyptians also. The Jews pretend to give a reason why Egypt lay waste just forty years, because the famine, signified in Pharaoh’s dream, was to have lasted, as they make it out, forty two years; whereas, according to them, it continued only two years; and, instead of the other forty years of famine, Egypt must be forty years uninhabited: this is mentioned both by Jarchi and Kimchi.

Ver. 12. *And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, &c.*] As Judea and others, made desolate by the king of Babylon:

and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years; such as Thebes, Sais, Memphis, and others; which should share the same fate as Jerusalem and other principal cities in other countries, which fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar:

and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries; such as were not carried captive into Babylon fled

into other countries, as Arabia, Ethiopia, and other places, Berosus^{f519} makes mention of this captivity of the Egyptians under Nebuchadnezzar the son, which no other writer does.

Ver. 13. *Yet thus saith the Lord God, at the end of forty years, &c.]* Reckoning from its devastation by Nebuchadnezzar to the taking of Babylon by Cyrus:

will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered; from Babylon, and other places; Cyrus very probably being stirred up by the Lord to proclaim liberty to the Egyptians, as he did to the Jews, to return to their own land; and at the same time restored Amasis to the quiet possession of his kingdom, who must be still alive; since, according to Diodorus Siculus^{f520}, he reigned fifty five years; though, according to Herodotus^{f521}, he reigned but forty four years.

Ver. 14. *And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, &c.]* For what is done by men, under the direction and influence of divine Providence, is said to be done by the Lord, as this was, though by the means of Cyrus:

and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros; which was a part of the land of Egypt; perhaps so called from Pathrusim, the son of Mizraim, from whom Egypt had its name, (⁽¹⁰⁰⁴⁾Genesis 10:14). Bochart takes it to be Thebais, a principal country in Egypt:

into the land of their habitation; or nativity, where they were born, and where they before dwelt:

and they shall be there a base kingdom; as it is at this day more especially, to which it has been gradually reduced, having passed into various hands, and come under the power and dominion of different states: whatever might be the case and circumstances of it under Cyrus, Cambyses his son entered into it, made sad devastation in it, and an entire conquest of it; and though it revolted under Darius Hystaspes, it was subdued again, and brought into a worse state than before by Xerxes: it revolted again in the reign of Darius Nothus, and was at last by Ochus totally subdued; and from that time the Egyptians never had a king of their own nation to reign over them. Along with the Persian empire it came into the hands of Alexander without any opposition; and, after his death, fell to the share of Ptolemy, one of his captains; and, though some of the first kings of that name were of considerable note and power, yet Egypt made a poor figure under the reigns of several of them. When the Roman empire obtained, it became a

province of that, and continued so for six or seven hundred years; and then it fell into the hands of the Saracens, when it sunk into ignorance and superstition, the Mahometan religion being established in it, with whom it continued until about the year of Christ 1250; when the Mamalucks, or Turkish and Carcassian slaves, rose up against their sovereigns, the sultans of Egypt, and usurped the government, in whose hands it was until the year 1517; when Selim the ninth, emperor of the Turks, conquered the Mamalucks, and put an end to their government, and annexed it to the Ottoman empire; of which it is a province to this day^{f522}, being governed by a Turkish basha, with twenty four begs or princes under him, who are raised, from being servants, to the administration of public affairs; and so it is become a base kingdom indeed, if to be called one^{f523}.

Ver. 15. *And it shall be the basest of the kingdoms*, &c.] That belonged to the Persian monarchy, or to the Macedonian empire, being more kept under than the rest, lest it should regain its former strength and glory; though it became more famous in the times of some of the Ptolemies, yet never recovered its former greatness; and is now exceeding base indeed, as appears from the preceding note:

neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations; so as to conquer them, and make them tributary to it, as it had done:

for I will demolish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations; for though they made war upon other nations in the time of the Lagidae, yet they did not subdue them, and annex them to their kingdom, being much weakened both as to men and money.

Ver. 16. *And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel*, &c.] It having been treacherous to them, and moreover subdued by the Chaldeans, the Jews, even after their return from captivity, put no more confidence in them; it being now become as it is here prophesied it would, the basest of the kingdoms, more weak, and in a more abject state, than the rest, and so despised by its neighbours, as it was by the Jews:

which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them; as they had done in time past, when they looked after them for help, and expected it from them, and trusted in them, and served their idols; which brought to the Lord's remembrance former iniquities and idolatries, for which he punished them; but now they should do so no more:

but they shall know that I am the Lord God; not the Egyptians, but the Israelites; who being returned from captivity, shall acknowledge and serve the only true God, and no more worship the idols of the nations.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year*, &c.] Of Jeconiah's captivity; or of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana, from Seder Olam Rabba^{f524}, observe; though it was in the thirty fifth year of his reign that Tyre was taken by him; and after that Egypt was given him:

in the first month, in the first day of the month: the month Nisan, which answers to part of March, and part of April. According to Bishop Usher^{f525}, it was on the twentieth of April, on the third day of the week (Tuesday), in 3432 A.M. or before Christ 572. Mr. Whiston^{f526} makes it to be a year sooner. This prophecy is not put in its proper place, as to order of time, since it was sixteen or seventeen years after the preceding, and the last of Ezekiel's prophecies; but is here placed, because it relates to the same subject as the former, the destruction of Egypt.

The word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows:

Ver. 18. *Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon*, &c.] The same with Nebuchadnezzar; he goes by both names in Scripture, nor is the difference very great:

caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus; in besieging it thirteen years^{f527} before he was able to take it; during which time his army suffered much hardship, was greatly fatigued and wearied, by the various military works they were engaged in, to carry on the siege so long a time:

every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: the heads of the soldiers became bald with wearing their helmets so long, or carrying baskets of earth and timber upon them, to make mounts with; and the skin of their shoulders was peeled off, either with their armour, or by carrying burdens on them for the above purpose; or, as Jerom says, from the Assyrian annals, to make a causeway to join the island to the continent, that so they might come at it with their battering rams, and demolish it:

yet hath he no wages; nor his army, for Tyrus; for besieging it; for, as the same Jerom observes when the Tyrians found that the city was like to be taken by him, their gold and silver, and whatsoever was valuable that was with them, they put on and sent it to other islands; or, as others say, that

when Tyre on the continent, which was what Nebuchadnezzar besieged, was about to be taken, the inhabitants transplanted their riches to the island at some distance, where new Tyre was afterwards built; however, what with the consumption of their riches during this thirteen years' siege, and the removing their effects to other places before the taking of the city there was scarce anything left for the plunder of king of Babylon's army, so that he and that had nothing to requite them:

for the service that he had served against it: it must have cost him a great deal of money to support such a numerous army for so long a time, as well as the siege was very toilsome and laborious; and yet, when the city was taken, there was nothing found in it to answer this expense and labour.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Since this was the case, that the king of Babylon had been working for nothing, and had spent much blood and treasure, as well as time, to little purpose and advantage to himself;

behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; which will make him a sufficient recompence for his loss of time, men, and money, before Tyre; and though the conquest of Egypt was made easy to him, by the internal divisions and wars which were among the Egyptians; yet these were suffered, and ordered by the providence of God, to bring about this his will, by way of righteous punishment of the Egyptians, for their treachery to his people, and other sins:

and he shall take her multitude, of soldiers, and of inhabitants, and carry them captive:

and take her spoil, and take her prey; that which the Egyptians had spoiled other nations of and made a prey of that should now become the spoil and prey of the Chaldeans:

and it shall be the wages for his army; with this the king of Babylon would be able to pay off the arrears of his army; which had lain so long against Tyre; or this would be a recompence to them for all the hardships they there sustained.

Ver. 20. *I have given him the land of Egypt for labour wherewith he served against it,* That is, against Tyre; meaning not Nebuchadnezzar merely or only, but his army also, who did the main of the service and

labour, and had the plunder of the country for it; though the kingdom itself was given to their king, and annexed to his monarchy:

because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God; not intentionally, but eventually; they did not design to do any service for God; they only sought to serve themselves with the riches and wealth of those they subdued; and yet while they besieged Tyre, and when they took it, and while they were ravaging, plundering, and subduing Egypt, they were doing the Lord's will and work, and executing his righteous judgments on these enemies of his for their sins; wherefore he rewarded them sufficiently: none ever are employed by him but he gives them their wages; even though they are wicked and ungodly men, verily they have their reward.

Ver. 21. *In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, &c.*] Not at the time of Egypt's destruction, unless it can be thought that this refers to the advancement of Daniel in the court of Babylon; or to the taking of Jehoiachin out of prison, and setting his throne above the rest of the kings; which events came to pass a little after this: but rather this respects the time of Egypt's restoration forty years after, when Cyrus came to the throne, and proclaimed liberty to the Jews to return to their own land, and build their city and temple, under the government of Zerubbabel their prince: besides, it may not be limited to either of these times, but may regard the famous day, when the kingdom of Israel, in a spiritual sense, should flourish under the Messiah, the Horn of salvation, and Branch of David, often promised to bud forth, and was fulfilled in Jesus, (⁴¹²¹⁷Psalm 132:17 ⁴²¹⁵Jeremiah 23:5 ⁴⁰⁶⁸Luke 1:68,69). The Targum is, "in that day will I bring redemption to the house of Israel."

And I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; in prophecy among them, as the Targum; who after this, might deliver other prophecies, though we have no account of them; or he should have boldness and courage when he and they should see his prophecies fulfilled, by which it would appear that he was a true prophet of the Lord:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; who sent the prophet, and from whom he had these prophecies, and by whom they were fulfilled.

CHAPTER 30

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 30

This chapter is a continuation of the prophecy against Egypt, both against the country and the king of it. It is introduced with expressions of lamentation, because of the destruction coming on, (³⁰⁰¹Ezekiel 30:1-3), and not only Egypt, and the cities thereof, should be destroyed, but all her friends, associates, and allies; the Ethiopians, Lydians, Lybians, and others, (³⁰⁰³Ezekiel 30:4-9). Nebuchadnezzar and his army were to be the instruments of her ruin, (³⁰⁰⁵Ezekiel 30:10-12), particular cities are mentioned by name, which should suffer much, and become desolate, (³⁰⁰⁷Ezekiel 30:13-19) and then Pharaoh king of Egypt himself is threatened with broken arms, and his people to be scattered among the nations, (³⁰⁰⁹Ezekiel 30:20-23), and the king of Babylon is again mentioned, whose arms should be strengthened to do all this, (³⁰¹¹Ezekiel 30:24-26).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came again unto me, &c.*] Whether this prophecy was delivered about the time of that in the former part of the preceding chapter, namely, in the tenth year, tenth month, and twelfth day of it; or whether about the time that was which is recorded in the latter part of the chapter, in the seven and twentieth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, is not easy to say; I am inclined to think it was about the time of the latter, since the time of the fulfilment of it is said to be near, (³⁰⁰³Ezekiel 30:3):

saying: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy and say, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Prophecy against Egypt's king and inhabitants, and in the name of the Lord thus speak against them:

howl ye; ye Egyptians, and also ye Ethiopians, and all others after named, which should share in the destruction of Egypt; this is said to give them notice of it, and prepare them for it:

woe worth the day! or, “alas for the day!”^{f528} O the unhappy day! what a sad dismal day is this! O that we should ever live to see such wretched times!

Ver. 3. *For the day is near*, &c.] The day of Egypt’s destruction, the time fixed for it:

even the day of the Lord is near; the day appointed by him, and in which he would make himself known by the judgments he executed: Kimchi observes, that, the same year this prophecy was delivered, Egypt was given into the hands of the king of Babylon:

a cloudy day; or; “a day of cloud”^{f529}; which was seldom seen in Egypt in a literal sense, rarely having any rain, their country being watered by the Nile; but now, in a figurative sense, the clouds would gather thick and black, and threaten with a horrible tempest of divine wrath, and of ruin and destruction:

it shall be the time of the Heathen: both when the Heathen nation of the Chaldeans should distress and conquer others; and when Heathen nations, as the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and others, should be destroyed by them. The Targum is,

“it shall be the time of the breaking or destruction of the people.”

Ver. 4. *And the sword shall come upon Egypt*, &c.] The sword of the Chaldeans shall come upon the Egyptians, by which they should be cut off; it having a commission from the Lord for that purpose:

and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt; Ethiopia being a neighbouring nation to Egypt, shall be in a panic when it shall hear of the sword of the Chaldeans being in Egypt, and of the ravages made by it, of the multitudes slain with it; fearing it will be their turn next to fall into the same hands, and in the same manner; and the rather, not only as they were neighbours, but allies:

and they shall take away her multitude; that is, the Chaldeans shall carry captive vast numbers of the Egyptians; such as fell not by the sword should not escape the hand of the enemy, but be taken and carried into other lands. Egypt was a very populous country; according to Agrippa’s speech in Josephus^{f530}, there were in it 7,500,000 persons from Ethiopia to Alexandria, besides the inhabitants of the latter, as might be gathered from

the tribute each person paid; hence they are compared to the trees of a forest that cannot be searched, and to grasshoppers innumerable, (^{<2463>}Jeremiah 46:23), but now their numbers should be lesser:

and her foundations shall be broken down; either in a literal sense, the foundations of the cities, towers, and fortified places in Egypt, should be undermined and destroyed, and consequently the buildings on them must sink and fall; or in a figurative sense, her king, princes, magistrates, laws, and government, which are the support of a state, should be removed, and be of no more service.

Ver. 5. *Ethiopia, Lybia, and Lydia*, &c.] Or, “Cush, Phut, and Lud”. Cush and Phut were both sons of Ham, from whom Egypt is sometimes called the land of Ham; and Lud or Ludim was the son of Mizraim, the son of Ham, the common name of Egypt in Scripture, (^{<0106>}Genesis 10:6,13). Cush is by us rendered Ethiopia; and is thought by some to be a part of Arabia, which lay near to Egypt. Phut and Lud are properly enough rendered Lybia and Lydia; and both these, with Ethiopia, are represented as the allies and confederates of Egypt, (^{<2469>}Jeremiah 46:9).

And all the mingled people; the Syriac version renders it, “all Arabia”: and so Symmachus, according to Jerom; though others think they are the Carians, Ionians, and other Greeks, which Pharaohapries got together to fight with Amasis^{f531}: and “Chub”; or “Cub”; the inhabitants of this piece are thought to be the Cobii of Ptolemy^{f532}, who dwelt in Mareotis, a country of Egypt; though some, by a change of a letter, would have them to be the Nubians, a people in Africa; and so the Arabic version here reads it. Of these Strabo^{f533} says, on the left of the stream of the Nile dwell the Nubians, a large nation in Lybia; and which he afterwards mentions along with the Troglodytes, Blemmyes, Megabarians, and Ethiopians, that dwell above Syene: and so Ptolemy^{f534} speaks of them along with the Megabarians, and as inhabiting to the west of the Avalites: and Pliny^{f535} calls them Nubian Ethiopians, whom he places near the Nile: and a late traveller^{f536} in those parts informs us that the confines of Egypt and Nubia are about eight miles above the first cataract (of the Nile); Nubia begins at the villages of Ellkalabsche, and of Teffa; the first is to the east of the Nile, and the second to the west.

And the men of the land that is in league shall fall with them by the sword; all the nations above mentioned, with whomsoever should be found that were confederates with Egypt, should share the same fate with them. The

Septuagint render it, “and those of the children of my covenant”; as if the Jews were meant that were in Egypt, who are sometimes called “the children of the covenant”, and of “the promise”, (~~4125~~Acts 3:25 ~~4108~~Romans 9:8), and so some interpret the place; but it takes in all the allies of Egypt, and does not design the Jews, at least not them only.

Ver. 6. *Thus saith the Lord, they also that uphold Egypt shall fall, &c.*] That is, by the sword; either their allies and auxiliaries without, that supported the Egyptians with men and money; or their principal people within, their nobles that supported their state with their estates, their counsellors with their wisdom, their soldiers with their valour and courage:

and the pride of her power shall come down; or the power they were proud of, the dominion and grandeur they boasted of; the greatness of their king, and the largeness of their empire, with the wealth and riches of it:

from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord God; or rather, from “Migdol to Syene”; so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, from one end of Egypt to the other; the sword would ravage, and multitudes fall by it, in all cities and towns, between the one and the other; which denotes the general slaughter that should be made; (see Gill on ~~3290~~Ezekiel 29:10”).

Ver. 7. *And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, &c.*] Or among them, shall be ranked with them, and be as desolate as they are; as Judea and other countries, ravaged by the same enemy:

and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted; undergo the same fate as they have done, as Jerusalem and others. The cities of Egypt were very numerous; Diodorus Siculus^{f537} says, that in ancient times Egypt had cities and villages of note, more than 18,000. Herodotus^{f538} writes, that it was said, that under King Amasis there were 20,000 cities in it; and the first mentioned writer^{f539} says, under Ptolemy Lagus they were reckoned more than 30,000; and, according to Theocritus^{f540}, under Ptolemy Philadelphus they were 33,339.

Ver. 8. *And they shall know that I am the Lord, &c.*] The Egyptians shall know the Lord to be the true God, and acknowledge him to be omniscient and omnipotent, that should so exactly foretell their destruction, and accomplish it:

when I have set a fire in Egypt: a war there; the heat of battle, very devouring and consuming, as well as very grievous and terrible, as fire is. The Targum is,

“when I shall give (or set) people that are strong as fire against Egypt;”

the army of the Chaldeans:

and when all her helpers shall be destroyed; her auxiliaries, the neighbouring nations in alliance with them, before mentioned.

Ver. 9. *In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships*, &c.] Either by the river Nile, or by the Red sea, to Arabia Felix, which some think is meant by Ethiopia. Cush or Ethiopia was encompassed about with water, so that there was no coming to it but by ships; (see ^{<101B>}Genesis 2:13), compare with this (^{<238B>}Isaiah 18:1,2), the messengers here were either such who under a divine impulse, or however by the providence of God, were directed to go to Ethiopia, and tell them the news of the destruction of Egypt; or these were messengers sent by the king of Babylon, to demand a surrender of their country to him; or it may design him himself, and his army, who marched thither to subdue that country also, after the conquest of Egypt. So the Targum,

“at that time messengers shall go forth from before me with legions;”

and because all this was by the appointment and providence of God, they are represented as messengers sent by him:

to make the careless Ethiopians afraid; with the news of the fall of Egypt their confederate, and of a mighty army coming against them; who had dwelt securely and confidently, at ease and unconcerned, without any sense of danger, or fear of any enemy:

and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt; either as of old, when the plagues were on Egypt, and especially when they were drowning in the Red sea; or as of late, when the sword was in Egypt, and ravaging there:

for, lo, it cometh; the same day was coming on them as came on Egypt, the day of the Lord, a cloudy one, and the time of the Heathen; it was certain, just at hand, and there was no escaping it; (see ^{<260B>}Ezekiel 30:3,4).

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will make the multitude of Egypt to cease*, &c.] The vast numbers of people that inhabited Egypt; some of its cities were very populous, especially the city No, after mentioned; but now the numbers should be greatly lessened, and the whole land sadly depopulated: or the “noise”^{f541}, “tumult”, and hurry of it; which is very great where there are large numbers of people, and which ceases when they are cut off. The Syriac version renders it, the riches of Egypt. Now the instrument God would make use of to do all this is mentioned by name, as follows,

by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; the then greatest monarch in the world.

Ver. 11. *He and his people with him*, &c.] He and his army, consisting chiefly of Chaldeans; though there were of other nations among them, as were in his army when he besieged Jerusalem, as seems to be suggested in the next clause:

the terrible of the nations shall be brought to destroy the land; the Chaldeans, the most fierce, cruel, and terrible of all people, and others the most terrible that could be collected out of all nations under the yoke of the king of Babylon; and all of them terrible to the nations against whom they came, as now against Egypt to destroy it; (see ~~3006~~ Habakkuk 1:6,7):

and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain; go through the land with their drawn swords, and kill all they meet; and not put them up till they have quite depopulated the land, and filled it with dead carcasses.

Ver. 12. *And I will make the rivers dry*, &c.] Egypt was a country that abounded with rivers; however, with canals cut from the river Nile; its wealth and riches very much depended here on, partly on account of the multitude of fishes taken out of them, and the paper reeds that grew upon their banks; but chiefly because the whole land, was watered by them, and made exceeding fruitful, rain being not so common in it; so that to dry up the riven was in effect to take away their substance and dependence; besides, hereby the way was made easy and passable for the enemy; there was nothing to obstruct him, he could overrun and ravage the land at pleasure:

and sell the land into the hand of the wicked; the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, who were wicked idolaters, men of flagitious lives, and

of merciless and cruel dispositions; who would show no favour to the inhabitants of the land, when delivered up to them, which is called a selling it; for, as things sold are delivered to the buyer, so should this land be to them; which though they had no right to it before, yet by the event of war, and disposal of divine Providence, came to have a property in it, given them by him who is the proprietor of all lands; and after them into the hands of the Persians, under Cambyses, and Ochus; who were very wicked and cruel princes, and may be reckoned among the terrible or violent ones of the nations in the preceding verse; and then into the hands of the Grecian, Romans, Saracen, Mamaluck, and now the Turks, all very wicked people:

and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers; the Babylonians, people of another country and distant, of another language, and with whom they had no commerce, alliance, and friendship, and so would not spare them, and their land, when in their possession; and so all the rest above mentioned, into whose hands they successively fell:

I the Lord have spoken it; determined it, prophesied of it; and it shall come to pass, as it did accordingly.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, &c.]* With which Egypt abounded, making an idol of all sorts of creatures, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, and in which they trusted; wherefore these being destroyed, they had nothing to put their confidence in:

I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; called Moph, (^{<2896>}Hosea 9:6) and which we there rightly render Memphis, as many versions do here, and was very famous for idolatry: here stood the temple of Serapis, and the temple of other idols; here Isis and Osiris were worshipped; and it was in Jerom's time, as he says, the metropolis of the Egyptian superstition. It was built by Menes^{f542}, the Mizraim of the Scriptures, the first king of Egypt; though Diodorus Siculus^{f543} makes Uchoreus to be the founder of it. Some interpreters take this city to be the same with what is now called Alkair, or Grand Cairo; or, however, that this is built upon the same spot, or near the same place that was, in which I have followed them on (^{<2893>}Isaiah 19:13 ^{<2426>}Jeremiah 2:16) whereas Cairo stands right over against old Memphis, the Nile being between them, on the east side of it, and Memphis on the west; as is clear from Herodotus^{f544}, and from the charts of Dr. Shaw, and Mr. Norden; and who observe, that some take the place

of it to have been where a village now stands, Dr. Shaw calls Geza, and Mr. Norden Gize:

and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt; that is, a native of that country; or that should rule over the whole of it, and in that grandeur the kings of Egypt had before; or, however, not dwell in Memphis, which was the seat of the kings of Egypt, but now should be so no more: when Egypt was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, it was under the Babylonians; and then under the Persians; and then under the Greeks; and afterwards under the Romans; since under the Saracens and Mamalucks; and now in the hands of the Turks; so that it never recovered its former glory; and indeed, after Nectanebus was driven out of it by Ochus, king of Persia, it never after had a king:

and I will put a fear in all the land of Egypt; a panic in all the inhabitants of it; as soon as they shall hear of the king of Babylon entering into it, their courage, bravery, and fortitude, shall at once leave them, and they shall be dispirited, and have no heart to defend themselves, and oppose the enemy.

Ver. 14. *And I will make Pathros desolate,* &c.] A country in Egypt; (see Gill on “⁴³⁹⁴Ezekiel 29:14”), perhaps it was the first place that Nebuchadnezzar entered, and so went from place to place in the order hereafter mentioned:

and I will set fire in Zoan; or Tunis, a famous city in Egypt in the times of Moses, (⁴¹³²Numbers 13:22 ⁴⁷⁸²Psalms 78:12,43). The Targum and Septuagint version call it Tanis here; and from hence a nome in Egypt was called the Tanitic nome. This city was burnt down by the king of Babylon: the place now built on the spot is called Mansourah, as Dr. Shaw^{f545} says:

and I will execute judgment in No. The Vulgate Latin version renders it Alexandria; and so does the Targum; of which place Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret it; and so does Jerom; which, though built after these times by Alexander, and called so after his name, yet is supposed to be built on or near the place where ancient No stood. The city is now called Scanderoon, or Scanderea; the Turks calling Alexander Scander: here the judgments of God were executed in the destruction of it by the Chaldean army; and great devastations have been made in it since it was rebuilt by Alexander, by the Saracens, who destroyed all places where they came; so that, as Dr. Shaw^{f546} observes, it is somewhat extraordinary that the greatest part of the ancient walls, together with their respective turrets,

should have continued entire quite down to this time. The Septuagint version calls it Diospolis, or the city of Jupiter, as does the Arabic version, that is, of Jupiter Hammon; the city of Thebes, where he was worshipped; as it is in a following verse called Hammon No; though Hillerus^{f547} thinks neither of these places are meant, neither Alexandria nor Diospolis; but Memphis, as it is rendered by the Septuagint in the next verse; (see Gill on “Na 3:8”).

Ver. 15. *And I will pour out my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt, &c.*] Either the city Sais, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; or rather Pelusium, as the Vulgate Latin version, so called from “pelos” which signifies “clay” in the Greek language; and the same “Sin” signifies in the Chaldee, (^{<P18B>}Psalm 18:43), and as now called Tineh, from ^ˆyj, “clay”: it had a very fine haven, and may be called the strength of Egypt, it lying at the entrance of it; and having a strong fortified tower, it was difficult to enter into it; but could not stand before the wrath and fury of the Lord of hosts, when he sent the Chaldeans to it. It is thought by some to be the same with Pithom, built by the first of the pastor kings of Egypt, and fortified by him, (^{<M11>}Exodus 1:11), according to Manetho^{f548}, he put into it a garrison of two hundred and forty thousand men; and the same writer says it contained ten thousand acres of land; according to Adrichomius^{f549}, it was two and a half miles in compass, and near it was a vast hollow, which extended to Mount Cassius, and which made the way into Egypt on that side difficult; and is now, as he says, called “campus de Gallo”; in which he is mistaken, as well as Thevenot, and others, who take it to be the same with Damietta:

and I will cut off the multitude of No; the numerous inhabitants of it; hence called “populous No”, (Na 3:8), or “Hamon No”; (see Gill on “^{<A14>}Ezekiel 30:14”); here, as before observed, the Septuagint version renders it Memphis; as does also the Arabic version. Some take it, as before, to be the Egyptian Thebes, where was a temple dedicated to Jupiter Hammon; and which city, Pausanias^{f550} says, was reduced to nothing in his time.

Ver. 16. *And I will set fire in Egypt, &c.*] Kindle a war there, which shall consume it; (see ^{<A18>}Ezekiel 30:8):

Sin shall have great pain; as a woman in travail, seeing its destruction is just at hand; the same with Pelusium, as before:

and No shall be rent asunder, the walls of it shall be broken down by the enemy, or a breach shall be made in it, like the breach of waters which were about it; (see Na 3:8):

and Noph shall have distresses daily: that is, Memphis, as before; enemies shall surround it daily, as the Targum; shall besiege and distress it, until it is taken: or, “in the daytime”; their enemies should not come as thieves in the night, openly in the day. Abendana interprets it of their unfortunate day, their star being unlucky.

Ver. 17. *The young men of Aven and of Phibeseth shall fall by the sword, &c.*] Aven is the same with On, of which Potipherah was priest in Joseph’s time and whose daughter he married, (⁰⁴⁴⁵Genesis 41:45), the same with Heliopolis, or Bethshemesh, the city of the sun, (see ²⁴⁸¹³Jeremiah 43:13), (see Gill on “²⁴⁸¹³Jeremiah 43:13”); where was the temple of the sun, and where it was worshipped; and so it is rendered by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions. It is called here “Aven”, or “vanity”, because of the vain and idolatrous worship here performed. Phibeseth is the Bubastis of Herodotus, and called by other writers Bubastus; hence there was a nome or province in Egypt called the Bubastic nome, mentioned by Ptolemy^{f551}, and others. In this was a temple built to the honour of Diana, where she was worshipped and Herodotus^{f552} says, that Bubastis, in the Greek tongue, is Diana; here she was worshipped in the form of a cat; and Stephanus^{f553} observes, that the Egyptians call a cat Bubastus; and it is also said that dead cats salted were buried in this city, as being sacred: according to Diodorus Siculus^{f554}, it was built for the sake of Isis; and Hillerus^{f555} says, that in the Abyssine language it was called “Phy’ mly’ sith”; that is, the portion of the wife, namely of Isis married to Osiris, by whom this city was built to the honour of her; as appears by the pillar of Isis, on which these words are inscribed,

“for me the city of Bubastia is built; be glad, be glad, O Egypt, which brought me up.”

This place is now called Bishbesh, according to Dr. Shaw^{f556}: now the young men of both these places, though they might exert themselves in the defence of them, yet should fail therein, and fall by the sword of the Chaldeans:

and these cities shall go into captivity; the rest of the inhabitants of the cities of Aven and Pibeseth, that shall not fall by the sword, shall be carried

captive into other lands. Joseph Kimchi supplies “women” instead of “cities”; and thinks, that as the males are mentioned before, the females are understood here. The Targum is,

“they that served them shall go into captivity;”

that served the idols worshipped in these cities.

Ver. 18. *At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened*, &c.] The same with Hanes in (^{230d}Isaiah 30:4) and Tahapanes in (^{241e}Jeremiah 2:16) and Tahpanhes, (^{243f}Jeremiah 43:7-9), it was a royal seat of the kings of Egypt: there was in Solomon’s time a queen of Egypt of this name, and perhaps it might be so called from her, (^{4111b}1 Kings 11:19,20). It is generally thought to be the Daphne of Pelusium, it being near that city; though Junius takes it to be a place in another part of Egypt, at a great distance, which Herodotus^{f557} calls Tahcompso, an island encompassed by the Nile; and by Ptolemy^{f558} called Metacompso: now at this place the day should be darkened; or should “restrain”^{f559}, as it may be rendered; that is, its light; it should be a calamitous and mournful time with the inhabitants of it:

when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt; the yokes they put upon the necks of others, who now should be freed from them: or, “the sceptres of Egypt”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; the regalia of their kings, which might lie in this place; it being a royal seat where Pharaoh had a house, as appears from (^{243b}Jeremiah 43:9):

and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her; all that grandeur and magnificence which appeared in the courts of the kings of Egypt in this place:

as for her, a cloud shall cover her; as for this city, a cloud of calamity shall cover it, so as its glory shall not be seen. The Targum is,

“a king with his army shall cover her as a cloud ascends and covers the earth:”

and her daughters shall go into captivity; which may be taken either in a literal sense for the daughters of the inhabitants of this place, which must be a great affliction to their tender parents, to have them forced away by rude soldiers, and carried captive into distant lands; or in a figurative sense, for the villages and the inhabitants of them round about this city; it being

usual to represent a city as a mother, and its villages as daughters; and so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi interpret it.

Ver. 19. *Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt, &c.*] In the several provinces, and in the several cities of it before mentioned, and in all other places; even the judgments of fire, famine, sword, and captivity:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; God omniscient and omnipotent, by the, judgments executed; and own the same: this more especially they did, when the Gospel was preached among them, and many were converted by it in the times of the apostles.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass in the eleventh year, &c.*] Of Zedekiah's reign, and Jehoiachin's captivity; some little time after the prophecy in (~~2391~~Ezekiel 19:1), here the prophecies come into their order again, being interrupted by those of a much later date, at the end of the preceding chapter, and the former part of this:

in the first month, in the seventh day of the month; the month Nisan, which answers to part of March, and part of April; the seventh day must be about the twenty ninth of March; but, according to Bishop Usher^{f560}, it was on the twenty sixth of April, on the third day of the week (Tuesday), in 3416 A.M. or before Christ 588: this was given out three months and two days before Jerusalem was taken:

that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows:

Ver. 21. *Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt, &c.*] Not Pharaohnecho, king of Egypt, whose army was overthrown at Carchemish by the king of Babylon, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; when the latter took from the former all that belonged to him between the river of Egypt and the river Euphrates; by which he was so weakened and dispirited, that he could not stir any more out of his own land, (~~2441~~Jeremiah 46:2 ~~1247~~2 Kings 24:7) and of him Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; but Pharaohhophra, or Apries, who was defeated by the Cyreneans, and saved himself by flight; (see Gill on "~~2394~~Ezekiel 29:4"):

and, lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it; a metaphor taken from chirurgeons, who, having set broken bones, put on a bandage or rollers of linen, or such like stuff, to keep them tight; but nothing of this kind should be done; hereby suggesting that Egypt should

receive such a blow or wound as would be incurable; (see ^{<3461>}Jeremiah 46:11):

to make it strong to hold the sword; which it should not be able to do, or to make war any more, at least with success, or to defend itself.

Ver. 22. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, &c.*] The then present king of Egypt, whose name was Hophra or Apries, (^{<3440>}Jeremiah 44:30):

and I will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken: both his arms, the sound and the broken one, his whole power, strength, and dominion; meaning that that part of his kingdom which lay between the two rivers of Egypt and Euphrates, that had been taken away by the king of Babylon, should remain so; and the other part of his kingdom should fall a prey to him also:

and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand; so that he should be so far from being so able to make use of the sword, that he should not be able to hold it; it should drop out of his hand; nor should he be able to take it up again, and make war, either offensive or defensive.

Ver. 23. *And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, &c.*] Among the several provinces of Babylon, and other places, where the Chaldeans should carry or send them:

and will disperse them through the countries: the same thing repeated in different words for the confirmation of it.

Ver. 24. *And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, &c.*] Give him a commission to make war; direct his councils; supply him with all necessaries; animate and encourage his soldiers; and give him success in all his enterprises:

and put my sword in his hand; which confirms the above sense, that he should have power and authority from the Lord to attack the king of Egypt, and should gain a victory over him; since it was not his own sword he drew, but the sword of the Lord of hosts; which coming from him, and having his commission, cannot fail of doing execution;

but will break Pharaoh's arms; as before in (^{<3502>}Ezekiel 30:21,22):

and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man; that is, before the king of Babylon; by whom, as an instrument, his arms shall be broken, and his power destroyed; and he be like a man in the agonies of death, just expiring, not able to speak, but groaning out his life under the inexpressible anguish of broken bones, and none to set them.

Ver. 25. *But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, &c.*] Which is repeated for the sake of confirmation:

and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down: as when a man's arms are broken; and he shall not be able to lift them up and defend himself:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; namely, the Egyptians, as in (²³⁰⁹Ezekiel 30:19):

when I shall have put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out on the land of Egypt; that is, when he shall have a commission to carry the war into Egypt; and he shall spread desolation over all the land, cutting off the inhabitants of it everywhere, as before described in this chapter.

Ver. 26. *And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries, &c.*] Of which they might assure themselves, since the Lord had before spoken it, and here again repeats it:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; whose name alone is Jehovah, and does whatsoever he pleases; sets up kings, and puts them down; strengthens and weakens kingdoms just as seems good in his sight; none having any power but what is given by him, and which he can take away when he thinks fit.

CHAPTER 31

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 31

This chapter contains a confirmation of the preceding prophecy, of the ruin of the king of Egypt, by the example of the king of Assyria, to whom he was like in grandeur and pride, and would be in his fall. The time of the prophecy is observed, (²⁶¹⁰Ezekiel 31:1), the prophet is ordered to give the following relation to the king of Egypt, (²⁶¹⁰Ezekiel 31:2) in which the king of Assyria is compared to a large and flourishing cedar, for the extent of his dominions, the prosperous state of his empire, and his exaltation above all other princes, which drew upon him their envy (²⁶¹⁰Ezekiel 31:3-9), wherefore because of his pride, his heart being lifted up with these things, (²⁶¹⁰Ezekiel 31:10), ruin came upon him; which is described by the instruments and manner of it, and the effects following it; mourning and fear in some, solace and comfort to others, and destruction to his associates, (²⁶¹¹Ezekiel 31:11-17), wherefore Pharaoh is called upon to consider all this, who was like to him in greatness and pride, and should have the like fate with him; nor could his greatness any more secure him than it did the Assyrian monarch, (²⁶¹⁸Ezekiel 31:18).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the eleventh year, &c.]* Of Zedekiah's reign, and Jeconiah's captivity:

in the third month, in the first day of the month: the month Sivan, which began on the twentieth of our May, and answers to part of May, and part of June; this was about seven weeks after the former prophecy, and about five weeks before the destruction of Jerusalem; according to Bishop Usher^{f561}, this was on the nineteenth of June, on the first day of the week, in 3416 A.M. or before Christ 588:

that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, &c.]* To Pharaohhophra, the then reigning king; not to him personally by word of mouth, for the prophet was now in Chaldea; but by delivering out a prophecy concerning him, and which he might have an opportunity of sending to him:

and to his multitude; the multitude of his subjects, of which he boasted, and in whom he trusted:

whom art thou like in thy greatness? look over all the records of time, and into all the empires, kingdoms, and states that have been; draw a comparison between thyself and the greatest potentate that ever was; fancy thyself to be equal to him; this will not secure thee from ruin and destruction; for as they have been humbled, and are fallen, so wilt thou be: pitch for instance on the Assyrian monarch, whose empire has been the most ancient, extensive, and flourishing, and yet now crushed; and as thou art like him in greatness, at least thou thinkest so, so thou art in pride, and wilt be in thine end; to assure of which is the drift of the following account of the king of Assyria.

Ver. 3. *Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon*, &c.] Here grew the tallest, most stately, broad and flourishing ones. This sense is, that he was as one of them; comparable to one, for his exaltation and dignity; for the largeness of his dominion, the flourishing circumstances of it, and its long duration; that empire having lasted from the times of Nimrod unto a few years of the present time; for this is to be understood, either of the monarchy itself, or of Esarhaddon; or rather of Chynilidanus, or Saracus, the last king of it. The Septuagint, and Arabic versions render it the “cypariss” in Lebanon; but not that, but the cedar, grew there, and which best suits the comparison:

with fair branches; meaning not children, nor nobles, nor subjects; but provinces, many and large, which were subject to this monarch:

and with a shadowing shroud; power, dominion, authority, a mighty army sufficient to protect all that were under his government, and subject to it:

and of an high stature: exalted above all the kings and kingdoms of the earth:

and his top was among the thick boughs; his kingly power, headship, and dominion, was over a multitude of petty princes and states, comparable to the thick boughs and branches of a tree: or, “among the clouds”; as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it; above the heights of which the Assyrian monarch attempted to ascend, (^{<23144>}Isaiah 14:14 ^{<27110>}Daniel 4:10-12).

Ver. 4. *The waters made him great, &c.*] The waters of the river Tigris, near to which stood the city of Nineveh, the metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy; the traffic brought by which river made it rich and great, and the whole empire, and the king of it:

the deep set him up on high, with her rivers running round about his plants; the vast trade by sea, the profits and commodities of which were conveyed through various rivers, which ran about the provinces of the empire, which were as plants in a field; and by which they were enriched, and the whole empire, and the king of it, were raised to a prodigious pitch of wealth and power:

and sent out little rivers to all the trees of the field; so that the common people, comparable to the trees of the field for their number and usefulness, all received profit and advantage hereby: or else by waters and the deep may be meant the multitude of people, as in (⁶⁶⁷⁵ Revelation 17:15), which increased his kingdom, filled his provinces, supplied his colonies, and enlarged his power and riches. The Targum is,

“by the people he was multiplied; by his auxiliaries he became strong; he subjected kings under his government; and his governors he appointed over all the provinces of the earth.”

Ver. 5. *Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, &c.*] His majesty, grandeur, and glory, were advanced above all princes, nobles, and people; all ranks and degrees of men, let them be compared to trees taller or lower:

and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long; the provinces of his empire became more numerous, and were spread far and near, and reached to distant countries:

because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth; either the vast number of people, which were daily increasing, and were sent out to people distant colonies, newly subdued or planted; or because of the great traffic which was carried on in different parts, and the advantages arising from it. The Targum is,

“therefore he was lifted up in his strength above all the kings of the earth, and his army was multiplied, and his auxiliaries prevailed over many people, through his victories”

Ver. 6. *All the fowls of the heavens made their nests in his boughs, &c.*] People from all parts of the world, under the whole heavens, flocked to his dominions, and settled themselves in one province or another; promising themselves protection, prosperity, and peace under his government:

and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young; even people of a more savage disposition, being either conquered by him, and placed in his provinces; or coming thither of their own accord, took up their residence there, built houses, planted vineyards, married wives, begat children, and settled their families there:

and under his shadow dwelt all great nations; under his protection, care, and government, many large kingdoms and states were; yea, all were either subject to him, or sought to be his friends and allies: this explains the above figurative expressions. The Targum is,

“by his army he subdued all the strong towers; and under his governors he subjected all the provinces of the earth; and in the shadow of his kingdom dwelt all the numerous people.”

Ver. 7. *Thus was he fair in his greatness, &c.*] Amiable, lovely, delightful to look upon in the greatness of his majesty, in his royal glory and dignity:

in the length of his branches; in the extent of his empire, and the provinces of it:

for his root was by great waters; his kingdom was well established, firmly rooted among a multitude of people; from whom he had a large revenue to support his throne and government, and the dignity of it; by tribute, taxes, customs, and presents; and through the large trade and traffic of his subjects in different parts, from whence he received great profit and advantage. The Targum is,

“and he became victorious by his auxiliaries, by the multitude of his mighty ones, so that his terror was upon many people.”

Ver. 8. *The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him, &c.*] That is, could not rise so high as this cedar, and overtop him, and obscure his glory; even those that were most excellent, which grew in Eden, near to which Babylon stood, and where a mighty king dwelt. The sense is, that the greatest kings and potentates in the whole world, which is like a garden

planted by the Lord, were not equal to the king of Assyria, and much less exceeded him in grandeur, wealth, and power:

the fir trees were not like his boughs: lesser kings and princes, comparable to fir trees for the beauty, regularity, order, and flourishing condition of their kingdoms; yet these were but petty states, and not to be compared even with the provinces of the king of Assyria:

and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; lesser states still: which, though well set, and well spread, and full of people, yet not answerable to some countries that were in the provinces that belonged to the Assyrian empire:

not any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty; no king, prince, or potentate whatever in the whole world, was to be compared to him for royal majesty and greatness. The Targum is,

“mighty kings could not prevail against him, because of the strength of his power, which he had from the Lord; rulers could not stand before his army, and mighty men could not prevail against his auxiliaries, because of the strength of power he had from the Lord; there is none like to him in his strength.”

Ver. 9. *I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches, &c.*] Or provinces, the extensiveness of his dominions: all his power and strength, riches and wealth, grandeur and glory, and the vast dominions he was possessed of, were all from the Lord; as whatever kings have are, though they are too apt to ascribe it to themselves; but all are from him, by whom kings reign:

so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him; all the kings of the earth, though they dared not openly speak against him, or oppose him; yet they inwardly grieved at and secretly grudged his grandeur and majesty, superior to theirs, and wished themselves in his stead; and could gladly have done anything, were it in their power, to eclipse his glory, and bring him lower. This is the case of all that are in any eminence, or are conspicuous to others, or in any exalted station above others, be it what it will; whether they have superior gifts and endowments of mind; or greater riches, and larger possessions; or are in high places of honour, trust, and profit. The Targum is,

“I have made him beautiful by the multitude of his mighty ones; and all the kings of the east trembled before him, because of the strength of his power, which he had from the Lord.”

Ver. 10. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Having described the greatness of the Assyrian monarch; now follows the account of his fall, and the cause of it, pride:

because thou hast lifted up thyself in height; this is either an address to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who, though he did not rise up so high as the Assyrian monarch in glory and grandeur; yet he lifted up himself, and thought himself superior to any; which reason he must be brought down: or the words are directed to the Assyrian monarch, by a change of person frequent in Scripture; who, though he was raised by the Lord to the height of honour and dignity he was, yet ascribed it to himself:

and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs; the multitude of provinces over which he became head and governor; (see Gill on “²³¹⁰⁸Ezekiel 31:3”):

and his heart is lifted up in his height; with pride, insolence, and contempt of God and men; of which see the instances in (²³¹⁰⁸Isaiah 10:8-15 36:18-20 37:10-13).

Ver. 11. *I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the Heathen, &c.*] Or, into the hand of the mightiest of the nations^{f562}; the mightiest prince among them. Some understand this of Arbaces the Mede, by whom Sardanapalus had been defeated long before this time: others of Merodachbaladan king Babylon, by whom Esarhaddon the Assyrian monarch was vanquished; or rather Nebuchadnezzar, who was called Nabopolassar; who, in the first year^{f563} of his reign, in conjunction with Cyaxares king of Media, took Nineveh, the metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy; and this was by the appointment of God, and under the direction of his providence, and through the success he gave to the arms of these princes, according to his own decrees and prophecies. Some render it, “into the hand of the god of the nations”^{f564}; yet meaning either Cyaxares or Nebuchadnezzar; so called because of their great power and might, and which they had from the Lord:

he shall surely deal with him; or, “in doing he shall do to him”^{f565}; he shall do with him as he pleases he shall easily manage him, though so powerful;

and deal with him according to his deserts; or, as the Targum, he shall take vengeance on him, as he did:

I have driven him out for his wickedness; out of his court and palace; out of his royal city Nineveh; out of his kingdom and dominions; and he shall reside and reign no more there; and all this for his wickedness, pride, and oppression, and other sins: when God strips men of their honour, riches, power, and dominion, it is because of their abuse of them; for some sin, or sins, or wickedness they have been guilty of, both against him and men; and therefore it is but just and righteous in him to dethrone such princes, and drive them from their seats.

Ver. 12. *And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, &c.]*

Cut off the boughs and branches of this cedar, and cut him down to the ground; that is, utterly destroyed him, his empire and monarchy: these “strangers” were the Medes, who lived in a country distant from Assyria; and “the terrible of the nations”, the cruel and merciless Chaldeans, the soldiers of the king of Babylon’s army; (see ²⁵¹Ezekiel 30:11):

and have left him upon the mountains, like a tree cut down there, and its boughs and branches lopped off, which roll down from thence into the valleys, and by the rivers of water signifying his depression from a high and exalted state to a very low one, as follows:

and in all the valley his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; signifying that many provinces and countries under his dominion were broken off, and by force taken away from him; or they broke off and revolted of themselves, and either set up for themselves, and recovered their former power and authority; or gave up themselves to the conqueror. The Targum is,

“and in all valleys his army fell, and his auxiliaries were scattered by all the rivers of the land.”

and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him: those that joined themselves to his empire, put themselves under his protection, or sought his friendship and alliance, now withdrew themselves from him, and left him alone to shift for himself; as frightened birds and beasts will do, when a tree is cut down and fallen, in the boughs or under the shadow of which they dwelt. The Targum paraphrases it,

“from the shadow of his kingdom.”

Ver. 13. *Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, &c.]* Or, “on his fall”^{f566}; the fall of this tree: and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches as when a tree is cut down, and its lopped off branches and boughs lie here and there, either the birds and beasts that before dwelt in it or under it, though for a while frightened away, return unto it; or others come: the birds come and sit upon the boughs, and pick up what they can find on them; and the beasts browse upon the branches: this may signify that even those people who before put themselves under the protection of this monarch, or sought alliance with him, now preyed upon his dominions; or the Medes and Babylonians, the conquerors, seized on the provinces of the empire, and plundered them of their riches, The Targum understands it literally of the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, feeding upon the carcasses of the slain; which is no bad sense of the passage; thus,

“upon the fall of his slain all the fowls of heaven have dwelt, and upon the carcasses of his army all the beasts of the field have rested.”

Ver. 14. *To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, &c.]* The end proposed by the Lord in the destruction of the king of Assyria, and the use to be made of it, is this; that the kings of the earth take warning hereby, who rule over a multitude of people, comparable to waters, and who abound in riches and wealth; that they are not elated with pride and vanity, because of their exalted estate, their grandeur, and dignity; and do not behave insolently against God, on whom they depend; nor haughtily and in an oppressive manner towards their own subjects, over whom they rule:

neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs; affect universal monarchy, as he did; and set up themselves over all kingdoms and states, as he had over them, and make all subject to them:

neither their trees stand up in their height, that drink water; that is, kings and potentates, who rule over the people, and are supplied and supported by them in their exalted stations, by the tribute and taxes they pay them and so abound in riches and power, should not trust in the height of honour and power they are raised to, and treat contemptuously God and man; but consider what they are, that they are but men, and are in slippery places, where there is no standing long, and especially when death comes, as follows:

for they are delivered unto death in the nether parts of the earth; they are mortal by nature, as other men; they are appointed to die, and will be delivered into the hands of death, when the time is come, who will not spare them because of their crowns and sceptres; and when they will be laid in the grave, in the lowest parts of the earth, who used to sit upon elevated thrones of state:

in the midst of the children of men, with those that go down to the pit; the grave, where they are upon a level with the poorest and meanest of their subjects. The Targum is,

“that all the kings of the east might not be lifted up with their strength, nor exercise tyranny over the kingdoms; nor all that hold a kingdom lift up themselves in their own strength, for all are delivered unto death, &c.”

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God, in the day when he went down to the grave, &c.*] The Assyrian monarch; when his monarchy was destroyed, and he ceased to be king, and was stripped of all his majesty, power, and authority, and was as one dead, and laid in the grave, and buried:

I caused a mourning: that is, for him, in the waters, and among the trees, among the people and the kings of the earth, as follows:

I covered the deep for him; with mourning, with thick darkness, which set him up on high (²⁵¹⁰⁴Ezekiel 31:4):

and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed; which made him great, (²⁵¹⁰⁴Ezekiel 31:4), signifying by all this that the kingdoms of the world, comparable to the sea, of which his monarchy consisted, and all the inhabitants and people of them, comparable to floods and great waters, were affected with the fall of this great monarch, and thrown into consternation by it; not knowing what the event of things would be, stood still, and knew not what course to take; all business was stopped, especially all traffic by sea, and all trade and commerce every where; a stagnation of everything for a while:

and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him; where he was a cedar, (²⁵¹⁰³Ezekiel 31:3), this may respect the whole empire he was head of, particularly the kingdom of Syria, on the borders of which Lebanon was; and was a part of the Assyrian empire, which must mourn and be concerned at the fall of it:

and all the trees of the field fainted for him: all the kings of the earth that were in alliance with him, or subject to him, trembled for fear that their destruction would be next; or as doubtful and concerned what would be their condition, under the yoke of another. The Targum is,

“tribulation covered the world, and the provinces were forsaken, and many people trembled, and all the kings of the people smote the shoulder because of him.”

Ver. 16. *I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, &c.]* As, when a large cedar was cut down and fell in Lebanon, the noise of it was heard at a distance; so when this mighty monarch and monarchy fell, the nations of the world, and the kings of them, heard of it far and near, and shook through fear of what would be the consequence, lest they should fall also in like manner:

when I cast him down to hell, or “the grave”,

with them that descend into the pit; in common with other men that die, and are buried: it may refer to his subjects and soldiers that perished with him, who were slain by the sword, and were buried with him, and he with them; no distinction being made between them:

and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water; the greatest kings and potentates of the world, the chief and principal of the Assyrian empire; all that ruled over multitudes of people, and partook of their wealth and riches, and were supported in grandeur and dignity; who had been in the state of the dead before this time:

shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth; when they see so mighty a monarch depressed, and brought as low as they, into the same state of meanness and contempt; as it is some kind of solace for persons in distress to have partners with them: this is a poetic expression, representing the dead as rejoicing to see others in the same condition with themselves. The Targum is,

“all the kings of the east, the governors, and those that are rich in substance, all that hold a kingdom, are comforted in the lower part of the earth.”

Ver. 17. *They also went down to hell with him, &c.]* To the grave with him; many of his nobles, princes, generals, soldiers, and subjects:

unto them that be slain with the sword; to be buried and lie with them who had fallen by the sword, as a just punishment for their iniquities:

and they that were his arm; either that leaned on his arm, were dependents upon him; or his ministers, his instruments, whom he employed under him as his deputies, to govern the several provinces that belonged to him; or rather his allies and auxiliaries, who helped and assisted him on occasion:

that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the Heathen; in the midst of the nations subject to the Assyrian empire; such who put themselves under the protection of it, lived comfortably under it, and continued with it to the last; these shared the same fate as that did. The Targum is,

“his governors are broken, whom he strengthened in the midst of the kingdom.”

Ver. 18. *To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden?* &c.] Among all the kings and potentates of the earth; pitch on whom you will, say which of them all, even the greatest of them for majesty and glory, for wealth and riches, power and authority, and extent of dominion, you are equal to; name the king of Assyria, if you please, before described, though you are not equal to him; and if you were, this would not secure you from ruin; since, as great as he was, he fell, and so will you: this is said to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and is an application of the preceding parable to him; suggesting, that let him be as high as any ever was, or he could imagine himself to be:

yet shall thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth; the grave, and lie in the same depressed and humble state as the greatest monarchs that ever were on earth do:

thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised; the wicked, as the Targum; the uncircumcised in heart; who belong not to God, or his people, and have no communion with either, but are shut out of the kingdom of heaven, and have their portion with devils and damned spirits:

with them that be slain by the sword; in a way of judgment for their sins:

this is Pharaoh, and all his multitude, saith the Lord God; this account represents Pharaoh, his grandeur, his pride, and his ruin; this shows what will be the end of him, and of his numerous subjects. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “so will be Pharaoh”, &c. in like manner will he

fall, and all his people with him; for the Lord God has said it, and it shall assuredly come to pass. The Targum is,

“to whom art thou like now in glory and greatness among the kings of the east? and thou shall be brought down with the kings of the east into the lower part of the earth; in the midst of sinners thou shalt sleep, with those that are slain by the sword; this is Pharaoh, and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.”

CHAPTER 32

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 32

This chapter contains two more prophecies concerning the destruction of Egypt. The date of the first is given, (³²²¹Ezekiel 22:1), in which the king of Egypt is compared to a large fish taken in a net, and brought to land, and left on it, to be the prey of the fowls of the air and beasts of the field, (^{321D}Ezekiel 32:2-4), and the ruin of that kingdom is further amplified by the casting of it on the mountains and valleys; by the land flowing with its blood; by the darkness of the heavens; by the vexation in the hearts of many people; and by the amazement of kings and nations, (^{321B}Ezekiel 32:5-10), the means and instruments of all which will be the king of Babylon and his army, (³²¹¹Ezekiel 32:11,12), the devastation made by him, which would be such as would cause lamentation in other nations, is described, (³²¹³Ezekiel 32:13-16), then follows the other prophecy, whose date is given, (³²¹⁷Ezekiel 32:17), the prophet is bid to lament the fall of Egypt, which is represented under the funeral of a corpse, (³²¹⁸Ezekiel 32:18-20), saluted by those gone down to the grave before, or were become desolate; which are mentioned, to assure Egypt of its destruction, (³²²¹Ezekiel 32:21) as the Assyrian empire, and all its provinces, (³²²²Ezekiel 32:22,23), the Persians and Medes, with all their dominions, (³²²⁴Ezekiel 32:24,25), the posterity of Meshech and Tubal, or the Scythians, those warlike people, (³²²⁶Ezekiel 32:26-28), the Edomites, the princes of the north, and all the Zidonians, (³²²⁹Ezekiel 32:29,30) which would be a comfort, though a poor one to the king of Egypt and his subjects, to have such company with them, (³²³¹Ezekiel 32:31,32).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the twelfth year, &c.]* Of Jeconiah's captivity, above a year and a half after the taking of Jerusalem; the Syriac version reads in the eleventh year:

in the twelfth month, in the first day of the month; the month Adar, which answers to part of our February, and part of March; the Septuagint version reads it the tenth month: according to Bishop Usher^{f567}, this was on the twenty second of March, on the fourth day of the week (Wednesday), 3417 A.M. or 587 years before Christ:

that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, &c.]* Pharaohhophra, or Apries; say a funeral dirge for him; this is ordered, not out of honour and respect to him, or in compassion for his misery and ruin, but to assure him of it:

and say unto him, thou art like a young lion of the nations; for strength and fierceness, for cruelty and tyranny, which he exercised, not in one nation only, but in many; a lively emblem of the beast of Rome, spiritually called Egypt and Sodom, compared to a leopard, bear, and lion, (~~¶118~~ Revelation 11:8 13:2):

and thou art as a whale in the seas; or rather “like a crocodile”^{f568}, which was common in the rivers of Egypt, but not the whale; which also has not scales, nor does it go upon land, nor is it taken in a net; all which is said of this creature here, and in (~~¶398~~ Ezekiel 29:3,4) and to the crocodile there is an allusion in the name of Pharaoh, in the Arabic language, as Noldius from Camius observes^{f569}; (see ~~¶398~~ Ezekiel 29:3):

and thou camest forth with thy rivers; or, “by thy rivers”^{f570}; as the crocodile in the river Nile, by the arms of it, or canals made out of it, sometimes went out from thence to other parts: or, “out of thy rivers”^{f571} upon the land, as the crocodile does; so the king of Egypt went forth with his armies out of his own land, into other countries, to disturb them, as follows: or rather, “camest forth in thy rivers”^{f572}; as the crocodile puts forth its head out of the water for respiration:

and thou troublest the waters with thy feet, and foulest their rivers; just as the feet of men or beasts, in shallow waters, raise up the mud or clay at the bottom, and so foul them; this best agrees with the crocodile, which has feet; Grotius thinks, for this reason, the sea horse is intended; the meaning is, that Pharaoh with his soldiers entered other nations, made war upon them, and disturbed their peace and tranquillity. The Targum is,

“thou hast been strong among the people, as a whale in the seas, thou hast fought with thine army; and thou hast moved the people with thine auxiliaries, and thou hast wasted their provinces.”

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* The Lord God Almighty, who is able to manage this fierce and turbulent creature, this mighty monarch and disturber of the nations:

I will therefore spread out my net over thee with a company of many people; meaning the Chaldean army, which the Lord would instigate, and by his providence bring against the king of Egypt, and surround him as fishes in a net, and take him and his people; (see ³⁶²¹³Ezekiel 12:13 17:20):

and they shall bring thee up in my net; out of his rivers, out of his fortresses, out of his own land, and carry him captive, or destroy him.

Ver. 4. *Then will I leave thee upon the land*, &c.] Like a fish that is drawn out of the waters with a net or hook, and laid on dry land, and left gasping and expiring, where it cannot long live:

I will cast thee forth on the open field; the same in different words, signifying that his army should fall in battle by the sword of the Cyreneans, or Chaldeans, or both, and be left on the surface of the earth unburied:

and will cause all the fowls of the heavens to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee; which may be understood either literally of the fowls of the air, that should light upon the slain carcasses, and rest on them till they had satisfied themselves with their flesh; and of the beasts of the field that should gather about them from all parts, and fill themselves with them; (see ⁶⁶⁹⁷Revelation 19:17,18) or figuratively of the soldiers of the enemy's army, that should plunder them, and enrich themselves with the spoil.

Ver. 5. *And I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains*, &c.] The remainder of it, left by the birds and beasts of prey, and who might carry it thither; or it intends such of the Egyptians who should flee to the mountains for safety, but should fall by the hands of the enemy there. So the Targum,

“and I will give the flesh of thy slain upon the mountains.”

And fill the valleys with thy height; his huge army, and with which he prided and lifted up himself, and thought himself safe in; which should fall in such great numbers as to cover the plains and valleys where the battle was fought. Jarchi observes, that the word for “height” has with some the signification of “worms”; and so the Syriac version renders it, “and the valleys shall be filled with thy worms”; bred in the carcasses of the slain: and so the Vulgate Latin version, “with corrupt matter”; such as issues out of putrefied wounds. The Targum very rightly paraphrases it,

“the valleys shall be filled with the carcasses of thine army.”

Ver. 6. *And I will also water with thy blood the land wherewith thou swimmest, &c.*] Where he resided, over which he ruled; alluding to his being compared to a fish, a whale, or a crocodile; and which land abounded with all good things, and he with them; instead of being watered with the waters of the Nile, by which it became fruitful, it should now be flooded with the blood of his army:

even to the mountains; an hyperbolic expression, signifying the vast quantity of blood that should be shed; see the like in (^{<6640>}Revelation 14:20):

and the rivers shall be full of them; of the carcasses of his army, and of the blood of them; they should lie about everywhere, on mountains and valleys, on the land and in the rivers; and which should now be turned into blood, as the rivers of Egypt of old were; and which figure is used to express the destruction of the antichristian states; (see ^{<1070>}Exodus 7:20 ^{<6643>}Revelation 16:3,4).

Ver. 7. *And when I shall put thee out, &c.*] As a candle is put out, or some great light or blazing torch is extinguished; such was the king of Egypt in his splendour and glory; but now should be like a lamp put out in obscure darkness, and all his brightness and glory removed from him, (^{<1816>}Job 18:5 20:17 ^{<1030>}Proverbs 13:9 20:20):

I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; with the smoke that should arise at the extinguishing of this lamp; or they should be covered with mourning, or clad in black, at the destruction of this monarch and his monarchy:

I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light; all which figures are sometimes made use of to denote the dissolution of kingdoms and states: the “heaven” being an emblem of a kingdom itself; the “sun” of an emperor or king, or kingly power; the “moon” of the queen, or of the priesthood; the “stars” of nobles, princes, counsellors, and such like eminent persons, useful in government; who being destroyed or removed, the light and glory, the prosperity and happiness of a kingdom, are gone; (see ^{<2130>}Isaiah 13:10 ^{<6612>}Revelation 6:12,13). The Targum is,

“tribulation shall cover thee when I shall extinguish the splendour of the glory of thy kingdom from heaven; and the people of thine army shall be lessened, who are many as the stars; a king with his

army shall cover thee as a cloud that ascends and covers the sun, and as the moon, whose light does not shine in the day.”

Ver. 8. *All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee*, &c.] Or, “all the lights of the light”^{f573}; the rest of the luminaries of heaven; the other five planets, as Kimchi, besides the sun and moon:

and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God; as there must needs be, the sun, moon, and stars, and all the lights of heaven, being darkened above: there seems to be an allusion to the thick darkness that was formerly over the land of Egypt; and this is a figure and representation of that darkness that shall be in the kingdom of the beast, or spiritual Egypt, yet to come; (see ^{<DXX>}Exodus 10:21 ^{<GGL>}Revelation 16:10). The Targum is,

“tribulation as darkness shall cover thy land.”

Ver. 9. *I will also vex the hearts of many people*, &c.] With anger and grief, with fear and dread, with consternation and amazement:

when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations; or, “thy breach”^{f574}; the news of it, the tidings of their destruction; which by one means or another should come to their ears, and fill them with concern and great anxiety of mind, so rich and powerful a kingdom being subdued, and the king of Babylon made so great thereby, and fearing they fall a prey unto him also. The Targum renders it,

“when I shall bring the broken of thy war;”

that is, the soldiers that should be wounded in battle, their limbs broke, and they taken captive, and brought among the nations, dismal spectacles to look at; and which should be brought

into countries, which thou hast not known; at a distance from Egypt, and which had no commerce nor communication with them, nor were their friends and allies; yet as their destruction would reach their ears, so it would affect their hearts, and fill them with vexation and grief; not so much on account of Egypt, as the growing power of Nebuchadnezzar, and the danger they were in of falling into his hands.

Ver. 10. *Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee*, &c.] That so potent a state, and such a flourishing kingdom, should at once be so easily subdued and conquered: and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee; because of her destruction, lest their turn should be next; so the kings of

the earth will be afraid when God's judgments are executed on mystical Egypt; (see ^{668B}Revelation 18:9,10):

when I shall brandish my sword before them; the sword of the king of Babylon after mentioned, called the Lord's, because it was by his appointment and permission, and came by the direction of his providence, and was succeeded by his power: this glittering sword being brandished over Egypt, in the sight of the nations round about, was terrible to them; dreading that it would not be put up until it was sheathed in them, or they felt the effects of it; or, "when I shall cause it to fly before them"^{f575}; in their sight, and upon the borders of their countries; expressive of the swiftness of its motion, the sudden destruction it brought on Egypt, and its nearness to them. The Targum is,

"when I shall bring upon thee those that kill with the sword."

And they shall tremble at every moment; from moment to moment, or continually; they shall never be free from fear:

every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall; not kings for their subjects, or subjects for their kings, but every man for himself; expecting every moment that the sword which flew and ravaged through Egypt, and now hovered over them, would be instantly plunged in them.

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord God, the sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee.*] Upon Pharaoh and his kingdom; having a commission and a direction from the Lord, and which would be the instrument of the destruction before threatened. The Targum is,

"those that slay with the sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon or against thee;"

his army, sword in hand.

Ver. 12. *By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, &c.*] Pharaoh's numerous subjects; or his army, as the Targum; the vast number of soldiers in it, whose carcasses should fall in battle by the sword of the Chaldeans, the mighty men of Nebuchadnezzar's army:

the terrible of the nations all of them; which army consisted of men of several nations, and those the most terrible, fierce, and cruel, by whose swords this slaughter should be made:

and they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt; cut off the king, the princes of the blood, the nobility and gentry, the prime of the nation; plunder the king's palace of all the wealth and riches in it, the treasury of the kingdom; destroy the metropolis of it; demolish its cities and fortified places, and take away all its strength and glory:

and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed: all the people of the land, high and low, rich and poor; the destruction shall be general, all ranks and degrees of men shall share in it.

Ver. 13. *I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters*, &c.] Which used to graze beside the river Nile, and the canal, of it, in the plains and meadows, valley, and hills, which these ran by; meaning both horses, which Egypt abounded with, and would be good booty for the Chaldeans, and oxen and sheep, which they would kill for present use, or drive away for future service:

neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them; there should so few remain of men and beasts, that the waters of the rivers would not be disturbed, either by men passing over them, and doing any business upon them, or by beasts drinking at them.

Ver. 14. *Then will I make their waters deep*, &c.] Either the water, of Egypt literally, the waters of the Nile: no canals being cut from it, to carry the water to the several parts of the land, the land being depopulated, and no business done: or, figuratively, other nations, compared to waters for their numbers, who before had been disturbed by the Egyptians; but now they being destroyed, these would be at ease, like troubled waters, which subside, and: become deep and clear, when there is none to trouble them:

and cause their, rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord God; very slowly, as if, they were mourning the unhappy condition of the land; or smoothly, clearly, undisturbed, as before. The Targum is,

“there will I cause the people to rest, and I will lead their kings quietly, saith the Lord God.”

Ver. 15. *When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate*, &c.] The cities being demolished, the inhabitants destroyed with the sword, or carried captive:

and the country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full; men and cattle, corn and other fruits of the earth, wealth and riches, pomp and grandeur:

when I shall smite all them that dwell therein; with the sword of the Chaldeans:

then shall they know that I am the Lord for God is known in the perfections of his nature, omnipotence, omniscience, holiness, justice, &c. by the judgments he executes; for this is not to be understood of a spiritual knowledge of him, but of a terrible conviction of the truth of his being and attributes, by the awful dispensations of his providence.

Ver. 16. *This is the lamentation with which they shall lament her*, &c.] The Egyptians themselves, or rather they that are after mentioned. The Targum is,

“the prophet said, a lamentation is this prophecy, and it shall be for a lamentation;”

he was bid at the beginning of it to take up a lamentation, and now at the end of it he pronounces it to be one, and that it should be sung as such:

the daughters of the nations shall lament for her; either literally understood, it being the business and custom of women to say or sing the funeral dirge, or the lamentation at the interment of the deceased; or figuratively, the inhabitants of other nations. So Ben Melech and the Targum, “the villages of the people shall lament her”;

that is, the inhabitants of them, who were in alliance with Egypt, and under its protection:

they shall lament for her, even for Egypt, and for all her multitude; for the desolation of the land, and for the vast numbers of people that should be slain with the sword, or carried captive:

saith the Lord God; which is added for the confirmation of it; for what he has spoken shall be done.

Ver. 17. *It came to pass also the twelfth year*, &c.] Another prophecy of the like kind was delivered out the same year as before:

in the fifteenth day of the month; of the twelfth month, the month Adar, which is not here expressed, because mentioned before, (Ezekiel 32:1),

it was about a fortnight after the other prophecy. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read it,

“it came to pass in the twelfth year, the first month, the fifteenth day of the month;”

according to which this prophecy was before the other, which is not to be supposed.

Ver. 18. *Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, &c.*] Sing a funeral song or dirge, or compose one, to be sung by the mourning women, on account of the vast numbers of the inhabitants of Egypt that shall be slain; for the prophet himself would not mourn, but rejoice, on this occasion; but this is said to show the certainty of the destruction, and the lamentation that would be made on that account:

and cast them down, even her and the daughters of the famous nations; Egypt, and all those countries, and the inhabitants of them, that were in alliance and friendship with her; that is, declare by prophecy that they shall be cast down and destroyed, or be brought down from the height of grandeur and prosperity in which they now were:

unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down to the pit; not unto stately sepulchres built on high, such as were made for the kings of Egypt; but unto common pits or graves, dug in the lower parts of the earth, where the meaner and common sort of people were buried; there should be no distinction between them and others, they should have one common burial. The Targum is,

“son of man, prophesy concerning the multitude of Egypt, and break her, even her, and the villages of the mighty people; prophesy that they shall be delivered unto the lowest earth, with those that go down to the pit of the house of perdition.”

Ver. 19. *Whom dost thou pass in beauty?* &c.] This question the prophet is bid to put to Egypt; what nation is there, or has been, that thou excellest in wisdom, in riches, or in strength, in the multitude of subjects, or extent of dominions, that thou thinkest thyself secure from destruction? look over other kingdoms and states mightier than thou, or at least equal to thee, and see how they are brought to ruin, and expect that this will quickly be thy case:

go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised; go down to the grave, and take thy place, and lie there among the wicked and most profligate of mankind, and such as might be most despised by the Egyptians, since they used circumcision. The Targum is,

“go down and sleep with sinners.”

Ver. 20. *They shall fall in the midst of them that are slain by the sword,* &c.] The Egyptians shall fall in battle by the sword of the Chaldeans:

she is delivered to the sword; Egypt is given to the sword, to perish by it, for her sins, according to the just appointment of God:

draw her and all her multitudes; to the place of burial; not in pomp and splendour, as great persons are drawn in hearses; but in great disgrace, as carcasses are dragged unto a common pit or grave, and cast into it: this is said to the Chaldeans, who had a commission from the Lord to slay Egypt, and to bury her, and all her people.

Ver. 21. *The strong among the mighty shall speak to him,* &c.] The strongest of them, such who have excelled others in strength and courage, famous for military exploits, who have been generals of armies, great warriors, and conquerors; and yet with all their might and strength could not withstand death, but were subdued by it, and brought down to the grave; these are, by a poetical figure, represented as meeting Pharaoh king of Egypt, when he came to his grave, saluting and welcoming him to the state of the dead in which they were; taking a sort of comfort in it, and insulting him as being as weak as they; (see ²³⁴⁹ Isaiah 14:9,10,16), which they should do

out of the midst of hell, or the grave, “Hades”, the state of the dead:

with them that help him; the associates, allies, and friends of Pharaoh, his auxiliaries that fell with him, and were brought to the grave at the same time with him; these should be greeted, saluted, and welcomed in like manner:

they are gone down; to the grave; those mighty ones that are represented as speaking, and the Egyptians and their helpers who are spoken to:

they lie uncircumcised; among them that are so, (²⁵²⁰ Ezekiel 32:19):

slain by the sword; of their enemies, who got the victory over them.

Ver. 22. *Ashur is there, and all her company, &c.*] In the state of the dead, or in a most desolate and ruinous condition; the great Assyrian monarchy, the kings of it, the princes, nobles, generals, soldiers, and the vast number of subjects in all the dominions of it; all his army, as the Targum; this, with what follows, shows who the mighty are, that should meet and address the king of Egypt at his funeral:

his graves are about him; either the graves of Pharaoh and his multitude are round about the graves of the Assyrian monarch and his subjects, as Kimchi; or rather the graves of his subjects and soldiers are round about him: it seems to represent the king of Assyria as having a more stately monument, and the graves of his people as lesser ones round about him, but all in the same condition:

all of them slain, fallen by the sword of their enemies, the Medes and the Babylonians, by whom the Assyrian monarchy was destroyed.

Ver. 23. *Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, &c.*] Or vault, where lay the king of Assyria, and those who fell by the sword with him, who are represented as lying in graves all around him; the nearest to him those who were in the highest posts, and most valiant and courageous, and next the common soldiers, as follows:

and her company is round about her grave not Pharaoh's company round about the grave of the Assyrian monarch; but the company of the king of Assyria, or his army, as the Targum, round about grave; or lying about in the ruins of his kingdom:

all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living; even they who now are in the state of the dead, and can no more disturb and distress any, while they were alive, or in the world, struck terror in all neighbouring states and kingdoms; threatening destruction to them, and obliging them to submit to their tyranny and exactions. Jarchi interprets this of the land of Israel; and the Jewish writers commonly understand by the land of the living the land of Canaan wherever they meet with it; because here men worshipped the living God, and lived before him; and the inhabitants of this land were often terrified by the king of Assyria. So the Targum,

“because they ruled in the land of Israel.”

Ver. 24. *There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, &c.*] The kingdom of the Medes and Persians lying in ruin, and the potent kings thereof in the state of the dead; with their army, as the Arabic version, slain and destroyed, and placed round about the grave of the king of Persia; for of him rather it is to be understood than of the king of Assyria, or of Egypt, as some:

all of them slain, fallen by the sword; either of the Scythians in the reign of Cyaxares; or of Nebuchadnezzar a few years before this, in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah; (see ^{<248B>}Jeremiah 49:34-39):

which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth; unholy persons, profane sinners, destitute of the grace of God; who were gone down into the grave, and even into hell and everlasting destruction, as their sins deserved:

which caused their terror in the land of the living; made a great noise in the world, and struck a panic in neighbouring nations, invaded and conquered by them; this they did while living, but now, being in the state of the dead, nothing was to be feared from them: yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit; were obliged to submit to death, and a shameful one, by the hands of their conquerors, and to be laid with ignominy in the grave with others, without any mark of distinction; all being upon a level, cast into the same pit of destruction, and into the lower parts of it; though their king might have a magnificent sepulchre erected for him, as follows:

Ver. 25. *They have set her bed in the midst of the slain, with all her multitude, &c.*] The grave is called a bed, (^{<251D>}Isaiah 57:2), whereon is put the sepulchral chest or coffin, in which the body is laid, and rests as on a bed. It may here design a stately sepulchre or coffin in it, with a magnificent monument over it for the king of Elam, with his army, and the generals of it slain in battle, placed all around him, in less stately beds, coffins, and graves, as explained in the next clause:

her graves are round about him; the king of Persia and his grave, surrounded with the graves of his soldiers and officers:

all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit; which is repeated for the confirmation of it:

he is put in the midst of them that be slain; the king of Elam or Persia; he is laid among the slain, having fallen with them, and his grave is placed in the midst of them.

Ver. 26. *There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude*, &c.] The Scythians, a powerful and warlike people; and all their armies, as the Targum; with their leaders, generals, and commanders, as lying in their graves next to the Assyrians and Elamites, or

her graves are round about him; not the king of Egypt, nor the king of Assyria, nor the king of Persia; but the chief commander of the Scythians, called the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, (^{<GRD>}Ezekiel 38:2):

all of them slain by the sword; of Halyattes, king of Lydia, and Cyaxares, king of Media, who was assisted by the former in subduing the Scythians:

though they caused their terror in the land of the living; as they did in Media, and other countries, and especially in some parts of Asia.

Ver. 27. *And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised*, &c.] That is, shall not lie in such state, or be buried with such pomp and magnificence, and have such sepulchral monuments erected to their memory, as other heroes among the Heathens have had; such as the mighty kings of Assyria and Persia before mentioned:

which are gone down to hell, or “the grave”,

with their weapons of war; which were never taken from them, and which they held in their hands to the last, being never conquered, and died at last a natural death, and not by the sword; or which were carried in state before their hearse at the time of interment, as is the custom to this day so to do at the funeral of great warriors, generals, and officers:

and they have laid their swords under their heads; as a sign and token, as Jarchi says, that the sword did not rule over them, that they did not fall by it; either their statues and sepulchral monuments were adorned with these, and other instruments of war, as was the grave of Misenus by Aeneas^{f576}; and as is still the custom where the heads of such mighty ones are laid, to engrave them on them: or, literally, their swords and other weapons of war were put in their graves under their heads; as it was usual, in former times, in some places to put swords, shields, and other armour, in the graves of military men, as were in the grave of Theseus, on the bier of Alexander the

great, and others, as reported by Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, and Sophocles^{f577}: now the Scythians were not buried: after this grand and pompous manner:

but their iniquities shall be upon their bones; or the punishment of their sin should be, that their bones should lie unburied and scattered about, or be dug up and broke to pieces, and treated with inhumanity and contempt, as a just reward for their savageness, and cruelty:

though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living: not only the terror of the common people, but even of the most powerful kings and mighty warriors.

Ver. 28. *Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised*, &c.] Kimchi, and so others, think this is said to Pharaoh king of Egypt; but rather it respects the prince of the Scythians, who should fall into the hands of Heathens, and be destroyed by them:

and shalt lie with them that are slain with the sword; be buried with them, or in like manner as they are; and not as mighty warriors, who die a natural death in their own country, and are buried in a stately and magnificent manner; but like those that fall by the sword of the enemy, and are thrown into one common pit.

Ver. 29. *There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes*, &c.] In the next place, near the graves of the above mentioned, and in the same ruinous and desolate condition, lie the famous kingdom of Idumea, and the several kings and dukes of it, from the first setting of it up, to its last destruction prophesied of, (^{<36512>}Ezekiel 25:12-14), of many of which mention is made, (^{<36365>}Genesis 36:15-43):

which with their might are laid by them that are slain with the sword; who, notwithstanding their powerful armies, and prowess and skill in war, yet are conquered, and destroyed, and laid in graves in like manner as all others slain by the, sword of the enemy are:

they shall lie with the uncircumcised; for though they themselves were circumcised, being the descendants of Esau the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, on whose seed circumcision was enjoined; yet this did not secure them from a violent death, and an ignominious burial; they being uncircumcised in heart, wicked and ungodly men, and so should be joined in their death and burial with such:

and with them that go down to the pit; the common receptacle of the slain.

Ver. 30. *There be the princes of the north, &c.*] The kings of Babylon, according to Kimchi, which lay north of Judea; or the princes of Syria, Damascus, and Tyre, especially the latter, which commonly goes along with Zidon, being near it, as follows:

and all the Zidonians. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “and all the hunters”; but wrongly; as also the Septuagint and Arabic versions, which read the princes or soldiers of Assyria. The Zidonians or inhabitants of Zidon are meant as the Targum; a famous maritime city, as Tyre also was, in Phoenicia:

which are gone down with the slain; into the grave, being conquered and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; (see ^{צבא}Ezekiel 28:21-23):

with their terror they are ashamed of their might, the number and strength of their armies, the valour and courage of their soldiers, and the fortifications of their cities, in which they trusted, and of which they boasted; but yet could not preserve them from ruin:

and they lie uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword; in common with other profane and wicked persons that have fallen by the sword as they have done:

and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit; (see Gill on ^{צבא}Ezekiel 32:24”).

Ver. 31. *Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over his multitude, &c.*] That is, when Pharaoh is brought to the grave, and into the state of the dead, he shall look about him, and see who lie by him; and he shall behold the above mentioned kings of Assyria, Persia, Idumea, and the princes of Tyre and Zidon, and all their mighty armies, generals and soldiers, in the same condition with himself; and this shall be some solace to him in his own death, and at the loss of so great a kingdom, such numerous subjects, and a vast army, that others as rich, as powerful as himself, lie in the same low and miserable condition; though such comfort as this must be poor comfort indeed! and yet this is all the comfort wicked men have in hell, that they have company with them there:

even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword. Pharaohhophra and his numerous army slain by the sword of the king of Babylon. This explains

who is meant by Pharaoh and his multitude: and that this would certainly be his case it is added,

saith the Lord God; he hath spoken it, and it shall be done; whose words are continued in the next verse.

Ver. 32. *For I have caused my terror in the land of the living, &c.]* Or, “his terror”^{f578}; there is a double reading. The Keri or marginal reading, which we follow has it “my terror”^{f579}; but the Cetib or writing is his terror; and so read the Septuagint. Syriac, and Arabic versions; both may be taken, and the sense be, I have caused or suffered him, Pharaoh king of Egypt, to be a terror to the nations about him, particularly to the land of Israel, which the Targum expressly mentions as the land of the living; and now I will terrify him who has terrified others:

and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with those that are slain with the sword; shall have a common burial with other Heathen nations; even with such, who, in a way of judgment, have perished by the sword of their victorious enemies, as he will:

even Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God; the king of Egypt, his subjects, and his soldiers, as numerous as they are; and thus ends this doleful ditty, and funeral dirge or lamentation, composed, taken up, and sung for Pharaoh as ordered, thereby to assure him of his certain destruction.

CHAPTER 33

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 33

This chapter treats of the prophet's duty, and the people's sins; contains a vindication of the justice of God; a threatening of destruction to those who remained in the land after the taking of the city; and a detection of the hypocrisy of the prophet's hearers. The duty of a watchman in general is declared, (²⁶³⁰Ezekiel 33:1-6), an application of this to the prophet, (²⁶³¹Ezekiel 33:7): the sum of whose business is to warn the wicked man of his wickedness; and the consequence of doing, or not doing it, is expressed, (²⁶³²Ezekiel 33:8,9), an objection of the people, and the prophet's answer to it, (²⁶³³Ezekiel 33:10,11), who is bid to acquaint them, that a righteous man trusting to his righteousness, and sinning, should not live; and that a sinner repenting of his sins should not die, (²⁶³⁴Ezekiel 33:12-16), the people's charge of inequality in the ways of God is retorted upon them, and removed from the Lord, and proved against them, (²⁶³⁵Ezekiel 33:17-20), then follows a prophecy, delivered out after the news was brought of the taking of the city, threatening with ruin those that remained in the land, confident of safety, and that for their sins, which are particularly enumerated, (²⁶³⁶Ezekiel 33:21-29), and the chapter is closed with a discovery of the hypocrisy of those that attended the prophet's ministry, (²⁶³⁷Ezekiel 33:30-33).

Ver. 1. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the delivery of various prophecies concerning the ruin of other nations, the Ammonites, Tyrians, and Egyptians, a fresh prophecy comes from the Lord concerning the Jews:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, &c.*] The Jews, of whom the prophet was; and designs those who were with him in the captivity; and who, having behaved so ill, the Lord will not own them for his people, but calls them the prophet's people, and the children of them:

and say unto them, when I bring the sword upon a land; a foreign enemy with an army to invade it, or any other judgment; for there is no public

calamity whatever that comes upon a people, but what is by the order, direction, or permission of the Lord. The Targum is,

“those that kill with the sword;”

an army of men that enter into a land sword in hand, with an intent to conquer and destroy: if the people of the land take a man of their coasts: that lives upon their borders, and so is acquainted with all the places where it is most likely an enemy should enter; or a man out of the midst of them, as the Targum; so this phrase sometimes signifies, (~~Q117D~~ Genesis 47:2), one of their own people, who might be thought to have their good and safety at heart, and might be trusted:

and set him for their watchman: on some place of eminence; on the walls, or in a tower of a frontier town, from whence he might descry the enemy coming at a distance.

Ver. 3. *If what he seeth the sword come upon the land, &c.*] Or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; as soon as he observes a body of armed men, more or less, marching towards the borders of the land with a manifest intention to enter and invade it:

he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; warn the people by blowing the trumpet, the signal agreed on; by which they would understand that an enemy was at hand, or danger near; or warn them by word of mouth, as well as by the trumpet, where he could do it, and when it was necessary.

Ver. 4. *Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh no warning, &c.*] Does not mind the notice given him; is incredulous of the danger he is in, or negligent of providing for his safety; fancies it is an alarm, and nothing else; and imagines there is no real danger, or what is a mere trifle; or, that the enemy is at a great distance, and it is time enough to provide for his defence:

if the sword come and take him away; those that kill with the sword, as the Targum, come suddenly on him, and take away his life, or carry him captive: his blood shall be upon his own head; the guilt of his slaughter, as the Targum; the sin will be his own; it must be brought in wilful murder; no blame can be laid upon any but himself; the watchman will be clear.

Ver. 5. *He heard the sound of the trumpet, &c.*] The alarm of the enemy being at hand, and so was inexcusable:

and took not warning; which that gave him:

his blood shall be upon him; the fault shall be imputed to himself, and not another; and he must bear it himself, and answer for it, and not the watchman:

but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul; who, hearing the sound of the trumpet, prepares for his own defence, and provides for his safety, he shall save his life, and not fall into the enemies' hands.

Ver. 6. *But if the watchman see the sword come*, &c.] Or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum is; so far doing the duty of his office as to be in the watchtower, and not asleep:

and yet blow not the trumpet: to give the people notice of the enemy, and of their danger:

and the people be not warned; but in the utmost security, not apprehending themselves to be in any danger at all:

if the sword come and take any person from among them; even though but a single person:

he is taken away in his iniquity: having had no time to have it set before him, and to be convinced, and to repent of it, and seek for pardoning mercy for it; it is a dreadful thing thus to be taken out of the world, and snatched into hell at once:

but his blood will I require at the watchman's hands; he shall be punished for not doing his duty, for not giving the due warning of danger, on which account the man was surprised with the enemy, and taken away unawares; and therefore his death shall be laid to the watchman, and he must be answerable for it.

Ver. 7. *So thou, O son of man*, &c.] Here begins the application of the parable to the prophet himself, describing his office and his duty:

I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; which is repeated from (^{<3187>}Ezekiel 3:17), (See Gill on "^{<3187>}Ezekiel 3:17"). The Targum is,

“I have appointed thee a teacher;”

a spiritual watchman; so pastors, teachers, ministers of the Gospel, are watchmen, (^{<3046>}2 Timothy 4:5 ^{<3137>}Hebrews 13:17):

therefore thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and warn them from me. The Targum is,

“thou shalt receive the word from my Word, and warn them from sinning before me.”

Ver. 8. *When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, &c.]* Order the prophet to say so to him, and as follows; (see Gill on “^{<3188>}Ezekiel 3:18”).

Ver. 9. *Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way, &c.]* (See Gill on “^{<3189>}Ezekiel 3:19”).

Ver. 10. *Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, &c.]* Such of them as were with him in the captivity: thus ye speak, saying; reasoning and arguing within and among themselves; which the Lord heard, and made known to the prophet, who is bid to repeat it to them in order to give an answer:

if our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them; as the prophet said they should, (^{<3223>}Ezekiel 24:23), with which he had concluded his prophecies to them; and now they take it up, and argue against themselves, and against him; if our sins and transgressions are laid upon us, and we must answer for them; if the guilt of them is charged on us, and they are unexpiated and unatoned for; and the punishment of them is, or will be, inflicted on us, and we do, and must pine away, and be consumed in them, and by them:

how should we then live? as thou promisest us upon repentance; it is all over with us; there is no hope for us; what signify our repentance, or thy promises of life unto us? these things can never hang together, that we should live, and yet pine away in our sins; so that these are the words of persons both despairing, and making the prophet to say things opposite and contradictory, and which would not admit of a reconciliation; (see ^{<3571>}Ezekiel 37:11).

Ver. 11. *Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord, &c.]* The following is the answer returned from the Lord by the prophet to their above complaint and reasoning; to which is premised the oath of God, showing the certainty, reality, and sincerity of what is said, which might be depended on as true:

I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, &c. (See Gill on “²⁵⁸²³Ezekiel 18:23”), (See Gill on “²⁵⁸³¹Ezekiel 18:31”), (See Gill on “²⁵⁸³²Ezekiel 18:32”):

Ver. 12. *Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, &c.*] (See Gill on “²⁵⁸¹²Ezekiel 33:2”). The purport of what the prophet is bid to say in this and some following verses is, that the righteousness of a man that trusts in it, he sinning and not repenting, shall not save him; and that the wickedness of a repenting sinner shall not damn him:

the righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; this must be understood, not of a truly righteous man, or of the righteousness of Christ, by which such an one is made so; for that righteousness does deliver those to whom it is imputed, from sin and the condemnation of it, even in the day of his transgression, which is every day of his life; for there is not a just man that does good, and sinneth not; and in the day when his sin is shown him, and he is convinced of it, this removes the guilt of it; and in the day it will be sought for, or he may be charged with it, and when the sins of others will be brought to an account, the righteousness by which he is justified will deliver him from avenging justice; from the curse of the law; from the wrath of God; from eternal death, and everlasting damnation; but this is to be interpreted of one that is not truly righteous, and of a man’s own righteousness; and which he trusts to, as is afterwards expressed; and may and does turn from: this can never deliver a man in the day of his transgression from the guilt and condemnation of it; for a man’s own righteousness is but what he ought to do; and, was it ever so perfect, yet, should he commit one single sin, it would not justify him from it, or deliver him from the curse of the law and wrath of God due unto it:

as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; when he is truly convinced of his sin, and the evil of it; is heartily sorry for it, after a godly sort; ingenuously confesses it, and departs from it; applies to Christ, to his blood and righteousness, for pardon and acceptance; though his wickedness has been ever so great, or attended with ever such aggravating circumstances, yet it shall not damn him; or he shall not fall by it into hell and everlasting perdition; but shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation:

neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth; he cannot live by it, nor for it; as it cannot justify him, it

cannot save him, or bring him to heaven, or entitle him to eternal life; he is not able to live comfortably now; when his sin is charged upon him, his righteousness will not relieve him; and much less will he be able to live happily hereafter; he must and will die in his sins, being found in them, for anything his own righteousness can do for him: this is the same with the former clause, and is repeated in different words for the confirmation of it; self-righteous persons not being easily convinced of the truth of these things.

Ver. 13. *When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live, &c.]* A happy life, here and hereafter; an eternal life, and not die the second death: this must be understood, should he appear a truly righteous person; one that does not trust to his own righteousness, but to the righteousness of Christ, and lives by faith on that; looking for the hope of righteousness through it, and behaving agreeably to his character:

but if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity; as he will by trusting to it; if he trusts to it for acceptance with God, and justification in his sight, and thinks himself proof against all temptation to sin on account of it; and that he has righteousness enough to make amends for sins committed, or for other sins he may commit; and which he may venture upon through this false notion, and so be led on to an open course of sinning, and series of committing iniquity:

all his righteousness shall not be remembered; God will take no notice of it; it shall be of no avail to justify him from sin, and secure him from wrath; it will be as if it never had been:

but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it; an eternal death, which is the just wages of sin; from which a man's own righteousness can never deliver him, though the righteousness of Christ does deliver from it; (see ~~2ND~~ Proverbs 10:2 11:4).

Ver. 14. *Again, when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, &c.]* That is, provided he continues in the same course of life, impenitent and unbelieving:

but if he turn from his sin; repent of it, and forsake it:

and do that which is lawful and right; or "judgment and justice"; do that which is agreeably to the law of God, and what is right between man and man; lives soberly, righteously, and godly, as well as denies ungodliness

and worldly lusts; whereby it appears that his repentance is genuine and true.

Ver. 15. *If the wicked restore the pledge*, &c.] His neighbour's raiment, which he has taken as a pledge for money lent him; and which, according to the law, was to be restored before sunset, (^{<0226>}Exodus 22:26,27) which wicked men did not attend unto; but when such a man is brought to a sense of his wickedness, and repentance for it, as an evidence of it he would restore the pledge:

and give again that he had robbed; to him whom he had robbed; as a thief was obliged to do, four or five fold, according to the law, (^{<0221>}Exodus 22:1), and which, when a man did voluntarily, from the convictions of his own mind, and not by force of the civil magistrate, it was a sign of true repentance; (see ^{<0218>}Luke 19:8):

and walk in the statutes of life; the rule of life and conversation, and to the keeping of which the promise of long life is annexed; and which preserve persons from dying a shameful death by the hand of the civil magistrate; statutes, which, if a man do, he shall live in them; see (^{<0311>}Ezekiel 20:11):

without committing iniquity; not living entirely without sin, which the best of men do not; but without committing grosser sins, as before; and without making a trade of sinning, and living in it:

he shall surely live, he shall not die; he shall live comfortably now, and happily hereafter; he shall live a spiritual life, and not die the second death.

Ver. 16. *None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him*, &c.] Imputed to him; placed to his account; charged upon him, or ever be spoke of to him, either now, or at the day of judgment, by way of accusation and complaint, or to his condemnation:

he hath done that which is lawful and right; has repented of his sin; looked to Christ by faith for the pardon of it; and laid hold on his righteousness for his justification; and being influenced and assisted by the grace of God, has done that which is right and good in the sight of God and man:

he shall surely live; he now lives a life of faith and holiness; he shall continue to live, and persevere to the end, and inherit eternal life; (see ^{<0321>}Ezekiel 18:21, 22).

Ver. 17. *Yet the children of thy people say, &c.*] “Not my people”; for surely the children of God could never say what follows; and one would think that even no man could say it, after so much had been said by the Lord concerning the righteous and the wicked, and his dealings with them, which must appear to be just and right, good and gracious; and yet such were the atheism, the perverseness and peevishness of these people, they went on to say as they had done before:

the way of the Lord is not equal: is not according to the rules of justice and equity. The Targum is,

“the ways of the goodness of the Lord are not made plain (or exposed) unto us.”

The answer to which is,

but, as for them, their way is not equal; according to the rule of the divine word; as for God, his way and methods, both of providence and grace, were right and good; (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁸²⁵Ezekiel 18:25”).

Ver. 18. *When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, &c.*] This and what is said in the following verse are clear instances of the equality, justness, and goodness of the ways of God; and are again repeated, if possible, to make it clear and plain to them that their charge and complaint were groundless; (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁸²⁴Ezekiel 18:24, 26”).

Ver. 19. *But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, &c.*] (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁸²⁷Ezekiel 18:27”).

Ver. 20. *Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal, &c.*] Still obstinately persisting in their false charges, notwithstanding plain proofs to the contrary:

O ye house of Israel, I will judge you everyone after his ways; (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁸³⁰Ezekiel 18:30”).

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, &c.*] Of Jeconiah’s captivity, when Ezekiel with others were carried into Babylon; (see ²⁶¹⁸⁰²Ezekiel 1:2)

in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month; which was a year, four months, and some days, after the city of Jerusalem was taken; for that was destroyed in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and so of the captivity, and in

the fifth month, and tenth day of the month. (^{1291D}2 Kings 25:2 ^{362D}Jeremiah 52:12). It is much it was not known at Babylon before; though so it might, and yet not one that escaped came to Ezekiel sooner to give him an account of it, which he had seen with his eyes. The Syriac version reads it, in the “eleventh year”; and so makes it but a few months after the destruction; and it may be observed that it is promised by the Lord, (^{320B}Ezekiel 24:26), that on the day the city was taken, one should escape, and bring the prophet the news; that is, directly, immediately, in a very short time, as soon as it was possible that he could arrive to him; and yet, as taken notice, here were a year and almost five months before he reached him, which seems pretty strange. The difficulty may be solved in this manner: Ezekiel reckons from the captivity of Jeconiah, which began in the month Chisleu; and the computation in (^{1291D}2 Kings 25:2 ^{362D}Jeremiah 52:12), is from Zedekiah’s reign, which is to be reckoned from the month Nisan, and from the first Nisan of his reign; for it is a rule with the Jews, ^{f580} that the beginning of the year for kings is the first of Nisan; so that the tenth month from the captivity is the sixth from Nisan; whence it appears there was not a full month from the city being burnt to the news being brought to Ezekiel; which was time short enough, in such a troublesome season, to take a journey from Jerusalem to Babylon; for Zedekiah not being crowned before the Nisan following the captivity, the computation of his reign did not begin till that Nisan, which makes this difference in the chronology. According to Bishop Usher ^{f581}, this messenger came to Ezekiel the twenty fifth of January, the fourth day of the week (Wednesday), in 3417 A.M. or before Christ 587:

that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me; as it was foretold and promised he should, (^{320B}Ezekiel 24:26):

saying, the city is smitten; the city of Jerusalem; the walls were broken down, the houses burnt, and the whole destroyed.

Ver. 22. *Now the hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came*, &c.] The prophet felt a divine impulse on his mind; he was under the influence of a spirit of prophecy, and knew before the messenger came to him what his message was, and was prepared to receive it, and to prophesy upon it; for this is to be understood of prophecy, as the Targum,

“prophecy from before the Lord was with me in the evening ^{f582},”

(see ^{<2181>}Isaiah 8:11):

and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; the hand of the Lord, or the power of the Lord, had done it, as he promised he would, (^{<3187>}Ezekiel 3:27) so that he spoke freely and boldly, and continued to do so from the evening, to the time the messenger came to him in the morning, to all those that were with him:

and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb: as he had been for three years past; for though he had been prophesying against several nations, yet these prophecies were not delivered, it is very likely, by word of mouth, but by writing, and sent into those countries by proper messengers; but now the prophet's mouth is opened by the Spirit of God, as it was said it should, when this messenger should come to him, (^{<3247>}Ezekiel 24:27) and from this time he was not silent, but prophesied to his people, the Jews, verbally, as he was bid to do by the Lord.

Ver. 23. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the messenger had delivered his message, and he had received it, and conversed with him about it:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 24. *Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel, &c.*] The places which were laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar's army, going and returning, in and about Jerusalem, and in several parts of Judea; these were they that were left in the land after the destruction, to people and plant it; or who, having fled to distant parts, were now returned, and took possession of it, though it was in a wretched condition, a mere waste or desert; and yet they were lifted up with it, and proud and haughty, as their language shows: for thus they speak,

saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land; he was but one, and had no child, when the promise of inheriting the land was made unto him; and he was but a single worshipper of God, and yet he had this favour and privilege:

but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance: so they oppose themselves to Abraham, and argue from the lesser to the greater; that if a single person was vouchsafed to inherit it, then much more many, and those of his seed; and to whom the land was particularly given for an inheritance, and who were now in the possession of it, as Abraham never

was; and, being many, were able to defend their right, and secure themselves in the enjoyment of it; all which reasoning shows their pride and vanity, though they were under such humbling circumstances; their land being waste, their numbers lessened, and the enemy had but just left it, having made dreadful devastations in it; and which had had no influence upon them to reform them, or bring them to repentance, as the following verses show.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Send them this message in writing, as from the Lord; for the prophet was now in Chaldea, and could not deliver it by word of mouth to those that inhabited the wastes of Israel; but he could tell it to the messenger that came to him, who had escaped from Jerusalem; or send it by him, or some other:

ye eat with the blood; or rather “upon”, or “by” the “blood”^{f583}; contrary to the law in (^(-B926)Leviticus 19:26) which is a different law from that in (⁽⁻⁰⁰⁹⁴⁾Genesis 9:4), and from that in (⁽⁻⁰⁸⁸⁷⁾Leviticus 3:17 7:26,27) and refers to an idolatrous practice of the Heathens, which these Jews imitated; who, having slain and offered their sacrifices to devils, sat down round about the blood of them, and ate their food or part of their sacrifice by it, as Kimchi on the text observes. The account Maimonides^{f584} gives of the Zabians is this,

“you must know (says he) that the blood is reckoned very unclean and impure by the Zabians, yet is eaten by them, because they think it is the food of devils; and that he that eats it by this means obtains some communications with them; so that they converse familiarly with him, and reveal things future to him, which the vulgar commonly attribute to devils: notwithstanding there were some among them, with whom it seemed very grievous and difficult to eat blood (for it is a thing which the nature of man abhors); these used to slay some beast, and take its blood, and put it in a vessel, or in a hole dug in the earth, and eat the slain beast, sitting in a circle about the blood; imagining to themselves, in so doing, while they ate the flesh the devils ate the blood, and that this is their food; and by this means friendship, fraternity, and familiarity were contracted between them, because they all ate at one table, and sat on one seat; besides, they were of opinion that the devils appeared to them in dreams, and told them things to come, and were of much advantage to them;”

and accordingly it follows:

and lift up your eyes towards your idols; make your devotion, and pray unto them, and worship them, and expect help and assistance from them:

and shed blood; innocent blood, as the Targum; they were guilty of murder as well as of idolatry, or shedding of blood, in sacrifice to idols:

and shall ye possess the land? can such wretches as you, such gross idolaters and murderers, ever think that you are the children of Abraham, and have a right to the inheritance of this land, or shall long continue in the possession of it, living in such abominable iniquities as these?

Ver. 26 *Ye stand upon your sword*, &c.] You trust in it, and think to support yourselves by it, and secure your possession and right of it by that means. So the Targum,

“you stand in your strength:”

ye work abomination; that which is abominable to God, and not fit to be named among men; Jarchi interprets it of sodomy: the word is in the feminine gender, and may be rendered, “ye women work abomination”; referring to that unnatural lust the apostle speaks of, (⁴⁰¹²⁵Romans 1:26) so Ben Melech:

and ye defile everyone his neighbour's wife; were guilty of adultery; and which was so common, that scarce any were free from it, and therefore is charged upon the whole body of them:

and shall ye possess the land? such vile creatures as these, guilty of the abominations for which the land formerly spewed out its ancient inhabitants, the Canaanites? and the present possessors might expect the same, as being very unworthy inheritors of it, whatever high thoughts they might have of themselves.

Ver. 27. *Say thou thus unto them, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Send or write unto them in the name of the Lord, after this manner,

as I live, which is the form of an oath; the Lord swears by himself his life, because he could swear by no greater, and for the confirmation of what follows:

surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword; by their own sword, falling out one with another; or by the sword of Ishmael

(~~2411D~~ Jeremiah 41:2,3) or by the sword of the Chaldeans, who revenged the death of Gedaliah and others; even such who dwelt amidst the ruins of the city of Jerusalem, and other places, that were become desolate through the ravages of the enemy:

and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured; of which it may be supposed there were the greater numbers, since the land was so depopulated: and they that be in the forts, and in the caves, shall die of the pestilence; such as were in fortified cities, or in caverns of the earth, dug in rocks and mountains, where, in neither of them, men and beasts could easily come at them; here the Lord would send his arrow, the plague, that flies by day, and reach them, and destroy them; none can escape his hands; these are three of the Lord's sore judgments, the sword, pestilence, and noisome beasts.

Ver. 28. *For I will lay the land most desolate*, &c.] Or, "desolation" and "desolation"^{f585}; one desolating judgment shall follow upon another, until it is completely desolate; it was very desolate already, through the ravages of the Chaldean army; but it should become more so, through other judgments here threatened them:

and the pomp of her strength shall cease; some understand this of the temple, which was the most pompous building in the land, and in which they placed their strength and confidence: but this was destroyed already: it is rather to be interpreted of whatsoever riches, power, and glory, were yet remaining, which should be removed:

and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate; which used to abound with vines and olives, with flocks and pastures:

that none shall pass through; not only there should be no inhabitant, but no traveller in it, or very few, because of the sword in one part, the pestilence in another, and wild beasts in other places, and a general barrenness and unfruitfulness; so that a traveller would be both in great danger, and in want of provisions to supply himself and cattle.

Ver. 29. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord*, &c.] An omniscient Being, that could foresee and foretell what would come to pass; and omnipotent, able to do whatever he pleased, and true and faithful to his word; and a sovereign Lord, whose will cannot be resisted; this they should see, own, and acknowledge:

when I have laid the land most desolate, because of all their abominations which they have committed: for though he is a sovereign Lord, yet he does not execute his judgments in an arbitrary way, merely cause it is his will, but because of the abominable sins committed by men, which provoke the eyes of his glory.

Ver. 30. *Also, thou son of man,* &c.] I have something to say to thee, and inform thee of, not only concerning the Jews in Judea, what they say, and what will befall them; but concerning those that are with thee, and what they say of thee, and what will be the issue of it:

the children of thy people still are talking against thee; not the Lord's people, but his own people, which was the more cutting to him to hear of, and the more ungrateful in them; though indeed they were but children, who acted a weak part, and the less to be regarded; these spake against the prophet: they could not say he was no prophet, he had his credentials and commission from the Lord, which were well known, and many of his prophecies had been fulfilled; they could not speak against his doctrine, which was of God; nor against his conversation, which was agreeable to his character and office; but they said some things in a ludicrous and jocose manner, in a slighting and contemptuous way, as showed they had little reverence and respect for him, and were careless and indifferent about hearing him; at least had little regard to this matter, or the subject of his ministry, which they had no great value for: and this they did still; they had been long at it; it was their common talk and constant business, though the prophet knew nothing of it, and thought they had the greatest respect for him, speaking fair to his face, and behaving with decency towards him; but the Lord knew it, and resented it, and informs him of it: and this they did continually, from time to time,

by the walls, and in the doors of the houses; privately and secretly; "by the walls", where they used to get together and sun themselves, and pass away their time, by talking against the prophet; and, when they did, would place themselves against the walls, that nobody might overhear them; and they would sometimes stand in the porches of their houses, and, as their neighbours and acquaintance passed by, would call them in, and hold a chat about the prophet; and jeer and laugh at him, and what he had said: and speak one to another,

every man to his brother, saying, come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord; let us go and amuse ourselves for

an hour or two with what the prophet says; perhaps we shall hear some new thing, which may be pleasing and diverting: for, not their spiritual profit did they seek, but to have their ears tickled, and their fancies pleased.

Ver. 31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh*, &c.] As the people of God, who came to the prophets's house to hear him preach the word, and explain it for their spiritual profit and edification these came when they did, and as early and constantly, and with seeming pleasure:

and they sit before thee as my people; with great decency and reverence, and very gravely and demurely, and with seeming devotion, and stay the time out till the whole service is over; as scholars sit at the feet of their masters, to hear and learn their doctrines. So the Targum,

“and they come unto thee as the men the disciples come:”

and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; they gave him the hearing, and seemed attentive, but did not understand what they heard, at least did not put it in practice; they were only hearers, and not doers of the word, and like to the foolish man in (^{<407b>}Matthew 7:26,27):

for with their mouth they show much love: by the motions of their lips while hearing, and other gestures, as well as by what they said afterwards, they seemed pleased and delighted with what they heard; made huge encomiums upon it, and spoke much in the praise of the preacher. The Targum is the reverse,

“they made game with their mouth.”

But their heart goeth after their covetousness;

“after the money they had taken away by force,”

as the Targum; after the world, and the things of it; after their secular affairs, so that they wished the sermon over, that they might be at them; or, however, did not so diligently attend to what was said, but the cares of the world choked the word, and made it unfruitful to them; these were like the seed that fell among thorns, the thorny ground hearers, (^{<403c>}Matthew 13:22 ^{<408f>}Amos 8:5).

Ver. 32. *And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice*, &c.] Whose voice, and the music of it, are regarded, and not the matter of the song, but the manner in which it is sung; so these

people did not so much attend to what the prophet said as the manner of his delivery; they were delighted with the harmony of his voice, the eloquence of his speech, the propriety of his expressions, the eloquence and aptness of his diction, and the cadency of his words, and not with the excellent doctrines he delivered; they were affected and pleased no otherwise than if they had been at a concert of music; or had been entertained by one that understood not only vocal music, but could “play well on an instrument” at the same time, and make both agree together; which yields much pleasure to lovers of music. The Gospel is a lovely song indeed; “a song of loves”^{f586}, as it may be rendered; of the love of God, and of the love of Christ; and the voice of a Gospel minister is a pleasant charming voice to those that understand it, but to others it is a voice, and nothing else; they may be delighted with his accents, but not with his matter: for they hear thy words, but they do them not; which is repeated, that it might be observed.

Ver. 33. *And when this cometh to pass*, &c.] The prophecy before delivered out, concerning the desolations in the land of Israel, by the sword, pestilence, and wild beasts:

lo, it will come; whatever is predicted by the Lord; in the mouth of his prophets, certainly comes to pass: then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them; and acknowledge it; and particularly that Ezekiel was one, a true prophet of the Lord, by the exact accomplishment of his predictions.

CHAPTER 34

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 34

In the former chapter the prophet prophesies against the people of the Jews, both those of the captivity, and those who were not; and here against the shepherds of Israel. This he is bid to do, (^{330B}Ezekiel 34:1,2), whose cruelty to the flock, negligence and unfaithfulness are exposed, (^{334B}Ezekiel 34:3-6), for which reasons they are threatened to be deprived of their office, (^{330E}Ezekiel 34:7-10), and the Lord promises to take the care of the flock upon himself, to seek out his sheep, and feed them, and do every kind office to them, (^{334B}Ezekiel 34:11-16) and then the strong of the flock, that oppressed the weak, are threatened with punishment, (^{334E}Ezekiel 34:17-22) and the promise of the Messiah, as the shepherd of the flock, is made, under whom all prosperity and happiness might be expected, (^{332B}Ezekiel 34:23-31).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] The date of this prophecy is not given; however, it seems to have been delivered after the destruction of Jerusalem; the causes of which are mentioned, the sins of the people and their governors, which the prophet is directed to expose:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, &c.*] Or, “concerning”^{f587} them; the governors of them, as the Targum and Jarchi; their political governors, their kings, princes, and civil magistrates of every order and degree; so Kimchi interprets it of kings; and it was common with the eastern nations, and with the Greeks, to call kings shepherds; and one and the same word; in the Greek language, signifies to feed sheep, and to govern people; (see ^{398E}Psalms 78:72 ^{334B}Isaiah 44:28), also their ecclesiastical governors are intended, prophets, priests, Levites, scribes, and Pharisees; these were bad shepherds, or they would not have been prophesied against; and though they were shepherds of Israel, this must be done:

prophesy, and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds: that the message to them might be the more regarded, it is ordered to be

delivered in the name of the Lord; otherwise they would have been apt to have despised it, and charged the prophet with impertinence and rudeness:

woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves! that is, themselves only, and not the flock: had they fed the flock, as well as themselves, they would not have been blamed; but they took no care of the people over whom they were set only minded their own affairs, to get riches and honour, but neglected the good of the people, yea, cruelly oppressed them:

should not the shepherds feed the flocks? undoubtedly they should; it is their duty, the business of their office, so to do; kings to rule over their subjects, defend their persons and property, and secure their privileges and liberties to them; and ecclesiastical rulers, ministers of the word, should feed the flock or church of God committed to them with knowledge and understanding; (see ^{<4185>}Jeremiah 3:15 ^{<4215>}John 21:15,16 ^{<4402>}Acts 20:2).

Ver. 3. *Ye eat the fat,* &c.] The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it, “the milk”; the words for fat and milk differ only in the points; and this was not unlawful, for

who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? (^{<4407>}1 Corinthians 9:7), provided it was done with moderation, that they ate some, but not all; but these rulers milked their subjects too much, oppressed them with heavy taxes, and got their substance into their own hands. The Targum is,

“ye eat the good;”

they got possessed of the best of their substance; as did also their ecclesiastical rulers, who were greedy shepherds, that could never have enough; they looked for their gain from their quarter, and even devoured widows’ houses, (^{<2581>}Isaiah 56:11 ^{<4234>}Matthew 23:14):

ye clothe you with the wool: the pure wool, as the Targum, the finest of it; they fleeced the flock, and stripped the people of their riches; and minded nothing but their own backs and bellies:

ye kill them that are fed; or, that “are fat”^{f588}; the richest of the people they brought accusations and charges against for capital crimes; and so put them to death under a colour of justice, that they, might get their estates into their hands:

but ye feed not the flock; did not govern the people well, by doing justice and judgment among men, as became civil magistrates; did not deliver out words of faith and sound doctrine, to feed the souls of men with, which is the duty of those that preside in the church of God.

Ver. 4. *The diseased have ye not strengthened*, &c.] Such, in the civil polity, who were poor, and in necessitous circumstances, were not relieved; such who were injured and oppressed by others were not vindicated; and such as were forced to flee to other countries, or were carried captive, no care was taken, or methods used, to ransom them, and, bring them back; all which may be meant by this and the following metaphors, taken from the evil things that befall a flock of sheep: and such who were weak through spiritual diseases, their prophets and teachers took no care to cure them of their diseases, and to strengthen these feeble minded ones with divine cordials and spiritual food, and confirm them in the faith:

neither have ye healed that which was sick; by directing them to the great Physician of souls, and to his precious blood for healing and pardon of sin:

neither have ye bound up that which was broken; whose consciences were wounded, and hearts broken, with a sense of sin; or who had fallen to the breaking of their bones, and should be restored in a spirit of meekness and dealt gently with, as surgeons do in setting and binding up broken bones:

neither have ye brought again that which was driven away; or, “was gone astray”^{f589}; being seduced by false teachers; and yet, though it was known they were, no care nor pains were taken to reclaim and restore them:

neither have ye sought that which was lost; that wandered of their own accord, and perished for want of knowledge, and were lost for lack of a guide to direct them, and no one would do this good office to them:

but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them; in an arbitrary and tyrannical way, lording it over God, s heritage, (~~418B~~ 1 Peter 5:3).

Ver. 5. *And they were scattered because there is no shepherd*, &c.] No good one; there were shepherds, but they were idol shepherds, good for nothing, and it was all one as if there were none: so, in Christ’s time, there were the Scribes and Pharisees; yet, since these did not feed the people with wholesome doctrine, they are said to be as sheep without a shepherd, and scattered abroad, as here from the fold, and from one another;

dispersed here and there, seeking food, and none, which moved his compassion, (⁴⁰⁸⁶Matthew 9:36), in the political sense it may refer to their captivity, and their dispersion among the nations, having no king: So the Targum,

“and they were scattered without a governor.”

And they became meat to all beasts of the field when they were scattered; the Targum is,

“and they were delivered to all the kingdoms of the people to be consumed;”

such as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Ammonites, Moabites, and others; and may be applied to false teachers, those grievous wolves, which spare not the flock, into whose hands members of churches, professors of religion, fall, when neglected by their shepherds.

Ver. 6. *My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill, &c.*] As sheep do, when gone astray, go from mountain to hill; so the people of Israel fled from place to place, through the cruelty of their rulers, or through the force of the enemy, being carried captive into many kingdoms and nations, signified by mountains; and perhaps there is some allusion, to their worshipping of idols on hills and mountains, being drawn into it by the false prophets:

yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth; so great and general was the dispersion by the several captivities: the Lord has sheep, or some of his elect, some that belong to his flock, in all parts of the world:

and none did search or seek after them; but he will himself, as in (³³⁴¹Ezekiel 34:11), for he will lose none of them; but this does not excuse the shepherds.

Ver. 7. *Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord.*] Or, “ye governors”, as the Targum, both civil and ecclesiastical; ye kings, princes, and magistrates; ye prophets and teachers of the people, who ought to have attended to the word of grace, to the doctrines of the Scriptures, and fed the people with them; but, since you have not, hear the word of threatening from the Lord, and the just punishment that shall be inflicted on you.

Ver. 8. *As I live, saith the Lord, &c.*] It is an oath, and which he swore in his wrath, being provoked with the shepherds for their misadministration:

surely, because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd; a prey to all the kingdoms of the people, being without a governor, as the Targum; or to false teachers, there being no spiritual pastors to take care of them:

neither did my shepherds search for my flock; that was scattered, and carried captive, and became a prey to others; even those that were of God's appointing, as the kings of Israel, their priests and prophets; for both their civil polity and ecclesiastical hierarchy were of God, though the ends thereof were not answered, or the persons put into office did not do their duty:

but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock: (see Gill on "^{341D}Ezekiel 34:2-3").

Ver. 9. *Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord.*] This is repeated, that it might be observed, and for the confirmation of it; it might be depended upon that what follows would be accomplished, unless they changed their conduct and behaviour; and, to leave them inexcusable, they are again called upon to hear what the Lord should say unto them. The Targum is,

“therefore, O ye wicked governors, return to the law, and I will have mercy on you; hearken to the doctrine of the law, and receive the word of the Lord.”

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against the shepherds, &c.*] His heart was against them; his hand was against them; his face was against them, to cut them off. The Targum is,

“behold, I will send my fury upon the governors;”

and there was good reason for it, they were against him and his glory, against his flock, his people, his cause, and interest; sad it is for any to have God against them, and to be against God; for none ever hardened themselves against him and prospered, (^{340B}Job 9:4):

and I will require my flock at their hand; the full tale of them that have been committed to their care, and will punish them for the neglect of them;

their blood, their life, and the loss of them, I will require at their hands; thus he punished Zedekiah and his princes, and the priests and prophets:

and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; take the kingdom from them, as he did from Zedekiah; abolish the ecclesiastical hierarchy among the Jews; cut off three shepherds in one month, the priests, prophets, and scribes of the people; and put the flock into other hands, the apostles and ministers of the Gospel:

neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; enrich themselves with the substance of the people:

for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them; who, instead of being shepherds to feed the flock, were no other than wolves in sheep's clothing, and ravenous lions and bears, which devoured the flock; but this they should do no longer.

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Since the shepherds are so negligent, careless, and cruel:

behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out; as he did the Jews, in all countries where they were, so his elect in all places where they are: he is the omniscient God, and knows them that are his, and can call his own sheep by name; he knows the places where they are; for he has fixed the bounds of their habitation, and was delighting himself in the habitable parts of the earth, where he knew they would be, even before the world was; he knows the time of finding them, which he himself has fixed, and which is a time of love, and a time of life; and he can distinguish them, notwithstanding the filth they have contracted by their sins and transgressions, and from the crowd they are among: and he is the omnipotent God, that can take them out of what hands soever they may be, or in whatsoever state and condition they are; though in the hands of Satan, in the paws of that devouring lion, and in a pit wherein is no water, in a horrible pit, the mire and clay: he that says this is the owner and proprietor of them; and that is the reason why he searches and seeks them out; and which he repeats for the confirmation of it, and to show the vehemence of his affection towards them, and how bent he is upon it, and how eager and resolute in his pursuit after them: he searches for his chosen people among the ruins of Adam's fall, in whom they fell as others; among the men of the world, where they are; among the dust of the earth, where his lost piece of silver and those pearls lie; among the mountains of sin or

self-righteousness, where these sheep are wandering; and he never leaves off seeking and searching till he has found them: and what moves him to it is not their nature, for they are no better than others; nor their numbers, for they are few; but his love to them, the relation he stands in to them as their shepherd, his interest and property in them, his covenant on their account, and also his own glory.

Ver. 12. *As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, &c.]* That is, when they have been scattered, and are got together again; then he goes among them, to see if there are any missing, and in what condition they are, and what they want:

so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day; such as, in a literal sense, the time of the captivity was, when the Jews were dispersed in the various provinces of Babylon, and other countries; and which was a time of darkness and affliction to them. The time of Adam's fall was a dark and cloudy day; when all sinned in him, and were made sinners by his disobedience; when the sentence of condemnation and death passed upon all, and they became liable to utter ruin and destruction; when darkness and ignorance seized all human nature; when all mankind were separated from God, and set at a distance from him; in consequence of which the children of God, his sheep, were scattered abroad. A time of unregeneracy is a cloudy and dark day with God's elect; they are in darkness, and walk in darkness, and are darkness itself, till made light in the Lord: and so is a time of desertion; when the Lord's people are laid in darkness, and the deeps, and both sit and walk therein, and see no light; when they can neither see the Lord, nor hear from him, nor have any communion with him; when the sun of righteousness is withdrawn or eclipsed; and they cannot see their interest clear in spiritual and eternal things: as is also a time of persecution with the churches of Christ; when both ministers and people are scattered abroad, and their eyes cannot behold their teachers; and moon and stars are not seen for many days, Gospel ministers and Gospel ordinances: and the same is a time of blasphemy and error; and when it is neither day nor night, as is the present season; but there is no day so cloudy and dark but the shepherd can see his sheep, and will look them out, though they cannot see him.

Ver. 13. *And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, &c.]* Which was in

part fulfilled when the Jews were delivered from the Babylonish captivity; and which may well be ascribed to the Lord, since it was he that stirred up Cyrus, king of Persia, to proclaim their liberty; and which raised the spirit of the people to go up upon it, and build the temple in Jerusalem, (~~1500~~ Ezra 1:1,5), though it will have a more full accomplishment in the latter day, when these people shall be gathered out of all countries where they are dispersed, and return to their own land, and embrace the true Messiah, and be all saved; of which there was a pledge and presage in the apostles' time, on the day of Pentecost; when some out of all nations were collected together at Jerusalem, and heard the wonderful things of God in their own language, and were converted; and afterwards, wherever the Gospel came in the Gentile world, it was first preached to the Jews, and was the power of God to salvation first to them; by which means the sheep of Christ, the elect of God among them, in each of the parts of the world, were gathered in: but this need not be confined to the Jews only; since the Lord had other sheep beside them, even among the Gentiles, in all parts of the world; whom he searches for, and effectually calls by his grace, and separates them from the rest of the world, and brings them into his churches, and among his people:

and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers: not upon the barren mountains of Sinai and Horeb, or with the works of the law; for there is no righteousness, life, and salvation by them, and so no peace and comfort, or food for faith; but upon the mountains of Israel, the churches of Christ, comparable to mountains for their height, visibility, immovableness, and for their pasturage: here the great Shepherd, the Lamb Christ Jesus, is, even on Mount Zion; here his under shepherds are, who feed the flock with knowledge and understanding; here the word of God is preached, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, by which souls are nourished up to everlasting life; in these mountains the feast of fat things is made; here the green pastures are, the sheep are made to lie down in; and here the lilies grow, among whom Christ feeds; and by these mountains run the "rivers" of everlasting love and covenant grace, the streams of Gospel doctrines, and the waters of Gospel ordinances, to the great refreshment of the saints; here the Lord feeds his people:

and in all the inhabited places of the country; in the private dwellings of the saints, as well as in public assemblies.

Ver. 14. *I will feed them in a good pasture*, &c.] Or with good food, as the Targum: such as the fulness of grace in Christ, where believers go in and out, and find pasture; and where they may feed to the full, have bread enough, and to spare; and may draw water with joy out of the full wells of salvation: this is good food; food indeed, in opposition to that which was typical, or is imaginary; this is spiritual food, suitable to the spirits of men, brought by the Spirit of God, and relished by a spiritual man; this is savoury food, soul satisfying and soul strengthening food; this is nourishing food, and what will endure to everlasting life: and such is the Gospel, the promises and doctrines of it, in which there is a variety of food; milk for babes, and meat for strong men; sweet to the taste, and health to the bones; salutary and nourishing, and which makes glad the heart; and of the same kind are the ordinances of the Gospel, the breasts of consolation, the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house; which he makes his people partakers of, and satisfies them with.

And upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be; there shall they lie in a good fold; of the same nature and use are the churches of Christ as a fold is to the sheep; as that they are separated, divided, and distinguished from others; as into a fold, the sheep of Christ are gathered into churches; where they lie together, are united and knit together in love, and where they have communion with one another, and keep each other warm, and stir up one another to love and good works; whereby the vitals of religion are preserved; here they are kept in the night season, and fed in the winter; these like a fold are a sort of fence unto them, and a preservation of them from wolves and bears; and here they lie down, and have spiritual rest, ease, and safety: and as in a fold there are lambs, and sheep, and goats, so in churches there are different sorts folded together, weaker and stronger Christians; and some only nominal ones, who will be separated at the last day. A fold may be taken down, and removed from place to place, and so may visible congregated churches; the candlestick may be removed out of its place, the word and ordinances; and so a Gospel church state may be carried from place to place; and there is but one fold for Jews and Gentiles, and this is a good one; (see ⁶¹⁰⁶John 10:16).

And in a fat pasture shall they feed on the mountains of Israel; on the feast of fat things there, and so become fat and flourishing; (see Gill on ⁶⁵¹³Ezekiel 34:13”).

Ver. 15. *I will feed my flock, &c.*] This is repeated for the further confirmation of it, that it might be depended upon that the Lord would feed his people in the manner before promised; and it gives a reason why he would do it, because they were his flock; he had a right unto them, a property in them; they were separated and distinguished from others by him, as the church of God is; and which is also purchased by Christ, and gathered out of the world by his Spirit and grace; and therefore he will feed them, or take care that they shall be fed, (~~418~~ Acts 20:28):

and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord; in the good fold provided for them; where they have both rest and safety, and also plenty of suitable food; (see Gill on “~~2644~~ Ezekiel 34:14”). The Targum is,

“I will govern my people, and will cause them to dwell safely, saith the Lord God;”

The Septuagint and Arabic versions add, “and they shall know that I am the Lord”.

Ver. 16. *And I will seek that which was lost, &c.*] As all men are in Adam, and through his fall, and by their own actual transgressions; and so the elect of God among the rest; who are lost not with respect to God’s knowledge of them, love to them, and care for them; but with respect to their knowledge of him, affection for him, and regard to his will, service, and glory; they are lost to themselves, they know not where they are, what is their state and condition, and how to get out of it; they cannot help themselves, nor can any other creature help them; and they see themselves to be in this lost and undone condition, when they are enlightened by the Spirit of God: but they are not irretrievably lost, for they are preserved in Christ Jesus; and he has been sent to seek and to save them; which he has done by redeeming them from sin, Satan, and the law; and, in the effectual calling, he goes after them, he sends his Gospel to them, and his Spirit unto them, and returns them to himself, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and whereas after this they go astray like lost sheep, he seeks and looks them up, and restores their souls, (~~4176~~ Psalm 119:176 23:3 ~~2910~~ Luke 19:10 15:3,4):

and bring again that which was driven away; through the power and prevalence of unbelief, from holding fast to the head Christ, departing at least partially from the living God; from dealing by faith with his precious person, blood, and righteousness; and from the precious promises, as not

belonging to them, and refusing to be comforted by them; but the Lord brings back such again, and causes them to believe: Thomas is a notorious instance of this, (^{<418B>}John 20:24-28), such also who are driven away through the force of Satan's temptations from the throne of grace; from the word and ordinances; and from private conversation with the saints, being hypocrites, as he suggests unto them; these the Lord brings back, by rebuking the tempter, and delivering out of his temptations: likewise such as are driven out of the right way of truth, and carried away with the error of the wicked, through the influence of bad pastors or false teachers, (^{<247B>}Jeremiah 23:1,2 50:6), these will he restore again; for it is impossible the elect of God should be finally deceived: moreover, such as are driven away by the force of persecution, and scattered abroad, in God's due time have rest, and return to their folds again; (see ^{<2517>}Jeremiah 50:17 ^{<440B>}Acts 8:1,2 9:31):

and will bind up that which was broken; such who have broken hearts, broken with a sense of sin; made truly contrite by the Spirit and grace of God, through the word; which is a hammer to them, that breaks the rocky heart in pieces; to these the Lord has respect; their broken hearts are acceptable to him; he dwells with them, to revive them; he speaks and restores comforts to them; pours in oil and wine into their wounds, like the good Samaritan, and binds them up; (see ^{<147B>}Psalm 147:3 51:17 ^{<250B>}Isaiah 61:1) and such who have broken bones, who have fallen into sin to the breaking of their bones, to the destroying of their peace, joy, and comfort, as David, Peter, and others have done; he sets their broken bones, and restores the joys of his salvation; and causes the bones which were broken to rejoice; at the discoveries of his pardoning grace and mercy, (^{<150B>}Psalm 51:8,12):

and will strengthen that which was sick; sick through sin, as all men are; sick of sin, as sensible sinners be; sickly and weak, and ready to die, as fallen professors, backsliders, are; sick of love, through want of the discoveries of it; long after them; cannot be easy without them, as Christ's spouse sometimes is; and sick for want of food, faint and languid for want of spiritual refreshment; as the persons were Christ had compassion on, being as sheep without a shepherd, (^{<408B>}Matthew 9:36 ^{<409B>}Matthew 9:12 ^{<613B>}1 Corinthians 11:30 ^{<211B>}Song of Solomon 2:5 5:8) each of these the Lord strengthens with the discoveries and applications of pardoning grace; with the flagons of his love, and apples of his promises; with the food of the Gospel, which strengthens men's hearts; and with grace out of his

fulness, whereby they are strengthened against sin, snares, and temptations, and to exercise grace, and do the will of God:

but I will destroy the fat and the strong; that are full of themselves, lifted up with pride, conceited with their riches or righteousness, and despise others, whom they thrust with side and shoulder, and push with their horns, (~~330~~ Ezekiel 34:21). So the Targum interprets it of wicked men,

“and I will consume the ungodly and sinners;”

but the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, “I will keep the fat and the strong”; in the plight and condition in which they are, and make them still stronger, and more fat and flourishing; so Jerom interprets it of saints and godly persons; and this agrees with the preceding clauses; only the original Hebrew text is against it, which does not admit of a various reading; and this rendering seems to arise in the Septuagint, the others follow, from the mistake of a similar letter: “I will feed them with judgment”; meaning either the whole flock, consisting of fat and lean cattle, making a distinction between them, (~~347~~ Ezekiel 34:17,20), feeding them with discretion, and judging them according to their deserts; or else the fat and the strong ones, by inflicting righteous vengeance on them, feeding them with wormwood and gall; or his own people and sheep only. So the Targum, “I will govern my people with judgment”; in righteousness, goodness, truth, and faithfulness.

Ver. 17. *And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Having done with the shepherds, and the complaint against them, the Lord proceeds to take notice of the flock, or the people themselves, and the evils that were among them; for in the Lord’s own flock, in the nation and church of Israel, as now in the visible congregated churches of Christ, there were two sorts of persons, some good, others bad; some that behaved well, and others ill; some were sheep, and others goats:

behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats: between the smaller and weaker cattle, the sheep and the lambs; and the larger and stronger cattle, the rams and he goats; by which latter may he meant persons of superior power and authority, of greater wealth and riches, and of more wisdom and knowledge, at least in their own conceits; and who were oppressive and injurious to the poor and common people, and less knowing, at least as they thought; who may be intended by the former: now, the Lord, as he observed a difference between them, he

would make this manifest, and take the part of the one against the other; even the part of the weaker against the stronger. The Targum is,

“behold, judge between man and man, sinners and the ungodly.”

Ver. 18. *Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, &c.*] This is directed to the rams and he goats, to the people of power and wealth, or who had the key of knowledge and instruction; who, by their conduct, showed as if it was not enough for them to eat and drink the best of things themselves, to enjoy their wealth and riches, and keep their posts of honour and profit, and the revenues of them, in church and state:

but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? but they must oppress the poor, by taking away from them that little they have; or by making their lives uncomfortable to them, by their severities and exactions; so that that small pittance they had, they cannot enjoy with any pleasure, The allusion is to beasts in pasture, which tread down and put dung what they do not eat, which makes what is left unfit for others; and to cattle, at ponds of water, which having drank, foul the rest with their feet; as camels particularly are said to do; so that others cannot drink after them, at least not so agreeably: this may be applied to the Scribes and Pharisees, and such as they were, who devoured widows' houses, and made void the word and commandments of God, by their traditions; teaching for doctrines the commandments of men; and so polluted the pure waters of the sanctuary; defiled the Scriptures of truth, and delivered out such doctrines as were not food and drink to the souls of men, and yet were obliged to receive them; and such are heretical persons, who sometimes arise out of the churches, are a part of the flock, that corrupt the word of God, pervert the Scriptures, and handle them deceitfully; and may be said to tread down and trample upon the wholesome truths of the Gospel, and to muddy the clear doctrines of grace; so that the children of God cannot, as they desire, have the pure, unmixed, sincere milk of the word.

Ver. 19. *And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet, &c.*] They are forced to do it, not being able to come at any thing else; being as sheep without a shepherd, or worse:

and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet; which, as it cannot be agreeable and relishing, so neither wholesome; as the leaven of the

Scribes and Pharisees; the traditions of the elders; the false doctrines of false teachers, whose words eat as do a canker. The Targum of the whole verse is,

“and my people eat the residue of the food of your ministers, and drink the residue of the drink of your ministers.”

Ver. 20. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them,* &c.] To the rams and he goats of the flock, that use the pastures and defile the waters after this manner, and make them unfit for the lesser cattle; or that use the poor people of God after this sort:

behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. The Targum is,

“between the rich man and the poor man;”

this is repeated, and in very strong terms, for the confirmation of it: this the Lord promised to do, and he has done it by his son, to whom he committed all judgment; and who, in the days of his flesh, made a difference between those who were full of themselves, self-righteous persons; who were self-sufficient, and needed not repentance, nor any other righteousness but their own; who trusted in themselves, and despised others: and may be meant by the “fat cattle”: and between those who were low and mean in their own eyes, humble and meek, weary and heavy laden, hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of another: now for judgment did Christ come, that they which see not might see, and those who saw might be made blind; he called the one, and not the other, to repentance; made known the things of the Gospel to babes, and hid them from the wise and prudent; rejected the one, and had compassion on the other; (see ^{<B72>}John 5:22 9:39 ^{<A93>}Matthew 9:13,36 11:25,26), and when he comes a second time, he will judge between these, and separate them; and set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left, (^{<A53>}Matthew 25:31-33).

Ver. 21. *Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder,* &c.] As the stronger cattle do the lesser:

and pushed all the diseased with your horns; as horned cattle do those they dislike, and bear an antipathy to; which to do to the diseased is great cruelty: sheep, it is said, will take some care of those that are diseased among them, and bring them to places of sunshine and shelter; but here the horned part of the flock, and in health, are represented as acting a

barbarous part to the weak and diseased: this may denote such as are in power and authority, using it to the hurt and detriment of those that are under them, and whom they should relieve and protect: it may be applied to the anathemas and excommunications of the Jews, who pronounced those an accursed and ignorant people that believed in Christ, and expelled such out of their synagogues that professed his name; and to their persecutions of the apostles and first Christians:

till he have scattered them abroad; or “without”,^{f590}; that is, without the land. The Targum is,

“through the provinces;”

obliged them to quit their country, and go unto other parts, as the first preachers of the word did; who, upon the persecution at the death of Stephen, were scattered abroad everywhere, (~~440E~~Acts 8:1,4).

Ver. 22. *Therefore will I save my flock*, &c.] Or redeem my people, as the Targum; that is, by his son, after described, as his shepherd and servant:

and they shall no more be a prey: to Satan the roaring lion; nor to such horned cattle, their persecutors; nor to false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive; nor shall they ever perish, being the sheep of Christ, hand, and under the care of him the shepherd, spoken of in the next verse:

and I will judge between cattle and cattle; between man and man, as the Targum; that is, between good and bad men, the persecutors and the persecuted. (See Gill on “~~2547~~Ezekiel 34:17, 20”).

Ver. 23. *And I will set up one shepherd over them*, &c.] Or governor, as the Targum; an excellent one of a thousand, the only one; in comparison of whom others are not to be named; for though there are under shepherds, as magistrates and ministers of the word, he is the principal one; that is, Christ, called the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, and the chief Shepherd, and the only one; and who became so by the constitution and appointment of Jehovah the Father; who chose him, called him, and intrusted him with all his sheep: who sent him to seek and save his lost sheep; for whom he died, rose again, and is accountable: he is more particularly called the one Shepherd, with respect to Jew and Gentile; (see ~~806~~John 10:16):

and he shall feed them; the flock, even the poor of the flock, thrust at and pushed by others: he shall feed them by his ministers, as under shepherds in his churches, where his word is preached, and his ordinances are administered; he shall feed them with himself, the bread of life; with his flesh and blood, which are meat and drink indeed; with covenant grace, blessings, and promises; with the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; he feeds his babes with milk, his strong men with meat, and all with the wholesome words of faith and good doctrine, whereby he nourishes them up to everlasting life; and this he

shall do, not by force, but willingly: it denotes the certainty of it; it may be depended on:

even my servant David; not David himself literally; who though a shepherd, and the servant of the Lord, yet had been dead many years before this prophecy was delivered; nor Zerubbabel, who was of his seed; for though a servant of the Lord, and a prince or governor of Judah, yet not a king, and much less a king or prince for ever; as this person is said to be, (~~33724~~ Ezekiel 37:24,25), but the Messiah, as is expressly owned by Kimchi; who says, this is the Messiah that shall arise from his seed in the time of salvation: he is called David because his name agrees with him, which signifies “beloved”, he being beloved of God and man; and because the son of David, of his seed according to the flesh; and because David was an eminent type of him, in his person, offices, afflictions, wars, victories, and exaltation; and because he was David’s Lord and representative, and in whom his everlasting kingdom is established. The same is called the servant of the Lord, as he often is in Scripture, being so in his office capacity as Mediator; and because he took upon him the form of a servant; did the work of one; and was of the Lord’s choosing, calling, supporting, and glorifying:

he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd; which is repeated for the greater confirmation of it.

Ver. 24. *And I the Lord will be their God*, &c.] The God of them Christ is the shepherd of, and whom he feeds; the sheep and poor of the flock: this is the great blessing of the everlasting covenant, and than which there cannot be a greater, to have the Lord, the everlasting and unchangeable Jehovah, to be a covenant God and Father:

and my servant David a Prince among them; who should reside among them, dwell with them, by granting them his spiritual presence, and so rule over them, protect and defend them; even he who is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and is exalted, a Prince and a Saviour of his people Israel; he is such a Shepherd as that he is a Prince; and such a Prince as that he is a Saviour and under whose princely government is the greatest safety:

I the Lord have spoken it; and therefore it shall assuredly be. The Targum is,

“I the Lord have decreed it in my word;”

he had determined it within himself, and promised it in covenant, and spoke of it in prophecy, and it should be fulfilled.

Ver. 25. *And I will make with them a covenant of peace,* &c.], Such the covenant of grace is, made with Christ from everlasting; in which Jehovah proposed terms of peace, and which Christ undertook to answer, and became the peacemaker; and from this article concerning the peace and reconciliation of men the covenant is so called; (see ²⁵⁴⁰Isaiah 54:10), this the Lord promises to make known to his people his flock, to show them their interest in it, and to make it good unto them; for otherwise it was made with Christ, and with them in Christ from all eternity. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read,

“I will make with David a covenant of peace:”

and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; which was literally fulfilled when the Jews returned from Babylon; during their captivity, the land being uninhabited, evil beasts increased in it, and possessed it; but upon their return these ceased, being either destroyed, or driven away: but figuratively these design wicked men, who, for the malignity of their nature, manners, and conversation, are called evil beasts, as the Cretians were, (⁵⁰¹²Titus 1:12), particularly false teachers may be designed; those grievous wolves that spare not, but wrong the flock; but now shall be no more, being either forced to quit their place, or truly converted; so that the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; which will be the peaceable and comfortable state of the church in the latter day; when there will be none to hurt and destroy in the Lord’s holy mountain, (²³¹⁶Isaiah 11:6-9):

and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods; not only in their houses, but in the fields, and even in the wilderness, and in the woods, where wild beasts used to resort; but now being clear of all, and under the protection of such a Shepherd and Prince as David the servant of the Lord, they shall have no dread upon their mind, no fear of any danger; but dwell in the utmost security, lie down and sleep in peace and safety, the Lord sustaining them; and whom they shall serve without fear of any enemy all their days, in righteousness and holiness, being delivered out of the hands of them all.

Ver. 26. *And I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing, &c.*] Alluding either to the city of Jerusalem, and the places adjacent; or to the temple, and the houses about it. So the Targum,

“I will cause them to dwell round about the house of my sanctuary;”

and so Kimchi interprets it of the temple. Some Christian interpreters, by the “hill” or mountain, understand Christ; and not amiss; who may be compared to one for height; he being higher than the kings of the earth, or than the heavens and angels there, as man and Mediator; as well as is God over all, blessed for ever; and for fruitfulness, from whom the saints have all theirs, either in grace or good works; and for shade, he being the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; which yields delight and refreshment, and is a protection from the heat of a fiery law, flaming justice, the wrath of God and man, and the fiery darts of Satan; and for shelter and security, there being salvation in him, when none in other hills and mountains; and for duration and immovableness, being the same today, yesterday, and for ever: and now the persons about him are such who are made nigh by his blood; brought to him by his powerful and efficacious grace; are worshippers about the throne where he sits; such as cleave to him, and follow him wherever he goes, and shall be with him to all eternity; these he makes a blessing, or most blessed. So the Targum renders it,

“and they shall be blessed;”

they are blessed in Christ their head; they are blessed through him as their Redeemer and Saviour, who was made a curse for them; they are blessed through being in him, and by the imputation of blessings to them from him, and through the application of them by his Spirit; their persons are blessed, and so are the places or habitations where they dwell: or rather this may be

understood of the church of God, often compared to a hill for its height and eminence; for its fertility and fruitfulness; for its stability and firmness; and in allusion to the hill of Zion for its holiness, and being the place of the divine residence; (see ^{<1951>}Psalm 15:1 24:4 68:15,16) now, the persons about this hill are those who are come to Mount Zion the church of God; being brought there by the Lord himself, and who take up their abode there; who lie about this hill, as flocks of sheep, in their several folds or congregated churches; (see ^{<2273>}Jeremiah 23:3 33:13) and these the Lord makes a blessing to one another, by their spiritual conversation, prayers, and services of love; and to the world, to kingdoms and states, to cities, towns, and neighbourhoods, and to particular families, where they are placed; and even to the world in general; for they are the light, stay, and stability of it; and without which it would be in darkness, corrupt and putrefy, and not continue long:

and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; which, in the spiritual sense, may design the Gospel; which, like a shower of rain, comes from God; descends from heaven; is a gift of God; which falls according to divine direction; refreshes, revives, and makes fruitful; brings a plenty of divine blessings with it; and comes in season, at its proper time; and is a word in season to weary souls:

there shall be showers of blessings; which the Gospel brings with it; spiritual blessings, blessings of grace; such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life: these, like showers, come from God; are free grace gifts of his, of which there is a large abundance; and which descend on Mount Zion the church of God; which is another Gerizim, on which the blessings are pronounced, (^{<1923>}Psalm 133:3 ^{<2550>}Isaiah 55:10,11 ^{<3101>}Zechariah 10:1).

Ver. 27. *And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit*, &c.] Such as are trees of righteousness, rooted in Christ, and planted in his church, and watered with his grace; these bring forth, bear, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness by him:

and the earth shall yield her increase; the fallow ground of men's hearts being broke up, and the seed of the word and of divine grace being sown in them, they bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold; (see ^{<1950>}Psalm 67:1,2,6,7), this, and what goes before, may be literally understood of the land of Canaan, and the fruitfulness of it, when the Jews shall again possess it; to which the next clause seems to have some respect:

and they shall be safe in their land; no enemy to disturb them, to invade or do any acts of violence to them: this will be when the Jews are converted, and become Christians; and antichrist destroyed; they will have none but Christian powers about them, who will be their protection. This is true, in a spiritual sense, of all the saints, who are under the care and government of Christ their Shepherd and Prince:

and shall know that I am the Lord; Jehovah their righteousness, Saviour and Redeemer:

when I have broken the bands of their yoke; of sin, Satan, and the law, and of all enemies:

and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them; or made them their servants, to whom they were subject; literally, the nations of the world, among whom they are dispersed; and figuratively, sin, whose servants men in a state of nature are; and Satan, by whom they are led captive; and the law, under which they are held as transgressors; and all other spiritual enemies; (see ^{<4174>}Luke 1:74,75).

Ver. 28. *And they shall no more be a prey to the Heathen, &c.*] To the Papists, who shall now be perished out of the land, (^{<3906>}Psalm 10:16):

neither shall, the beasts of the land devour them; neither that beast which rose up out of the sea, nor that which came up out of the earth, (^{<4101>}Revelation 13:1,11), the pope, both in his secular and ecclesiastic power, being destroyed. So the Targum,

“and the kingdoms of the earth shall not consume them;”

the antichristian kingdoms:

but they, shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid; (See Gill on ^{<2625>}Ezekiel 34:25”); (See Gill on ^{<2627>}Ezekiel 34:27”).

Ver. 29. *And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, &c.*] Or, “for a name”; or, “of a name”^{f591}; a famous one: this is to be understood, not of the Jewish nation itself, as the Targum,

“and I will raise up for them a plantation for standing;”

or which shall continue; but of the Messiah, and not of his incarnation, when he sprung up as a tender plant out of the dry ground, and as a branch out of the roots of Jesse, being on that account often spoken of as a

branch; (see ^{<310>}Isaiah 11:1 53:2 ^{<308>}Zechariah 3:8 6:12), but of him in a more raised and exalted state, as grown up to a stately tree, a goodly cedar, as in (^{<372>}Ezekiel 17:23) when his interest and kingdom should be great and glorious in the world, as it will be at the time of the conversion of the Jews; and it is spoken of his manifestation to them as a plant of renown, or as a renowned plant, the true vine and tree of life; or as a famous renowned person, one of name; whose glorious names and titles are Shiloh, the Messiah, Immanuel, Jehovah our righteousness, Jesus the Saviour, the Word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords:

and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land; the Targum is,

“they shall no more move from place to place through famine in the land;”

and which is to be understood, not of hunger through a famine of bread and water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; which they shall now have, and hear, and believe, and so have food for their souls, and hunger no more; as those do not who believe in Christ, (^{<365>}John 6:35), for this plant raised up for them, and pointed out to them, the tree of life, Christ Jesus, bears all manner of precious fruit, sweet to the taste, and nourishing to the souls of his people; under his shadow they sit, and his fruit is sweet to them; and with him is bread enough, and to spare; so that there is no want, nor fear of consumption with hunger, where he is:

neither bear the shame of the Heathen any more; being called by them Jews, in away of taunt, a proverb, and a curse; and outcasts, whom none seek after; but now they shall no more be termed forsaken, or called desolate, but instead thereof Hephzibah and Beulah; (see ^{<307>}Jeremiah 30:17 ^{<304>}Isaiah 62:4,12).

Ver. 30. *Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them,* &c.] Granting them his gracious and powerful presence, by all the above instances of his goodness and favour to them:

and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God: and not utterly cast off, as they seemed to be; the divine Shechinah now being returned to them, which had departed from them; the “loammi” that was written on them being now wiped off from them.

Ver. 31. *And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men,* &c.] This is observed, to show that all that had been said in this chapter concerning sheep, and a flock of sheep, was to be understood, not in a literal sense, but in a figurative one, of such as were rational and spiritual persons; a set of men whom the Lord had chosen, and separated from others, as his peculiar flock; and whom he took a special care of, and led them to, and fed them in, green pastures of his own providing; they are the souls of men that Christ is the Shepherd and Bishop of, (^{<4125>}1 Peter 2:25). The Talmudists^{f592} frequently make use of this text, to prove that Israelites are only called men, and not the Gentiles; (see ^{<4156>}Matthew 15:26)

and I am your God, saith the Lord God; which is often repeated for the certainty of it, because a blessing of the greatest importance, and which includes all others in it; (see ^{<3924>}Ezekiel 34:24,30).

CHAPTER 35

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 35

This chapter is a prophecy of the destruction of Edom, which is threatened, (^{<35:1>}Ezekiel 35:1-4), the cause of it, their hatred and slaughter of the Israelites, (^{<35:5>}Ezekiel 35:5-9), their claim of the lands of Israel and Judah for possession, (^{<35:10>}Ezekiel 35:10,11), their blasphemies against the people of God, and the Lord himself, (^{<35:12>}Ezekiel 35:12,13), the aggravation of their ruin, which was irretrievable; that when it was well with others, it should go ill with them; by way of just retaliation, (^{<35:14>}Ezekiel 35:14,15).

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the prophecy concerning the shepherds of Israel, and the goats of the flock, and of their oppressions of the sheep and lambs, the weak of the flock; and concerning the Messiah, and the blessings of grace promised the church in the latter day; came another concerning the destruction of her enemies, under the name of Seir or Edom:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man set thy face against Mount Seir, &c.*] Which had its name from Seir the Horite, who first possessed it; and was succeeded in it by Esau and his posterity, the Edomites; (see ^{<13:8>}Genesis 36:8,9,20 14:6) (^{<2:12>}Deuteronomy 2:12), so that the country of Edom or Idumea is here intended, and the inhabitants of it; who are put for the enemies of the church and people of God in general, as these were the enemies of Israel and Judah; and particularly for Rome, which, as it was spiritually called Egypt and Sodom, so it may be called Edom, as it often is by the Jews: now the prophet is bid to turn his face towards this mountain or country, and look sternly at it, and severely threaten it. The Targum is,

“take up a prophecy against it;”

which is expressed in the next clause:

and prophesy against it; foretell things contrary to it, which relate to its destruction, as follows:

Ver. 3. *And say unto it, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] The prophet was not upon the spot, and could not direct his speech immediately to the Edomites; but he might send this prophecy to their ambassadors at Babylon; or in a letter to them in their own land, in the name of the Lord:

behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee: not the face of the prophet only, but the face of God himself was against them; and a terrible thing it is for any to have God to be against them, whether a nation, or a particular person. The Targum is,

“behold, I send my fury upon thee:”

and I will stretch out mine hand against thee; which was able to reach them wherever they were: and which, being stretched out, cannot be turned back; and, where it lights, falls heavy indeed; namely, his mighty hand of power and wrath. The Targum is,

“and I will lift up the stroke of my power upon thee;”

that is, lift up his hand and strike powerfully; the consequence of which must be as follows:

and I will make thee most desolate; their land, cities, towns, and villages, all should be utterly laid waste; (see ^{<6676>}Revelation 17:16 18:8), so it follows:

Ver. 4. *I will lay thy cities waste, &c.*] Such as Dedan, Teman, Bozrah, and other cities of Idumea mentioned in Scripture; and figuratively may design all within the jurisdiction of Rome, the several cities of the antichristian states, called “the cities of the nations”; which will fall at the pouring out of the vials, (^{<6668>}Revelation 16:19):

and thou shalt be desolate; thoroughly and entirely, and remain so:

and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that has done all this; that the hand of God was in it; and that this is a punishment inflicted by him, for their sins after mentioned; but not that they should know the Lord spiritually and savingly, and so as to yield obedience to him, and own and acknowledge him to be their God; though this may be the case of a remnant among them; (see ^{<6613>}Revelation 11:13 18:4).

Ver. 5. *Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, &c.*] There was an old grudge and enmity subsisting in the posterity of Esau against the posterity

of Jacob, because the latter supplanted the former, and got the birthright and blessing from him; and which was discovered in all ages, and at all opportunities, and on all occasions which offered; and such has been the hatred of the church of Rome against the true professors and followers of Christ, as their bloody persecution of them in all ages have shown:

and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity: when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans, the Edomites not only rejoiced at it, and took part of the spoil, but stood in the crossways, and slew those that made their escape; or drove them back upon the sword of the enemy; or delivered them into their hands; which was barbarous and inhuman usage of their neighbours and brethren; (see Obidiah 1:10,11). The Targum is,

“and thou didst deliver the children of Israel into the hands of those that slay with the sword, in the time of their destruction:”

in the time that their iniquity had an end; when either the measure of that was full; or when they received for it full correction and chastisement; at the consummation of that.

Ver. 6. *Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, &c.*] The form of an oath; the Lord swears by himself, because he could swear by no greater; and which he never does but in matters of importance, and for the confirmation of them, as the following is:

I will prepare thee unto blood; prepare them for war, which will issue in slaughter and blood, such as the battle at Armageddon, (⁶⁶⁴Revelation 16:14,16 19:18,19): or, “I will make thee blood”⁵⁹³; nothing else but blood; a mere “Aceldama”, a field of blood; turn thee into blood, as the sea, rivers, and fountains will be, at the pouring out the second and third vials, (⁶⁶³Revelation 16:3,4):

and blood shall pursue thee; the guilt and vengeance of blood; or the avengers of the blood of the saints; the angels that shall pour out the vials of wrath on Rome; the ten kings that shall hate the whore. So the Targum;

“they that slay with the sword shall pursue thee;”

or the shedders of blood, as Ben Melech:

saith thou hast not hated blood; Jarchi reads it; “hast hated blood”: which he interprets of the blood of the sacrifices; as others, mentioned by him, of

the blood of circumcision; and others, of his brother, who was his flesh and blood, and hated by him; but it is a figurative phrase, by which less is expressed than is intended. The sense is, thou hast loved blood; thou hast delighted in shedding blood; hast thirsted after it, and drank plentifully of it, and even been drunk with it, as the whore of Rome is said to be, (~~6616~~ Revelation 17:5):

even blood shall pursue thee; this is repeated for the confirmation of it; and this was measure for measure; a just retaliation; having shed blood, it was but right that blood should pursue, and be given, (~~6616~~ Revelation 16:5,6).

Ver. 7. *Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate*, &c.] By shedding the blood of the inhabitants of it; and as Rome will be, when it will be utterly burnt with fire, as that city will, and the flesh of the whore also, and made desolate; and when all the vials shall be poured out on the antichristian states under her jurisdiction, (~~6616~~ Revelation 16:1 17:16 18:8):

and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth: every traveller that passeth to and fro; it shall no more be frequented by merchants; nor will there be any merchandise any more in it, (~~6611~~ Revelation 18:11).

Ver. 8. *And I will fill his mountains with his slain men*, &c.] Not only Mount Seir, but all the rest of the mountains, in Idumea; where they shall flee for refuge, and the enemy shall pursue them, and slay them; and where their carcasses will fall in such numbers, as to cover the mountains with them; compare with this (~~6618~~ Revelation 19:18,19):

in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword: expressive of the greatness and universality of the slaughter, that it should be a general one everywhere; hence rivers and fountains are said to become blood, through the number of the slain, (~~6616~~ Revelation 16:3,4).

Ver. 9. *I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return*, &c.] To their former dignity and glory; should not be built and inhabited again, but lie waste for ever: this agrees with what is prophesied of Edom, (~~3004~~ Malachi 1:4) and will be true of Rome or Babylon when destroyed; it will never rise more, but be like a millstone in the midst of the sea, (~~6621~~ Revelation 18:21):

and ye shall know that I am the Lord; (See Gill on “~~2604~~ Ezekiel 35:4”).

Ver. 10. *Because thou hast said, these two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it, &c.]* Meaning either Idumea he was now possessed of, and Israel he hoped to be, upon the people of it being carried captive; or rather the two nations of Israel and Judah, and their countries; which he pleased himself with would fall into his hands, as next heir to them; the posterity of his brother being dispossessed of them. This may denote the claim that Rome makes upon each of the Protestant nations and countries; and which she will think all her own, and that she is in the possession of them, upon the slaying of the witnesses; and when she will say, “I sit a queen, and am no widow”, (⁶⁸⁷Revelation 18:7).

Whereas the Lord was there; and heard their words, as Kimchi; and knew their thoughts, as Jarchi; so the Targum,

“and before the Lord the thoughts of the heart were manifest.”

The land of Judea was Immanuel’s land; and as the Lord had been in it, and granted his gracious presence in the tabernacle and temple, so he still continued his powerful presence in it, to protect and keep it for his people; who should return to it after their captivity, and inhabit it until the Messiah came, who was to be born in it. Or it may be rendered, “though the Lord was” or “dwelt there”^{f594}; denoting the great impiety and daring wickedness of the Edomites, to think and talk of possessing a country that was the Lord’s, and where he was: and this holds good of the true reformed churches of Christ; the Lord is there, and therefore, though they may be brought very low, and antichrist may triumph over them, and imagine he has got them under his power again, where they shall continue; yet on a sudden his destruction will come, and their deliverance. Or, “where the Lord was”^{f595}; but he has now departed, and will never return more, the temple being destroyed; so they said, encouraging themselves.

Ver. 11. *Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord, &c.]* An oath, as before in (³⁸⁶Ezekiel 35:6):

I will do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them: as thou hast been angry with them, and hated them, and done mischief to them, so will I be angry with thee, and hate thee, and inflict punishment on thee; I will retaliate all the anger, envy, and hatred showed unto my people, and punish thee according to thy just demerits. So the Romish antichrist shall be dealt with; he who has led into captivity shall go into it, and he that has killed with the sword

shall be killed by it. Babylon shall be rewarded double, as she has rewarded, others, (⁶¹³⁰Revelation 13:10 18:6).

And I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee; the Targum is,

“and I will reveal myself to do good unto them, when I shall have taken vengeance on thee:”

after the destruction of antichrist, the knowledge of God, and of Christ, will be spread among Jews and Gentiles, even all the world over, so universally, so clearly and distinctly, as never was before, (²⁷¹⁴Daniel 12:4 ²³¹⁰Isaiah 11:9).

Ver. 12. *And thou shall know that I am the Lord,* &c.] By the judgments executed upon Edom, and so upon antichrist; for God is known by the judgments he executes, both by good and bad men, (⁴⁰⁹⁶Psalms 9:16):

and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel; the people of Israel and Judah literally, and the churches and people of God figuratively: so antichrist is said to open his mouth in blasphemies, and to blaspheme the tabernacle of God, and them that dwell in heaven; that is, the church of God, and the saints of the most High; which are heard and observed by the Lord, and resented by him, and for which he will punish, (⁶¹³⁶Revelation 13:6):

saying, they are laid desolate, they are given up to consume; or, “for food”^{f596}; to possess and live upon; the inhabitants of them being carried captive or slain, so that there were none to enjoy the fruits of them; and therefore the Edomites concluded that the Israelites were forsaken of God, and that he would no more regard them, and that their land was theirs, which gave them great joy; (see ⁶¹¹⁰Revelation 11:10).

Ver. 13. *Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me,* &c.] Or, “magnified against me”^{f597}; spoke great swelling words of vanity, or had a mouth opened to speak great things and blasphemy against God, as antichrist is said to do, (⁶¹³⁵Revelation 13:5,6), what is spoken against the Lord’s people is taken by him as spoken against himself:

and have multiplied your words against me; not in prayer, by deprecations or supplications, as the word^{f598} used sometimes signifies; but in reproaches

and calumnies, vilifying expressions and hard speeches, against his people, in great numbers; which is all one as if they were directed against him:

I have heard them; these the Lord takes notice of, and will call to an account for, either here or hereafter; (see ⁽⁶⁰¹⁵⁾Jude 1:15).

Ver. 14. *Thus saith the Lord God, when the whole earth rejoiceth, &c.]* When it shall go well with the world in general, and the inhabitants of it; when they shall enjoy great peace and prosperity. Jarchi has a very good note upon this clause,

“when I shall take my kingdom; for then the earth will rejoice, as it is said, the Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice;”

so when Christ takes to himself his great power, and reigns, his church and people will rejoice, (⁽⁶⁰¹⁶⁾Revelation 11:16,17), as well as at the destruction of antichrist, as follows:

I will make thee desolate; for so some render it, “the whole earth rejoiceth when I make thee desolate”; or, “so shall all the earth rejoice in the desolation which I shall make for thee”^{f599}; (see ⁽⁶⁰¹⁸⁾Revelation 18:20 19:1,2) and which agrees with what follows:

Ver. 15. *As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, &c.]* So Edom rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem, (Obadiah 1:12), and so the followers of the man of sin will rejoice at the slaying of the witnesses, (⁽⁶⁰¹⁰⁾Revelation 11:10), which is resented by the Lord, and therefore adds,

so will I do unto thee; make thee desolate, as is explained in the next clause:

thou shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it; not that mount only, but all the land of Edom, called Idumea; the destruction shall be general, as it was, and irretrievable; and so not Rome only, but all the antichristian states, will be destroyed, when God comes forth in his wrath against them:

and they shall know that I am the Lord; the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent; who, having foretold all this, shall accomplish it.

CHAPTER 36

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 36

This chapter is a prophecy concerning the desolations of the land of Israel, and the causes of them; of the return of the people to it, and the fruitfulness of it; and of spiritual blessings bestowed upon them in the latter day. And first, for the comfort of the people of Israel, it is observed that their enemies that insulted them will suffer the vengeance of God's wrath, particularly the Edomites, (²³⁰¹Ezekiel 36:1-7), that the land of Israel should again become fruitful, its cities rebuilt, men and beasts be multiplied upon it, and be no more liable to destruction, nor bear any more the reproach of the Heathen, (²³⁰⁸Ezekiel 36:8-15), the causes of its desolation and destruction, the sins of its inhabitants, especially bloodshed, idolatry, and profanation of the name of God, (²³¹⁶Ezekiel 36:16-20), nevertheless the Lord promises to have mercy on them, and return them to their own land, not for their sakes, but for his own name's sake, (²³²¹Ezekiel 36:21-24), then follow promises of spiritual blessings to them: as purification from all sin by the blood of Christ; regeneration by his Spirit and grace; and evangelical obedience as the fruit of that, (²³²⁵Ezekiel 36:25-27), and others of a mixed kind, respecting partly temporal and partly spiritual blessings, (²³²⁸Ezekiel 36:28-36), for all which it is expected of the Lord that he should be prayed unto for them; particularly their inhabitation in their own land, and the multiplication of them in it, with which the chapter concludes, (²³³⁷Ezekiel 36:37,38).

Ver. 1. *Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, &c.]* The land of Judah, which was very mountainous, at least one part of it, called the hill country, (²⁴¹³Luke 1:39,65) and now the country being cleared of men through the captivity, and other desolating judgments, there were none but bare mountains to speak unto: or, "prophesy concerning the mountains of Israel"^{f600}; the inhabitants of them, or those that should be restored to them, concerning their future happiness and comfort: some render it, "against the mountains of Israel"^{f601}; but the later prophecies of them are in their favour, and not against them:

and say, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord; concerning the destruction of their enemies, and concerning the temporal blessings that should be bestowed on them.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] By the mouth of the prophet, who was bid to prophesy:

because the enemy had said against you, aha: rejoicing at the calamity of God's people, particularly the Edomites or Idumeans, as in the preceding chapter; and who are chiefly meant; and also the Ammonites and Tyrians, (^{327B}Ezekiel 25:3 26:2):

even the ancient high places are ours in possession; or, “the high places of the world shall be unto us for a possession”^{f602}; the land of Israel, according to Kimchi and others, was the highest part of the world, Jerusalem the highest part of that land, and the temple was built on the highest part of the city; and all these the Edomites claimed as their own, the land, city, and temple, and thought themselves sure of the same, as if they had them in actual possession; even the hilly part of the country, which had been so from the creation, and where stood many of the fortified and frontier towns and cities; which as strong as they were, or had been, they fancied would easily fall into their hands, now such desolations were made in the land.

Ver. 3. *Therefore prophesy and say, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Who heard all the enemy said, and knew all their designs and purposes, their schemes and devices:

because they have made you desolate; ravaged their country, destroyed their cities, burnt their temple, and carried them captive, and left the land without men or cattle:

and swallowed you up on every side; all their neighbours, being their enemies, were like ravenous beasts of prey, gaping upon them with their mouths; and, observing the low condition into which they were brought by the king of Babylon, helped forward the destruction; and everyone shared in the spoil and plunder nearest to them they could conveniently come at:

that ye might be a possession to the residue of the Heathen; either to those that were left in the land by the king of Babylon, or to the rest of the Heathen nations round about them:

ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people; reproached, defamed, and made a proverb and byword, by every foul mouthed prating fellow.

Ver. 4. *Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord*, &c.] As in (²⁷⁰¹Ezekiel 36:1), here repeated to raise and quicken their attention to what was about to be said to them:

thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken; before only the mountains are spoken to, though the whole land was included; here the several particulars are given, which describe the whole, and which suffered in the calamity, and the inhabitants that dwelt in them or near them; who only can be supposed to hear the word of the Lord, though places are only mentioned, because of the great depopulation of them:

which became a prey and derision to the residue of the Heathen that are round about; to the Tyrians, Philistines, Edomites, Ammonites, and Moabites; who mocked the Jews, rejoicing at their destruction by the king of Babylon, and seized upon as a prey to themselves what he left: or these are the residue of the Heathens round about Judea; who remained after the judgments threatened were executed on the above nations, foretold in chapters twenty five and twenty six, (see ²⁷⁰⁶Ezekiel 36:36).

Ver. 5. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Because these Heathens have acted such an unkind and cruel part to Israel:

surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken; in his fierce wrath and hot displeasure, resenting the ill usage of his people; hot with indignation against their enemies, having a fervent zeal for his own glory, and an affectionate concern for the good of his people. It is in the original text in the form of an oath, “if I have not spoken”, &c. ^{f603}; let me be reckoned a liar, or not God; believe me that I have spoken, and in this warm manner; and have not only foretold in prophecy, and threatened the destruction of these nations, but have resolved and determined upon it in my own mind. So the Targum,

“if I have not in the fire of my vengeance decreed in my word:”

against the residue of the Heathen, and against all Idumea; or Edom; the Edomites, even all of them, who of all the Heathen were the most

inveterate and implacable enemies of the Jews, though related to them, and are therefore particularly mentioned as the objects of the divine vengeance: the reason follows,

which have appointed my land into their possession; this land where his chosen people dwelt, and which he chose for them, and gave unto them; the land where he himself dwelt, and granted his presence; where his temple was, and he was worshipped. So the Targum,

“the land of the house of my majesty.”

Now this the Lord took ill at their hands, and resented, that they should lay out this land for themselves, and determine upon it as a possession and inheritance of theirs.

With the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey; with the utmost joy they joined Nebuchadnezzar’s army when he invaded the land of Judea and besieged Jerusalem, out of pure malice and spite to the people of the Jews, in order to eject them from the possession of their land, that it might become a prey to them; (see ^{}Psalm 137:7 Obidiah 1:12-14).

Ver. 6. *Prophecy therefore concerning the land of Israel, &c.*] And the inhabitants of it, for their comfort, in this their time of distress:

and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, thus saith the Lord God, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury; with great zeal for his honour, and the interest of his people; and with indignation at his and their enemies:

because ye have borne the shame of the Heathen; their calumnies and lies, their reproaches and scoffs, their injuries and abuses; all which were resented by the Lord, and therefore he determines to punish for them.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] This being the case, the people of God being in distress, and under shame and disgrace, and the enemy insulting them, and triumphing over them:

I have lifted up mine hand; solemnly swore; lifting up of the hand being a rite used by men when they swore, (^{}Genesis 14:22):

surely the Heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame; the punishment of their shame; that which is justly due to them for reproaching

and putting to shame the people of God: or they shall be a laughing stock to others, and be reproached and derided themselves, and so be paid in their own coin; a just retaliation this for their treatment of the Jews.

Ver. 8. *But ye, O mountains of Israel, &c.*] Literally understood, as appears by what follows; for though they could not hear what was said, the proprietors of them could, now in captivity; and the efficacy of the word should be seen on them, producing the following effects:

ye shall shoot forth your branches; that is, the trees that grew upon them should; the vines, and the olive trees, planted on hills and mountains, as was usual, as appears from the mount of Olives, and other places:

and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; not only put forth branches, but bear fruit; and which should be given to the right owners, the people of Israel, and not to the Heathens, who had claimed the ancient mountains for their possession:

for they are at hand to come; the Israelites; either by repentance, as Kimchi; or by a return from the Babylonish captivity, which was about forty or fifty years after this prophecy; and which was but a shadow and figure of their restoration in the latter day, yet to come; which might be said to be at hand, or near, with respect to God, with whom two or three thousand years are as nothing. The Targum is,

“for the day of my redemption is near to come.”

Ver. 9. *For, behold, I am for you, &c.*] For the mountains, that they might be cultivated and become fruitful, and be of advantage to their proprietors, and appear beautiful and lovely to behold, as well as to be useful:

and I will turn unto you; the Lord had turned from them, and left them a prey to the enemy, whereby they were become desolate; but now he would turn unto them, and bless them, and make them fruitful, and return the right owners of them to them, who should greatly improve them:

and ye shall be tilled and sown; manured and cultivated, and sown with wheat and barley, as in former times.

Ver. 10. *And I will multiply men upon you, &c.*] Who should inhabit the cities on the mountains, and increase very much:

all the house of Israel, even all of it: not the Heathens should be multiplied on them, but the Israelites, all of them, and them only; all the tribes of Israel, the ten tribes as well as the other; and which is repeated for the confirmation of it: by this it appears that the prophecy has a further view than to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; for all did not return, many remained in the provinces of Babylon; and those that returned were chiefly of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; but few of the rest came with them. Kimchi thinks the words have respect to the ten tribes, which he says are hid to this day; so Ben Melech.

And the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded; in a literal sense; as well as the church of God, and inheritance of Christ, shall then be in a flourishing condition.

Ver. 11. *And I will multiply upon you man and beast,* &c.] Not only men, but beasts also, of which the mountains had been deprived, being killed by the enemy for present use, or drove off for future subsistence; but now there should be an increase of them, which should feed upon the herbage of the mountains, and the rich pastures on them, to the great advantage of the proprietors:

and they shall increase and bring forth; or, “multiply and increase”^{f604}; both men and beasts:

and I will settle you after your old estates; that is, you mountains shall be inhabited by those that formerly dwelt in you, and you shall be enjoyed by your right owners; by those who had you in possession from the beginning, from the times of Joshua; by whom you were settled on them by lot, according to their several tribes:

and will do better unto you than at your beginnings; not that the land should be better or more fruitful than in the times of Joshua, who led the people into and found it a land flowing with milk and honey, and abounding with all kind of fruit; or that the people should be more flourishing in temporal things than in the times of David and Solomon; for no such fruitfulness and prosperity took place upon the return from the Babylonish captivity: but rather this is to be understood of spiritual blessings and privileges in the times of the Messiah; and particularly when the Jews will be converted in the latter day:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord; that is, the inhabitants of the mountains of Israel, the converted Jews, shall know and own the Messiah, and that he is Jehovah, the eternal God, and not a mere man.

Ver. 12. *Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, &c.*] And not beasts, as during the captivity; and that without fear of wild beasts, or any enemy; and not as travellers upon them, but as inhabitants of them; who shall walk to and fro upon them, as the owners of them, and doing their proper business there:

even my people Israel; and them only: some read it, “with my people Israel”^{f605}; as if other men, Gentiles called by grace, should dwell with the Jews at this time, particularly at their restoration in the latter day; which may be true, and, which seems to be the sense of the whole sixtieth chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy:

and they shall possess thee, and thou shall be their inheritance; that is, thou mountain; a change of number, meaning everyone of the mountains, even the whole land of Canaan, which was given to the Israelites for an inheritance; and was typical of the eternal inheritance in heaven:

and thou shall no more henceforth bereave them; of men, or of children; or be no more the cause of their being childless, or of bereaving them of men; sins committed on the mountains being the cause of provoking the Lord to bereave them; or men should be no more killed upon them, as they had been.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord God, because they say unto you, &c.*] The Heathens that dwelt round about the land of Judea said to the mountains, or to the whole land,

thou land devourest up men; eats up the inhabitants of it; which is part of the ill report the spies, in the times of Moses, brought on it, (~~4132~~ Numbers 13:32), to which the allusion is here; suggesting, that either the air was unwholesome; or that the land did not produce a sufficiency of food to support the inhabitants of it; or that the curse of God was upon it; and that one judgment or another was ever on it; either famine, or pestilence, or the sword of the enemy, or internal broils among themselves, or wild beasts, whereby the inhabitants of the land were wasted and consumed:

and hast bereaved thy nations; the several tribes, of men and children; so that they were diminished and depopulated: the allusion seems to be to

miscarrying women, or such who kill their children in the womb, and become abortive.

Ver. 14. *Therefore thou shalt devour men no more*, &c.] Or they shall be no more destroyed in thee by pestilence, famine, sword, or other means:

neither bereave that nations any more, saith the Lord; or, “thou shalt not cause them to fall any more”^{f606}, for so it is written, as in (~~2665~~ Ezekiel 36:15), though the marginal reading is, “thou shalt not bereave”, which we follow; and both are to be received, since miscarriages often come by falls.

Ver. 15. *Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the Heathen any more*, &c.] Their calumnies and revilings, their scoffs and jeers:

neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more; or be any more a taunt and a curse, a proverb and a byword of the people; or be their laughing stock, and the object of their derision:

neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord God; by famine, sword, or pestilence, or any other judgment caused by sin: or, “thou shalt not bereave”^{f607}, as the marginal reading is; and which the Targum and many versions follow: now what is here promised, in this and the preceding verse, had not its full accomplishment upon the Jews’ return from the Babylonish captivity; for since that time their men have been devoured, and their tribes have been bereaved of them by famine, sword, and pestilence; and they have heard and bore the shame and reproach of the nations where they have been dispersed, and do to this day; wherefore these prophecies must refer to a future restoration of that people.

Ver. 16. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] Here begins another prophecy, which was delivered about the same time with the former:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 17. *Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land*, &c.] The land of Canaan, which the Lord their God gave unto them; a land abounding with all good things, where they dwelt in great ease, plenty, and prosperity; and which also was a holy land, peculiarly chosen of God for his worship and service:

they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: by their sinful ways and evil works: sin is of a defiling nature; it defiles the bodies and souls of

men; it defiles their own, and it defiles others; it defiles a land, and the inhabitants of it, and makes them loathsome and abominable to a pure and holy God:

their way was before me, as the uncleanness of a removed woman: of a menstruous woman in the time of her separation; when she was debarred the company of her husband, and might not enter into the sanctuary of the Lord: this shows what an evil thing sin is, what an uncleanness it is in the sight of God, how abhorrent sinful ways are to him; and though he was the husband of these people, yet, because of their sins, he separated from them, and removed them from and out of their land, as not fit to be in his presence, nor to live there.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore I poured my fury on them,* &c.] Like a mighty flood that carries all before it, in just retaliation

for the blood they had shed upon the land; the innocent blood, as the Targum; the blood of righteous men, that opposed and reprov'd them for their sinful ways; the blood of the prophets, that were sent to warn them of them; and especially the blood of the Son of God; for this prophecy reaches further than to the times of the Babylonish captivity:

and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it; or, “for their dung”^{f608}; their dunghill gods; not only for their idols, and their idolatry, before the Babylonish captivity, which they after that were free from; but for the traditions of their elders, they set up against and above the word of God; and their own legal righteousness, their idols, the works of their hands, which wore as dung; and through their attachment to which they rejected Christ and his righteousness; and which brought wrath upon them, and them into their present captivity.

Ver. 19. *And I scattered them among the Heathen,* &c.] First by the Chaldeans, in the various provinces of Babylon; and next by the Romans, in the various parts of the world; and in this condition they now are:

and they were dispersed through the countries; or blown about as chaff, stubble, or any such like thing, is by the wind:

according to their way and according to their doings I judged them; condemned and punished them as their evil ways and wicked works deserved, according to the rules of justice and equity; so that no injustice

was done them, nor could any fault be justly found in the proceedings of God towards them.

Ver. 20. *And when they entered unto the Heathen, whither they went, &c.]* When the Jews went into the Heathen countries, whither they were carried captive, either by the Chaldeans, or by the Romans:

they profaned my holy name; by their irreligion and immorality; by their violation of both tables of the law; by their wicked lives and conversations, whereby they gave the enemy an occasion to reproach them, their religion, and their God, (⁴¹²⁴Romans 2:24):

when they said to them, these are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land; these are the men that boast they are the people of the Lord, whom he has chosen above all people, and see what a wicked people they are; for their sins they are driven out of the land, and become our captives: or though they were the Lord's people, as they pretend, and were under his care and protection; yet he was not able to keep them in their own land, and deliver them out of our hands, but they are carried captive by us; and thus the name of God, his being and perfections, were blasphemed, and his word, worship, and worshippers, were ridiculed by them. The Targum is,

“if these are the people of the Lord, how is it that they are gone out of the land of the house of his majesty?”

Ver. 21. *But I had pity for my holy name, &c.]* Had pity on the Jews for his name's sake, and not theirs; or he had a tender concern for his own honour and glory:

which the house of Israel had profaned among the Heathen, whither they went; and therefore was resolved to take a method for the glorifying of it, and that in a way of special grace and mercy to his people; (See Gill on ²⁵⁵⁰Ezekiel 36:20”).

Ver. 22. *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, &c.]* This is an order to the prophet, the son of man, (²⁵⁶⁷Ezekiel 36:17):

thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel; what he hereafter promises to do for them, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual; which he did, not on account of any deserts or

worthiness in them; for they had none, having done nothing to merit his favour, but, on the contrary, everything to provoke the eyes of his glory:

but for my holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the Heathen, whither ye went; for the honour of his holy name, for the glory of his holy word, holy worship, and holy religion; all which were traduced and reproached among the Heathen, by reason of the ungodly behaviour of the Jews.

Ver. 23. *And I will sanctify my great name, &c.]* The same with his holy name; for his greatness lies in his holiness; which name he sanctifies when he clears it from all charges and imputations; when he makes it appear to be holy and himself to be glorious in holiness; when he vindicates the honour of his name, not in a way of punishment, as he justly might, but in a way of grace and mercy; he sanctifies his name when he proclaims it, a God gracious and merciful; for it was in this way and manner he determined to make himself illustrious and glorious, and do honour to his name:

which was profaned among the Heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; this is repeated again and again, to show the heinousness of this sin, how ill he took it at their hands, and what a concern it gave him:

and the Heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes; when the Lord shall fulfil his promises, and deliver his people; when he shall sanctify, justify, and save them; and he shall be sanctified, served, and worshipped by them, and among them: it will be taken notice of by infidels themselves; and they shall hereby know, and be obliged to acknowledge, that the God of Israel is the only Lord God; that he is true and faithful to his word, righteous and holy, in his ways, the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent.

Ver. 24. *For I will take you from among the Heathen, &c.]* The Chaldeans and other nations, among whom they were carried captive; and the Papists, among whom many of them now are, often called Heathens and Gentiles in Scripture: this will be fully completed at the time of the Jews' conversion in the latter day: the phrase fitly expresses the act of divine grace, in taking his people from among the world by the effectual calling:

and gather you out of all countries; to himself, and to his Son, and to his church, and to some certain place from whence they will go up in a body to their own land, as follows: (see ³⁰¹¹Hosea 1:11):

and will bring you into your own land; into the land of Canaan literally understood, as well as into the church of God here, and into the heavenly country hereafter, of which Canaan was a type.

Ver. 25. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you,* &c.] Not baptismal water, as Jerom; an ordinance indeed of the Gospel, and to which the Jews will submit when converted; and which is performed by water, but not by sprinkling, nor does it cleanse from sin; and is administered by men, and is not an operation of God, as this is: rather the regenerating grace of the Spirit; though this does not purify from all sin, and besides is intended in the next verse: it seems best to understand it of the blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, and of justification from sin, and pardon of it by it; so Kimchi and Jarchi interpret of purification by atonement; and the Targum is,

“I will forgive your sins, as one is cleansed by the water of sprinkling, and the ashes of a heifer, which is for a sin offering:”

and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; by it men are justified from all things, and are made perfectly pure and spotless in the sight of God; they are cleansed from original sin, the pollution of their nature; from all actual sins and transgressions, which are very defiling; from sins of heart, lip, and life; even from such as are idols, set up in the heart, and served.

Ver. 26. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you,* &c.] A “new heart” and a “new spirit” are one and the same; that is, a renewed one; renewed by the Spirit and grace of God; in which a new principle of life is put; new light is infused; a new will, filled with new purposes and resolutions; where new affections are placed, and new desires are formed; and where there are new delights and joys, as well as new sorrows and troubles; the same which in the New Testament is called the “new man”, and the new creature, (⁴⁰²¹Ephesians 4:24 ⁴⁰¹⁷2 Corinthians 5:17). The Targum paraphrases it,

“a heart fearing, and a spirit fearing;”

where the true fear of God is, a truly gracious heart; and which is purely the gift of God, and is the fruit of his rich grace, abundant mercy, and great love:

and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh; the Targum is,

“and I will break the heart of the wicked, which is hard as a stone;”

this is a heart hardened by sin, and confirmed in it; destitute of spiritual life and motion; senseless and stupid, stubborn and inflexible; on which no impressions are made; and which remains hard and impenitent: now this is in “the flesh”, in corrupt nature; and this hardness of heart is natural to men; and all who have it are after the flesh, or are carnal; and it requires omnipotence to remove it; it cannot be taken out by men of themselves: nor by ministers of the word; nor by the bare mercies and judgments of God; but by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; giving repentance unto life; working faith in the soul, to look to a crucified Christ; and shedding abroad the love of God in the heart, which softens and melts it; all which is done by the Spirit, and frequently by means of the word. This is interpreted, in the Talmud^{f609}, of the evil imagination, or corruption of nature; and is one of the names of it, a stone; and it refers, it is said^{f610}, to the time or world to come, the days of the Messiah:

and I will give you an heart of flesh; a heart sensible of sin and danger; a penitent one, soft and tender, through the love and fear of God; a spiritual and sanctified heart; submissive to the will of God; flexible and obsequious to the commands of Christ; on which impressions are made by the grace of God; where the laws of God are written, the Gospel of Christ is put; where Christ himself is formed; where are the fear of God, faith, hope, and love, and every other grace.

Ver. 27. *And I will put my Spirit within you*, &c.] My Holy Spirit, as the Targum; the Spirit of holiness; the author of internal sanctification, of the new heart and spirit, and of the fleshy one before mentioned; and through whose grace and strength the saints do what is after said they shall do:

and cause you to walk in my statutes: men are first made alive by the Spirit of God, and have spiritual strength put into them, who of themselves can do nothing; by means of which they are enabled to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, and to continue in the observation of them; which walking in them supposes:

and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them; being constrained by the love of God; influenced by the grace of Christ; and strengthened by the blessed Spirit: and such persons observe and do them willingly and cheerfully; from a principle of love; in faith, and to the glory of God;

without any mercenary and selfish views; without trusting to, and depending upon, what is done for salvation.

Ver. 28. *And ye shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, &c.]* Not only shall be brought into it, but shall inhabit it, and continue there, and that in great safety and plenty; and which will be the more valued and esteemed, and reckoned a great blessing to enjoy; because this land is the gift of God, and what he gave to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by promise so long ago, and to their seed; of which promise it appears he is not unmindful:

and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God; which is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace; which will now be renewed, and the blessings of it applied. The Jews will appear to be the people of God by their effectual calling and conversion; and God will show himself to be their God, by his presence with them, his protection of them, and that communion with himself he will admit them to: (see ^{<2400>}Jeremiah 31:1 32:38), “the loammi” will be taken off, and they will be again declared to be the covenant people of God, (^{<3009>}Hosea 1:9,10).

Ver. 29. *And I will also save you from all your uncleannesses, &c.]* From all their filthy lusts of pride, envy, malice, covetousness, whoredom, blasphemy, and infidelity, to which the Jews are now addicted; but at this time shall be saved from the power and dominion of them by the sanctifying grace of the Spirit; and from the guilt and pollution of them by the blood of Christ sprinkled on them; and this, not from one, or some of them only, but from all of them; all Israel will be saved, and they will be saved from all their sins, (^{<5125>}Romans 11:25,26):

and I will call for the corn, and will increase it; which shall answer to the call of God, as a servant to his master; and shall spring up out of the earth in great abundance; and which shall grow, and increase, and bring forth much fruit; and yield bread to the eater, and seed to the sower: and which is to be understood, not of corn in a literal sense only, but of corn in a spiritual sense; of all spiritual provisions, the word and ordinances, and especially the corn of wheat, Christ Jesus; who is the sum and substance of the Gospel and his ordinances, and is in them food for the faith of his people; (see ^{<3017>}Zechariah 9:17): and

lay no famine upon you; neither a famine of bread, or of water; nor of hearing the word of the Lord; but shall have plenty of provisions, both for soul and body; (see ^{<3081>}Amos 8:11).

Ver. 30. *And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, &c.]* The fruit of trees that grow in gardens, and orchards, and vineyards, as pomegranates, apples, olives, grapes, &c. and the corn and grass of the field; so that there shall be great plenty of each of these, and no want of anything for man or beast: and by these are mystically designed spiritual blessings; the fruits of righteousness, with which the saints, who are trees of righteousness, shall be laden; and an increase of gifts and grace in the churches of Christ, and the members of them:

that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the Heathen; who upbraided them with it, that they were forced to go to other nations for food, as in the times of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that their land wanted rain, and waited for it; which, if it had not, became barren; whereas the Egyptians particularly needed it not, their land being watered yearly with the overflowings of the Nile: or the sense is, they should not be reproached with their penury and want of the things of life; and spiritually, that they should not be upbraided by the Gentiles with their want of the Gospel, and their contempt of it, their blasphemy and their unbelief; since they should now have it, receive, embrace, and love it, and feed upon it.

Ver. 31. *Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, &c.]* That were of their own choosing; in which they walked, and delighted to walk: and very evil ones they were; opposite to the ways of God; such as open violation of the law of God; neglect of his worship; idolatry, and many other sins, before the captivity; adhering to the traditions of their elders; and setting up their own righteousness as a justifying one afterwards; also their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah; their blasphemy against him, and persecution of his interest and people: now these will all be remembered with shame and confusion when the Lord shall bestow upon them the above blessings, spiritual and temporal; especially when a new heart and spirit shall be given them; the goodness of God will have such an influence upon them as to refresh their memories with former sins, and bring them to repentance for them; as well as to affect their minds, and make them thankful for present mercies: sins, which were before forgotten, or were

not thought to be sins, shall now come fresh in their minds, with all their aggravated guilt:

and your doings that were not good: far from being so, they were very evil, contrary to the law of God and Gospel of Christ; as they will at this time appear to themselves to be:

and shall loath yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations; their sins will be abominable to them, as they are in themselves, and to the Lord; and they will not only loath them, but themselves for them, when they shall come to have a true sight of them in their own colours, and a true sense of the evil nature of them; and this shall not be expressed only in the sight of men, and so as to be observed by them; but in their own sight, secretly and within themselves, under a clear and full conviction of their sins. The Syriac version is, “your faces shall be wrinkled”; as men’s are when they are displeased with themselves for what they have done. The Targum is,

“and ye shall groan when ye shall see, because of your sins, and because of your abominations;”

which is the case of sensible sinners, (⁴⁷⁰⁴2 Corinthians 5:4 ²⁰⁰⁴Ezekiel 20:43).

Ver. 32. *Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord, &c.*] Not for any worth or worthiness in them; for any merit or desert of theirs; for any goodness in them, or works of righteousness done by them; no, it purely flowed from his own unmerited grace and goodness; for his own sake, and for his own glory, will he do it; (see ⁴⁸⁰⁴Deuteronomy 9:4-6):

be it known unto you; this the Lord would have this people take notice of, who were very fond of their own righteousness and merits, and to trust therein, and ascribe much thereunto, as most men are too apt to do; and therefore, to take down their pride, and take them off of their boastings and vain opinions of themselves, he would have them know and acknowledge this; and be so far from placing any of the favours bestowed on them to the account of the merit of their good works, that they ought to take shame for their evil ones, as follows:

be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel; as men are when they are brought to a true sight and sense of them, and reflect

upon the evil of them, and are brought to true repentance for them; (see ~~Chap~~ Ezekiel 16:61,63).

Ver. 33. *Thus saith the Lord God, in the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, &c.*] By the free and full pardon of them; by sprinkling clean water on them, the blood of Christ on their consciences; and by applying the righteousness of Christ to them for their justification; as well as by creating clean hearts in them, for their sanctification; and enabling them by grace to escape and abstain from the pollutions of the world:

I will also cause you to dwell in the cities; that is, of Judea, which, as well as Jerusalem, shall be rebuilt and inhabited, as follows:

and the wastes shall be builded: such cities and towns as lay in ruins: temporal prosperity shall go along with or follow spiritual blessings to the people of the Jews at their conversion; or they shall dwell in the churches of Christ, which are as cities compact together, well regulated, and where Jews and Gentiles at this time will be fellow citizens.

Ver. 34. *And the desolate land shall be tilled, &c.*] The land of Judea, which lay desolate during the captivity, and which now is under the dominion of the Turks, and in a ruinous state, shall be manured and cultivated, and become fruitful, as it formerly was: or the people of the Jews, who, in a spiritual sense, are like barren and uncultivated ground; these shall have the fallow ground of their hearts ploughed up, and the seeds of grace, truth, and righteousness, shall be sown in them, and they shall bring forth the fruit of good works:

whereas it lay desolate in the eyes of all that passed by: as the land of Canaan now does to every traveller in it, that observes it, and compares it with what it once was; and as the present state of the Jews is, in the eyes of every Christian pilgrim and traveller, that takes notice of their blindness and ignorance, their unbelief and hardness of heart.

Ver. 35. *And they shall say, &c.*] Either the neighbouring nations that lived round about the land of Israel, (~~Chap~~ Ezekiel 36:36), or rather the travellers, as before, who having as they passed by observed what it had been, and now see what it is; these shall say to one another:

this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; for delight and fruitfulness: this may well be applied to the flourishing and fruitful state of the church of God, consisting of converted Jews, in the latter day:

and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited; which, as it will be true of cities in a literal sense, so of the churches of Christ in Judea in a spiritual sense; which will be rebuilt by the grace of God, fenced and fortified by his almighty power, and inhabited by true believers.

Ver. 36. *Then the Heathen that are left round about you, &c.*] Not cut off by the judgments which came upon them, according to the prophecies in chapter twenty five and twenty six, the residue of the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Tyrians; and, in the mystical sense, this may design the residue of the antichristian states not destroyed by the vials of God's wrath; (see ^{411B} Revelation 11:13):

shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate; this work of rebuilding Jerusalem, and other cities of Judea, and planting desolate places with trees, and all manner of corn and herbage for man and beast, as well as of building up and planting churches, will appear so manifestly the work of God, and not of men; which is brought about by his wonderful providence, or more surprising grace; that even the Heathen round about will take notice of it, and own and acknowledge it to be the Lord's work:

I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it; he has spoken of it by his prophets; he has promised it in his word, and he will surely do it; for he is true and faithful to his promises, and able to perform.

Ver. 37. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, &c.*] Besought and prayed unto for the accomplishment of the above promises, as well as what follows: for though God has promised and will perform, yet he expects that his people will apply to him for it; it is our duty to put the Lord in mind of his promises, to plead them with him, and pray unto him for the fulfilment of them. The Syriac version is, "even for this I seek Israel"; and so the Arabic version; as if the sense was, that the Lord will seek the people of Israel wherever they are, and find them out, and call them by his grace, and gather them out of all countries, and bring them into their own land: "to do it for them"; everything before promised, and what next follows:

I will increase them with men like a flock; as a flock of sheep is increased, which is a very increasing creature: or, “as a flock of men”^{f611}; it signifies that the people of the Jews will be very numerous at their conversion; (see ^{<3010>}Hosea 1:10).

Ver. 38. *As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts,* &c.] Like flocks of sheep, which were consecrated and set apart for holy uses, for sacrifices; even like the flocks of sheep, which were brought to Jerusalem to be offered in sacrifice at the three solemn festivals in the year; especially at the passover, when the Jews came from all parts of the country to slay and eat their passover; and every family had a lamb, which in all must be a great number: we read of thirty thousand lambs and three thousand bullocks given at one time for this service by King Josiah, besides what was given by the princes, (^{<4430>}2 Chronicles 35:7-9). The Targum is,

“as the holy people, as a people that is cleansed, and comes to Jerusalem at the feasts of the passover:”

or, “as the flock of the Holy Ones”^{f612}; either of the holy God, Father, Son, and Spirit; or of holy men, who are made holy or sanctified by the Spirit of God:

so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; or with men that are like sheep for meekness, harmlessness, patience, cleanness, society, and usefulness; and not with such as are comparable to unclean beasts, or beasts of prey; so it denotes both the quantity of persons that shall inhabit Judea, and dwelt both in the cities and churches there, and the quality of them.

CHAPTER 37

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 37

This chapter contains a prophecy of the Jews' return from captivity to their own land; of the union of the each tribes with one another; and of the glorious kingdom of Christ among them. Their restoration is represented by a vision of dry bones made alive; the place in which they were; the condition they were in; and the manner in which they were made to live, are described, (^{<3570>}Ezekiel 37:1-10), the explication and application of this vision to the Jews, (^{<3571>}Ezekiel 37:11-14), their union is signified by a sign or emblem of two sticks, which became one in the hand of the prophet, (^{<3575>}Ezekiel 37:15-17), the meaning of this is shown, (^{<3578>}Ezekiel 37:18-20), then follow promises of their return to their own land, in express words; of their being one kingdom, under one King, Christ, the antitype of David, of their sanctification; of their covenant interest in God, made manifest to them; and of his presence, and dwelling among them, (^{<3572>}Ezekiel 37:21-28).

Ver. 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me*, &c.] The Spirit of the Lord, a powerful impulse of his upon the prophet; the Targum interprets it a spirit of prophecy; (See Gill on "^{<3103>}Ezekiel 1:3"):

and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord: out of the place where he was to another; not really, but visionally, as things appeared to him, and as they were represented to his mind by the Spirit of God:

and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones: of men, as the Targum adds: this valley, Kimchi thinks, was the same by the river Chebar, where the prophet had his visions at first. R. Jochanan says it was the valley of Dura, and these the bones of them that were slain by Nebuchadnezzar there, (^{<2703>}Daniel 3:1). Rab says these were the children of Ephraim, slain by the men of Gath, (^{<1302>}1 Chronicles 7:20,21,22). Some of the Jewish Rabbins think there was a real resurrection at this time. R. Eliezer says, the dead Ezekiel quickened stood upon their feet, sung a song, and died. R. Eliezer, the son of R. Jose the Galilean, says, they went up into the land of Israel, married wives, and begat sons and daughters. R.

Judah ben Bethira stood upon his feet, and said, I am of their children's children, and these are the "tephillim" my father's father left me^{f613}; but these are all fabulous and romantic: others of them understand the whole in a parabolical way: these bones, and the quickening of them, were an emblem of the restoration of the Jews from their captivity, who were in a helpless and hopeless condition, as appears from (²⁵⁷¹Ezekiel 37:11-14), and of the conversion of that people in the latter day, which will be as life from the dead; and of the revival of the interest and church of Christ, when the slain witnesses shall rise, and ascend to heaven; and of the resurrection of the dead at the last day; and may be applied unto and be used to illustrate the quickening of dead sinners, by the efficacious grace of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 2. *And caused me to pass by them round about, &c.]*

Round, round^{f614}; several times round, that he might take exact notice of them, of their number, situation, and condition:

and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; as the Jews were in captivity; and as they will be when they shall be converted; and as the number of Christians will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; and as the dead will be at the time of their resurrection, both of the just and unjust:

and, lo, they were very dry; through length of time they had lain there, exposed to wind and weather; the flesh being wholly consumed from off of them, and the marrow within quite dried up; so that there was no probability or hope, humanly speaking, of their being quickened: these are a fit emblem of men in a state of nature and unregeneracy, who have no spiritual life, but are dead in trespasses and sins; have no sense of sin or danger; no strength to redeem and regenerate themselves, or do anything that is spiritually good; have no spiritual motion; no inward desires after God, or affection to him; no lifting up of the heart to him, or going out of the soul in faith and love to Christ; but in themselves entirely lifeless, helpless, and hopeless.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man, can these bones live? &c.]* Is there any probability of it? is there any reason to believe they shall live? can any ways and means be devised, or any methods taken, to cause them to live?

and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest; the prophet does not pronounce at once that it was improbable and impossible; he knew indeed

it was not probable, or possible, that these bones should revive of themselves; and he knew that neither he nor any creature could quicken them; but he wisely refers it to an omniscient and omnipotent God, who knew what he could and what he would do: the conversion of sinners is not of themselves, nor of ministers, but of God; it is wholly owing to his will and power, (^{<B011>}John 1:13) nothing else can make it probable, or possible.

Ver. 4. *Again he said unto me, prophesy upon these bones, &c.*] Or, “over these bones”^{f615}; or, “concerning these bones”^{f616}; foretell that they shall live; tell others of it, and them also:

and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord; the word of prophecy concerning you, as the Jews did in Babylon: so unconverted sinners may be preached unto, and their lost and miserable estate in which they are, like dry bones, may be set before them: they may be called upon to attend the external ministry of the word; and they are capable of hearing it with their bodily ears; though it is not profitable to them, for want of faith, yet faith comes hereby; and therefore it is right to attend upon the means, and hear the word.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, &c.*] By the prophet, who was sent to prophesy over them:

behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and none could do this but the living God, who breathed the breath of life into Adam at first, and he became a living soul; to which there seems to be an allusion here; and when the Lord puts his Spirit into men, or bestows his grace on them, then they shall live, and not till then.

Ver. 6. *And I will lay sinews upon you, and I will bring up flesh upon you, &c.*] That is, before he should cause breath to enter into them; for though it is first mentioned, it is the last done: this is the orderly process; first sinews are laid to join the bones together; then flesh is laid to cover them, and fill up all vacancies, and form muscles to make the bones capable of motion:

and cover you with skin; both bones, sinews, and flesh; for this is uppermost of all, and which makes the whole smooth and beautiful. Job expresses his formation in much such language, “thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews”, (^{<B011>}Job 10:11):

and put breath in you, and ye shall live; which is repeated for the confirmation of it:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord; the Lord God omnipotent, the Lord gracious and merciful, and your Lord and God: so men, when they are called by grace, know the Lord, they did not before; having an experience of his powerful and efficacious grace upon their hearts, they know him to be theirs and own and acknowledge him, and profess him before men.

Ver. 7. *So I prophesied as I was commanded*, &c.] The prophet was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; he was right to observe the orders and instructions given, whatever were the issue and success of them; that he was to leave with the Lord, and did. So Gospel ministers prophesy or preach according to the commission given them, and leave their work with the Lord: this was the first prophesying; for there is another after mentioned: these two are carefully to be observed and distinguished, different effects following the one and the other: this was a prophesying to the dry bones, upon them, over them, and concerning them; and what is next related was the consequence of it;

and as I prophesied, there was a noise; or, “a voice”^{f617}; this, in the literal sense, was the proclamation by Cyrus, giving the Jews leave to return to their own land, (^{<500>}Ezra 1:1-3), at the revival of the interest of Christ, a great voice will be heard from heaven, saying to the witnesses, come up hither, (^{<6112>}Revelation 11:12), and at the descent of Christ to raise his dead first, there will be the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, (^{<3046>}1 Thessalonians 4:16), and, as while the prophet was prophesying, there was not only his voice heard, but the voice of God, perhaps a thunder clap: so in the ministry of the Gospel there is a voice heard, which, at first, is only externally heard; men hear a noise, a voice, but it is a confused one; they do not know what to make of it, and yet it has some effect upon them; it causes a noise in them, an outcry about sin, and hell, and damnation; and yet, at present, no spiritual life or breath is in them:

and behold a shaking; of the bones; a rattling among them, as may be conceived must be where there is, as here, a tumbling of dry bones one over another, to get to their proper bone: so in the first effect of the word upon the conscience of a sinner, which works wrath there, there is a shaking and trembling through fear of damnation; which in some issues in real conversion, as in Saul and the jailer, (^{<406>}Acts 9:6 16:29), but in others it goes off again, and comes to nothing, as in Felix, (^{<4025>}Acts 24:25):

and the bones came together, bone to his bone: so the Jews scattered up and down in the provinces of Babylon gathered together upon the proclamation of Cyrus, and went up in a body to their own land; as they will do also at the time of their conversion, (^{<3011>}Hosea 1:11), thus, when persons are only under slight convictions, they may gather together, and have their religious meetings and societies, and yet be only a parcel of dry bones, without any spiritual life and breath in them.

Ver. 8. *And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them,* &c.] And they began to look like men, in the shape of men, and were a body of them, as the Jews did when gathered together:

and the skin covered them above; and so looked comely and beautiful, as in the proper form of men; as did the Jews enriched and protected by Cyrus: and this may be an image of such persons so far wrought upon under the word as to look like Christians; to have the form of godliness, and appear outwardly righteous before men, submitting to ordinances, and performing the duties of religion; and yet no principle of spiritual life in them; but, like Adam's body, of the earth, earthly, and breathless, before the breath of life was breathed into it; so here, but there was no breath in them; no spirit in the Jews to return to their land, though they had liberty, till the Lord stirred up their spirits, (^{<4506>}Ezra 1:5), all this, in a spiritual sense, shows how far persons may go under temporary convictions by the word, and yet not be living Christians.

Ver. 9. *Then said he unto me, prophesy unto the wind,* &c.] Before he had been prophesying to the bones, and over them; and something was done, but not to purpose, breath being wanting; wherefore he is bid to prophesy a second time, and that not to bones, but to the "wind", afterwards rendered "breath"; and may allude to the soul or breath of man reentering the body, as at a resurrection, which causes it to live: it signifies the "spirit"^{f618}, for the same word is used for the wind, for breath, and for the spirit; and in the mystical sense may be applied to the Spirit of God: and if ever ministers prophesy or preach to purpose, it must be with a view to the Spirit of God, both to assist them in their work, and to make their ministrations effectual; without which, how many formal professors soever may be made, not one dead sinner will be quickened. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "concerning the Spirit": and to discourse concerning the person, operations, and grace of the Spirit, is one part of the Gospel ministry, and a means of the conversion of sinners.

Prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind; ministers must not only preach, but they must pray for the Spirit to accompany the word with his power, and make it the savour of life unto life:

thus saith the Lord, come from the four winds, O breath; or “spirit”: because the Jews were to be brought from each of the parts where they were, as they will be at their conversion in the latter day; and so the Lord has a people in each of the parts of the world, that lie dead in sin, and must be quickened by the Spirit:

and breathe upon these slain, that they may live; though not slain with the sword, yet being as dead men, who are slain by death, are so called: so in a spiritual sense men are slain by sin, and are slain by the words of the Lord’s mouth; killed with the law, the killing letter; and it is only the Spirit of God that can give them life; and the breath or spirit here is applied to the Spirit of the Messiah by the ancient Jews^{f619}.

Ver. 10. *So I prophesied as he commanded me*, &c.] The second time he prophesied to the wind, as he had done to the bones, as he was ordered: and the issue of it was,

and breath came into them; or, “the spirit”; a spirit of courage in the Jews, to go up to their own land; the Spirit of life from Christ, which will enter into the witnesses slain, and revive them; and into the Jews in the latter day, and convert them; and which enters into dead sinners, and quickens them; and this he does while ministers are preaching the Gospel to them; (see ~~6111~~ Revelation 11:11 ~~4404~~ Acts 10:44):

and then lived; as men do spiritually, when the Spirit of God has produced a principle of spiritual life in them; they live by faith on Christ, in union and fellowship with him; they live in newness of life, and a holy life and conversation; and shall live and reign with Christ upon the first resurrection, and for evermore:

and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army; as the Jews did when they returned from the Babylonish captivity; they were many, and in a posture of defence; and as they will be in the latter day, when converted, (~~2010~~ Hosea 1:10), and as the number of the saints will be upon the first resurrection, (~~600~~ Revelation 7:9), so when men are quickened by the Spirit of God, “they stand upon their feet”; they stand in the grace of God, and on the foundation Christ; they stand by faith in him, and in the doctrine of faith, and in the house of God; and they stand firm against all their enemies:

they are an “army”; they are in a military state; fighting against sin, Satan, and the world; and though few in comparison of others, yet considered by themselves are very numerous; and as they will appear when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; and especially when they will be all gathered together at the coming of Christ.

Ver. 11. *Then he said unto me, son of man, &c.*] Here follow the explication and application of the above vision:

these bones are the whole house of Israel; an emblem of them, of their state and condition in the Babylonish captivity, and of them in their present state; and of the whole Israel of God, while in a state of unregeneracy: this phrase takes in the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, which returned from Babylon; and shows that respect is had to something more than that restoration barely:

behold, they say, our bones are dried; the house of Israel say we are like dry bones indeed; we have no spirit, nor strength, nor courage, nor life in us:

and our hope is lost; of being delivered from the present captivity; or of the Messiah’s coming; or of ever enjoying their own land, and of the promises of those things made unto them:

we are cut off for our parts; from the land of Israel, and have no hope of possessing it again, whatever others have; indeed they are cut off from the olive tree, and are cut down like a tree, both as to their civil and church state. The Targum is,

“and we are perished;”

it is all over with us; we are lost and undone; all the expressions show the desperate and despairing condition they were in.

Ver. 12. *Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, &c.*] For their comfort, in order to revive their hope, and encourage their faith, in these distressed circumstances:

thus saith the Lord, behold, O my people: they were his people still, and he had a covenant interest in them, and they in him, though in such a low estate; and which was the ground of his care of them, and concern for them, and of doing all the good things to them after mentioned; all proceeded from his covenant, and the grace of it, and their relation to him:

I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves; the cities and prisons in Chaldea and other places; where they were confined and held captives, and out of which they could no more deliver themselves than a dead man of himself can rise up out of his grave: this is both an emblem of the resurrection of the dead at the last day^{f620}, when they shall come forth out of their graves at the voice of Christ, some to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation; and of dead sinners, raised out of the graves of sin by the power and efficacy of the grace of God; (see ~~3825~~John 5:25,28,29):

and bring you into the land of Israel; to dwell in it, and abide there, and be no more dispossessed of it; as they will not, any more, when once settled in it, upon their conversion in the latter day.

Ver. 13. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, &c.]* (See Gill on “~~3506~~Ezekiel 37:6”):

when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves; which is doing that for them which none but the omnipotent God could do; and they seeing his hand and power, his grace and mercy in it, will know, own, and acknowledge him.

Ver. 14. *And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, &c.]* Not only a spirit of courage to go up into their own land, and live a civil and comfortable life there; but the Spirit of God, as a spirit of grace and supplication, of truth and holiness, of faith and adoption; and as a spirit of life, having produced a principle of life in them, and so should live spiritually and soberly, righteously and godly; (see ~~3827~~Ezekiel 36:27):

and I shall place you in your own land; settle them there in peace and quietness, in safety and security and in enjoyment of all mercies and privileges, temporal and spiritual:

then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord; that all this was a promise of his, foretold by him, notified to them by his prophets, and now fully accomplished exactly; which they would observe with wonder and thankfulness, and give him the glory of it.

Ver. 15. *The word of the Lord came unto me again, &c.]* Immediately or quickly after he had the above vision of the dry bones, and the explanation of it:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 16. *Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, &c.*] Or “wood”^{f621}; a stick of wood; or table, as the Targum; a board or plank. The Septuagint version renders it a “rod”; and so the Arabic; an emblem of a kingdom or government, as this was:

and write upon it; the following words:

for Judah, and the children of Israel his companions; for the tribe of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin, which adhered together, and as many of the other tribes which joined them; the godly and religious of the rest of the tribes, who could not give into the idolatry of Jeroboam:

then take another stick; like the former:

and write upon it; these words:

for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions; for the tribe of Ephraim, and the other nine tribes, which together made up one kingdom. It should be observed, that in the times of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, there was a division in the kingdom of Israel; ten tribes revolted from him, and only the two whole tribes of Judah and Benjamin continued with him; and from that time to the captivity, and even during that, as it seems, there were continual animosities and bickerings between the two kingdoms, on account both of their political and religious affairs, especially the latter; and an union between them this emblem is designed to signify, as will hereafter appear. Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, was of the tribe of Ephraim; and Samaria, the metropolis of the kingdom, was in that tribe; hence Ephraim often stands for all the ten tribes, for the kingdom of Israel, as distinct from that of Judah. Writing words on sticks or rods seems to be in allusion to what was done (^{Q117D}Numbers 17:2).

Ver. 17. *And join them one to another into one stick, &c.*] Clap the sticks, planks, boards, or tables, to one another; glue them together, or set them so close to one another, that they may seem as one stick, plank, board, or table:

and they shall become one in thine hand; they shall look as if they were one. R. Joseph Kimchi, the father of David, thinks they really became one,

by means of a miracle wrought; but there is no need to suppose this; it is enough that they appeared to be so.

Ver. 18. *And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, &c.]* The children of Israel and Judah in captivity, of which people Ezekiel was and to whom he was sent as a prophet; who seeing him take two sticks, and write on them, and then join them together, would naturally put such a question to him:

wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? for they concluded he had some meaning in it, and that it was not a mere childish diversion and amusement; and therefore would desire that he would let them know what it was: whether they would ask this seriously or in banter, out of curiosity or in contempt, as they sometimes did; it matters not, he was to give them an answer, as follows; though, by the manner of their putting the question, it looks as if they were doubtful whether he would or not; since they had treated him in a sneering way on such like occasions before.

Ver. 19. *Say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* Here follows the explanation of the sign or emblem:

behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows: that is, the kingdom of Israel, consisting of the ten tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief:

and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah; with the kingdom of Judah:

and make them one stick; these two kingdoms one kingdom:

and they shall be one in my hand: in Christ, the hand and arm of the Lord; one under his care, government, and protection, as after explained: this had in part, and as a shadow of what was to come, its fulfilment upon the Jews' return from Babylon; when many of the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, came from thence, and became one nation and kingdom under one prince, until the coming of Christ; and it had a further accomplishment in the union of converted Jews and Gentiles in one body: but this is chiefly designed as an emblem of the union of the Jews one to another, when they shall be converted in the latter day; when they shall join together in seeking the Lord, and David, their King, the Messiah; who shall be the one King over them, as is afterwards said; and when all animosities shall cease, both among them, and among all the spiritual Israel of God in

general; (see ^{<28113>}Isaiah 11:13 ^{<28104>}Jeremiah 50:4 ^{<28111>}Hosea 1:11 3:5
^{<28119>}Zephaniah 3:9)

Ver. 20. *And the sticks whereon thou writest, &c.]* Or art about to write the above things, according to order and direction:

shall be in thine hand before their eyes; shall be held up to them to look at for some time, and observe the cement of the two sticks; and learn and lay up in their minds what is meant by this emblem; and be assured that what is hereafter said as a further explication of it shall certainly be fulfilled.

Ver. 21. *And say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* Or, as the Targum,

“thou shalt prophesy to them;”

for what follows is a prophecy of what shall be in the latter day:

behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, or, “from among the Gentiles”^{f622}; not only the Chaldeans, where they were carried captives; but from among the nations where they are now dispersed, and among whom they go freely of their own accord from place to place, for the sake of traffic: and this phrase, “whither they be gone”, or “are going”^{f623}, travelling about from one country to another, better describes the present Jews, and their state, than those in the Babylonian captivity:

and will gather them on every side, or, “round about”^{f624}; from the several parts of the world where they are:

and bring them into their own land; the land of Canaan, given by the Lord to their fathers, and to them their posterity, for an inheritance; though now in the possession of others, who, it seems, are not the right owners.

Ver. 22. *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, &c;]* As they were in the times of David and Solomon, who were both types of the Messiah; and to whose times is referred this prophecy by the ancient Jews^{f625}, as then to have its accomplishment:

and one king shall be king to them all, not Zerubbabel, nor Nehemiah, nor Judas Maccabaeus; for these were neither of them kings; and much less such as reigned for ever, as it is said this king shall, (^{<28175>}Ezekiel 37:25),

besides, he is expressly said to be David, that is, the Messiah the son of David; and this clause is by a modern Jewish^{f626} writer applied to him:

and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; which is the very thing the two sticks made one were an emblem of.

Ver. 23. *Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, &c.]*

With their dung, or dunghill gods^{f627}; either with the idols of the Gentiles, or their own: after their return from the Babylonish captivity, the Jews were no more addicted to idolatry; and the image worship of the Papists is an abhorrence to them at this day, and a stumblingblock to them in their embracing Christianity: and when they are effectually called and converted to Christ; they will no more have respect to the idols, the works of their own hands; or to the idol of their own righteousness, which they have set up, and have gone about to establish, and to make to stand; they will then see it to be as filthy rags, defiling to them, instead of justifying of them; and therefore shall reject it, and no more defile themselves with it; but seek the righteousness of Christ, which justifies from all sin, and renders pure and spotless in the sight of God,

nor with their detestable things; or “abominations”^{f628}; the traditions of the elders, which they have preferred to the word of God, and made the rule of their faith, worship, and conversation; which has made them detestable unto God:

nor with any of their transgressions; particularly their disbelief of Christ and their blasphemy against him; nor shall they indulge themselves in those sins which now prevail among them, as pride, covetousness, uncleanness, fraud, and tricking in their trade and commerce:

but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned; as wherever they dwell they do; they are notorious for their wickedness; but God will bring them out of all these places, where they have lived in sin, and been the occasion of it to some, as well as followed the example of others:

and will cleanse them; by sprinkling clean water upon them; by applying the blood of Christ to them, which cleanses from all sin (see ^{36:25} Ezekiel 36:25):

so they shall be my people, and will be their God; the “loammi” will be taken off, and the covenant of grace shall be renewed with them, and made manifest to them; and the blessings and promises shall be applied to them, and particularly this; (see ^{<3801>}Jeremiah 31:1 ^{<5125>}Romans 11:25,26).

Ver. 24. *And David my servant shall be king over them*, &c.] The King Messiah, as Kimchi interprets it; and so Abarbinel^{f629} and others; being of the seed of David, and of whom David was an eminent type; and who, as Mediator, is the Lord’s servant, and as man appeared in the form of one: this shows that this prophecy looks further than the times of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity:

and they all shall have one shepherd: or king, the same as before: kings are called shepherds; (see ^{<3823>}Ezekiel 34:23 ^{<8106>}John 10:16):

and they shall also walk in my judgments, and keep my statutes, and do them; not the statutes and ordinances of the ceremonial law, which are abolished; and which the Jews, when converted, shall have no regard unto; but rather the precepts of the moral law, and chiefly the evangelic ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper; which ordinances they shall walk in, and attend unto with constancy and pleasure; and which statutes they shall keep, as they have been delivered, impartially, without delay, in faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God; (see ^{<3827>}Ezekiel 36:27).

Ver. 25. *And they shall dwell in the land which I have given to Jacob my servant*, &c.] Abraham and Isaac are not mentioned, as Kimchi observes, because they had other children, who did not inherit the land; only Jacob, because the land was given to him, and his seed alter him:

wherein your fathers have dwelt; and so the more desirable to them; and whose inhabitation and possession of it were a pledge of theirs:

and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children’s children for ever; unto the end of the world, or personal coming of Christ: and so everything after promised them is said to be for ever: this shows that this prophecy had not its accomplishment in the return of the Jews from Babylon to their own land; since they have been dispossessed of that again, in which state they now are; but that it refers to time to come, when, being converted to Christ, they shall possess their land again, and dwell in it, as long as the sun and moon endure:

and my servant David shall be their prince for ever; or their king, as the Targum; and which cannot be understood of any temporal prince, but of the King Messiah, whose throne is for ever and ever; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and who shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, (¹⁹⁸¹⁶Psalm 45:6 ²⁷⁰²⁴Daniel 2:44 ⁴⁰¹²²Luke 2:32,33) and to whom it is applied by several Jewish writers^{f630}.

Ver. 26. *Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, &c.]* So the covenant of grace is called, (²⁵⁴⁰Isaiah 54:10), one principal article of which is peace and reconciliation made between God and his people by the blood of Christ, agreed on in that covenant, from whence it has its name: now here it signifies that this covenant should be made known to the converted Jews, and their interest in it; in virtue of which they shall see that peace is made for them by the blood of Christ; and shall have a true conscience peace in themselves, through that blood of the covenant being sprinkled on them; and be at peace with converted Gentiles, and even with their worst enemies, enjoying all kind of prosperity, temporal and spiritual:

it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; it shall not wax old, and vanish away, as the former covenant did; under which they were before the coming of Christ, which was exhibited in types and shadows, legal sacrifices and carnal ordinances; and besides, God will always have a covenant people among them from this time to the end of the world; so that a “loammi” shall no more be written upon them:

and I will place them, and multiply them; that is, place them in their own land, and increase their number there: or, “I will give them”^{f631}; a place in their land, and every blessing temporal and spiritual: so the Targum,

“I will bless them, and multiply them:”

and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore; not any material temple, but his word and ordinances; in which he will grant his spiritual presence with them, and which shall continue to the end of the world.

Ver. 27. *My tabernacle also shall be with them, &c.]* The symbol of his presence: the meaning is, that he shall dwell in them by his Spirit and grace; and everyone of them shall be the temple of the living God, in whom he will walk and dwell:

yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; which is repeated for the confirmation of it; (see ⁴⁵⁷²³Ezekiel 37:23).

Ver. 28. *And the Heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel,* &c.] Or the Gentiles, the converted Gentiles, shall observe and take notice of the gracious dealings of God with his people the Jews; that he calls them with an holy calling; implants principles of grace and holiness in them; separates and consecrates them for his service, and enables them to walk holily, soberly, and righteously:

when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore; when his worship shall be set up among them; his Gospel shall be preached unto them, and received by them; and his ordinances administered unto them; and which shall continue till the second coming of Christ.

CHAPTER 38

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 38

This chapter gives an account of an enemy of the Jews, under the name of Gog, that shall invade their land, and disturb their peace, after they are settled in it; who is described by the countries over which he rules; and against whom the prophet is bid to set his face, and prophesy of him, the Lord being against him; and who would cause him to return from Judea unsuccessful, (²³⁰¹Ezekiel 38:1-4), the number of his confederates, their warlike accoutrements and preparations for the invasion of the land of Israel, are foretold, (²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4-9), his wicked designs and intentions to spoil and plunder the inhabitants of it, (²³¹⁰Ezekiel 38:10-12), the notice taken of his projects by the merchants of Tarshish and others, (²³¹³Ezekiel 38:13,14), his coming up to invade the land is again observed for the certainty of it; and the place from whence, and the time when he should come, are mentioned, as well as God's design in it, and which had been before predicted by his prophets, (²³¹⁴Ezekiel 38:14-17), and the chapter is concluded with a denunciation of divine wrath, which shall be terrible to all the inhabitants of the earth, and to all creatures in heaven, earth, and sea; when he and his forces shall be destroyed by the sword, by pestilence, and by dreadful storms and tempests, (²³¹⁸Ezekiel 38:18-23), of which destruction a fuller account is given in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] At the same time as the preceding prophecy did, as the copulative and shows; which predicts the restoration and conversion of the Jews; the union of their tribes under the King Messiah; and their settlement in their own land: and this respects some disturbance they should meet with upon it, for a short time, by a powerful enemy hereafter described:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Gog,* &c.] Of the phrase, “setting the face towards”, or “against”, (See Gill on “²³⁰⁶Ezekiel 6:2”) (See Gill on “²³¹⁰Ezekiel 21:2”) (See Gill on “²³¹⁰Ezekiel 25:2”) but who this Gog is the prophet is bid boldly to face, and intrepidly declare the wrath of God

against, interpreters are divided about. Calmet^{f632} thinks that Cambyses and his army are meant by Gog and Magog, which to mention is enough; and it is the opinion of St. Ambrose^{f633} that the Goths who ravaged the Roman empire in the fifth and sixth ages are meant: others, who suppose this prophecy was fulfilled after the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity, and before the coming of Christ, take Gog to be a common name of the kings of the lesser Asia and Syria, or the Seleucidae, who distressed the Jews in the times of the Maccabees; the chief of whom was Antiochus Epiphanes, who is supposed, to be more especially designed, and was a type of antichrist; and they are the more strengthened in this opinion, because they find, in Pliny^{f634}, that the city of Hierapolis in Syria was called by the Syrians Magog; and they fancy the name of Gog is the same with Gyges a king of Lydia, whose country was called from him Gygea, or Gog's land, who was grandfather to Croesus; and which country came into the hands of Cyrus, and from the Persians into the hands of the Greeks, and so to the Seleucidae; for which reason they may bear this name in this prophecy; but it is certain that the prophecy refers to what should be in "latter years", and in the "latter days", (²⁵⁸⁸Ezekiel 38:8,16), phrases which respect the times of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, and oftentimes the latter part of that; and even those times when the Jews shall return to their own land, and continue in it for ever, as the preceding prophecy, with which this is connected, shows; and so the Jews always understand it of an enemy of theirs yet to come. Cocceius is of opinion, that the Romish antichrist is meant; and that Gog signifying the covering or roof of a house, fitly points him out; who puts himself between God and man, as the roof is between heaven and earth; and who keeps out the light of divine things, the heat of love, and rain of spiritual blessings, from the church; and compares with this the veil over all nations, (²⁵⁸⁷Isaiah 25:7) and the covering cherub, (²⁵⁸⁴Ezekiel 28:14,16), but I rather think the Turk is here meant, the eastern antichrist, in whose possession the land of Judea now is; and which, when recovered by the Jews, will greatly exasperate him, and he will gather all his forces together to regain it, but in vain. The learned Vitringa^{f635}, though he is of opinion that this prophecy, according to its first and proper sense, respects the kings of Syria, the persecutors of the church, that should bring large and well disciplined armies into the land of the people of God, gathered out of the northern nations, and Scythians, and would be defeated in the land of Canaan; yet mystically intends the Turks, the Scythian nation and northern people, who, by a like attempt, will infest the church of the people of God, and invade their country; and this he makes

no doubt of is the proper aspect of Gog and Magog: and Samuel Dauderstat, a Lutheran divine, has wrote a dissertation, “Deuteronomy Antichristo Orientali”, concerning the eastern antichrist, which he explains of Gog and Magog: and Michael Buckenroder, another Lutheran, has written upon the irruption to be made by Gog and Magog into the mountains of Israel^{f636}. Osiander thus explains the several names mentioned; by Gog I think the Turk is meant, by Magog the Tartarian, by Meshec the Muscovites, and by Tubal the Wallachians; and Starckius on the place observes, that if this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, we shall easily find our Gog, and point out his metropolis Constantinople; so that I am not singular in my opinion. Gog signifies “high”^{f637} and eminent, one in a very exalted station: it comes from the same root, and has the same signification, as Agag, to whose height and exaltation there is an allusion in (~~Q247~~ Numbers 24:7), where the Samaritan and Septuagint versions read Gog: it is the same with <Arabic>, “Jagog”, by which name the Arabians called the Scythians that lived far east, particularly those that were situated to the north of China beyond Imaus, as Golius^{f638} observes; and Josephus^{f639} says that the posterity of Magog are called Scythians, and these inhabited Tartary; and there, as Paulus Venetus^{f640} affirms, are the countries of Gog and Magog, which they call Gug and Mungug now; from hence came the Turks, even from Tartary, which is called by the eastern writers Turchestan, whence they had their name; and so may with great propriety be called by the name of Gog; their emperor also being a high and mighty one, whose empire must be destroyed; and which is signified by the passing away of the second woe, and the drying up of the river Euphrates, (~~Q214~~ Revelation 11:14 16:12), upon which passages this and the following chapter may be thought a good commentary: and so the Jews^{f641} make Gog to be the general of the Ishmaelites or Turks, as Armillus of the Christians, and who shall reign in the kingdom of Magog or Scythia. Gog is the name of a man, (~~Q204~~ 1 Chronicles 5:4), as it is here, and not of a country. The country of Gog is called, as follows,

the land of Magog, of which Gog is king, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it: it may be supplied in connection with the former clause,

set thy face against Gog, in the land of Magog; or, “against Gog”, against “the land of Magog”, so Kimchi. The countries of Jagog and Magog, according to the Arabic geographer^{f642}, are surrounded by Mount Caucasus, which Bochart^{f643} conjectures has its name from thence; it being in the Semi-Chaldee language, the language of the Colchi and Armenians,

שׁג גׁג, “Gog-hasan”, or Gog’s fortress. This land of Magog is the same with Cathaia or Scythia, that part of Tartary from whence the Turks came; and which perhaps may come into their hands again before this prophecy is fulfilled; and even now the Turk calls himself king of Tartary; and the Magog of Pliny in Syria, the same with Aleppo, is in his dominions; which Maimonides^{f644} also takes notice of as in Syria, though he seems to distinguish it from Haleb or Aleppo; however, according to him, they were near to one another; though some^{f645} think the place in Pliny is corrupted, and that it ought to be read Magog, as it is, by Maimonides, Magbab. Gog is further described as

the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: some render it, “prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal”; taking Rosh, as the rest, for the name of a place, a part of Scythia, from whence the Russians came, and had their name. So it is rendered by the Septuagint, Symmachus, and Theodotion; and some later Greek writers^{f646} make mention of a country called Ros, which, they say, is a Scythian nation, situated between the Euxine Pontus and the whole maritime coast to the north of Taurus, a people fierce and wild. Meshech and Tubal were the brethren of Magog, and sons of Japheth, (¹⁰⁰²Genesis 10:2), whose posterity inhabited those counties called after their name; who, according to Josephus^{f647}, are the Cappadocians and Iberians; and among the former is a place called Mazaca, which has some affinity with Meshech; and there was a country called Gogarene^{f648}, a part of Iberia. According to Bochart^{f649}, these are the Moschi and Tybarenes, people that dwell near the Euxine sea, and under the dominion of the Turk; wherefore the Grand Turk may be called the chief prince of them:

and prophesy against him: foretell his ruin and destruction, which is hinted before. Mention is made of his invasion of the land of Judea, and that for the comfort of the Jews, that they might have nothing to fear from this formidable army.

Ver. 3. *And say, thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*] Which is repeated for the confirmation of it, that so it would certainly be; that the Lord, the mighty God, and King of kings, would in his providence frown upon him, and appear against him; and his titles are repeated also, to show that all his greatness, grandeur, and power, would not protect him from the vengeance of God.

Ver. 4. *And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, &c.]* Or, I will put hooks in thy jaws, and with them turn thee back; or rather, “turn thee about”^{f650}; and lead thee where and as I please; for this is not to be understood of God’s putting hooks into his jaws, and leading him back from his enterprise of invading the land of Judea; as he put a hook in the nose and a bridle in the lips of the king of Assyria, and brought him back from Jerusalem, (²³⁷²Isaiah 37:29), but of his using him thus in his providence to draw him to the land of Israel, out of his own land, as fishes are drawn with the hook out of the water. The sense is, that he would so work upon and influence the heart of Gog, that he should be inclined to come out of his own land and invade Judea; just as the Lord is said to draw Sisera and his army, (¹⁰⁴⁷Judges 4:7), as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe. So the Targum,

“I will persuade thee, and put hooks in thy jaws;”

that is, incline his heart to take such a step, which should be to his destruction:

and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army; all his janizaries, and large army out of Turkey, and other parts of his dominions:

horses and horsemen; the Turkish armies, chiefly consisting of cavalry; (See Gill on “⁶¹⁶Revelation 9:16”):

all of them clothed with all sorts of [armour]; or completely clothed, as the Targum; for the word “armour” is not in the text; and besides, their armour is particularly mentioned afterwards; and so Kimchi has it, with all kind of ornaments, richly clothed and decorated, especially the principal officers, and, so made a fine show: even a

great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords; or large armies, as the Targum; the Turks have always been used to bring prodigious large armies into the field; (see Gill on “⁶¹⁶Revelation 9:16”).

Ver. 5. *Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia with them, &c.]* These are the confederates or auxiliaries of the Turks, which shall join with them in this expedition. Persia is a neighbouring kingdom to the Turks, and may fall into their hands before this comes to pass; and is in a fair way for it at this time, through the internal divisions in it; however, it will be confederate with them. Ethiopia or Cush does not design the country of the Abyssines in the dominions of the Great Mogul, but Arabia Chusea, which lay

between Judea and Egypt, and is now in the hands of the Turks; and Lybia or Phut is the name of one of the sons of Ham, (^{<Q106>}Genesis 10:6) who, according to Josephus^{f651}, founded Lybia; and from him the inhabitants of it were called Phuteans (as they are here by the Targum); and he observes that there is a river of his name in Mauritania. Lybia is a country in Africa, to the west of Egypt and subject to the Turks:

all of them with shield and helmet; the Lybians are described by Jeremiah, (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 46:9), as

those that handle the shield; and the Egyptians, to whom the Lybians were near neighbours, and whom they might imitate in their warlike arms, as in other things, wore shields down to the feet, as Xenophon^{f652} relates.

Ver. 6. *Gomer, and all his bands, &c.*] Or all his army, as the Targum. Gomer was the eldest son of Japheth, (^{<Q102>}Genesis 10:2), from whom descended the people called by the Greeks Galatians, or Galio-Grecians, as Josephus^{f653} says, who before were from him called Gomarians: others think that Phrygia, and the inhabitants of it, are meant; but, whether one or the other, they were both people of the lesser Asia, which is now in the hands of the Turks:

the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands; Togarmah was one of the sons of Gomer, (^{<Q103>}Genesis 10:3) whose posterity, according to the Greeks, as Josephus^{f654} says, were the Phrygians; but others rather think the Cappadocians descended from him; and that Togarmah designs their country, which also is a part of the Turkish dominions; (see Gill on "^{<3274>}Ezekiel 27:14"). Several moderns, as Calmet^{f655} observes, believe that the children of Togarmah peopled Turcomania in Tartary, and Scythia, and which he approves of; and the Turks are mentioned by Ben Gorion^{f656} as one of the ten families of Togarmah. The Targum renders it here the province of Germany; as it is also interpreted in the Talmud^{f657}, but wrongly:

and many people with thee; from other places and nations, besides those named; especially out of the lesser Asia, as Pamphylia, Cilicia, and other places; and perhaps from Tartary, and elsewhere,

Ver. 7. *Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, &c.*] All warlike stores and provisions: this is ironically said; and suggests that he would do so, and yet all would be in vain, and to no purpose:

thou and all thy company, that are assembled unto thee; or all thine armies, as the Targum, gathered out of his dominions, and made up of his auxiliaries and allies; let them all be furnished with arms, and everything proper for the expedition designed:

and be thou a guard unto them; the general of them; let them observe and obey thy word of command; guide and direct, guard and protect them in their march; and take care of them when entered the land of Judea, that they are not exposed to any unnecessary danger, or cut off by any stratagem or ambush: this is also sarcastically said; signifying that let him use all the care and caution that a wise and prudent general can do, yet he and his army should perish.

Ver. 8. *After many days thou shalt be visited*, &c.] After the Ottoman empire has stood a long time, as it has already; when the many days will be ended that Israel should be without a king and a prince, &c. (²³⁷⁰Hosea 3:4), then shall Gog or the Turk be visited of God, not in a way of grace, but vengeance; he shall be punished for all his iniquities, and his punishment or destruction will be brought about in the following manner:

in the latter years thou shall come into the land that is brought back from the sword; that is, into the land of Judea, the right owners of which shall now be returned unto it; who have been for many years drove and kept out of it by the sword of their enemies; (see ²³⁷⁰Jeremiah 31:2) and these “latter years” are the same with the “latter days”, in which these people shall seek the Lord and the Messiah, and fear him and his goodness, and return to their own land, (²³⁷⁰Hosea 3:5 1:11), when the Turks, enraged at it, will raise a numerous army, and enter it, in order to repossess it. The description of the Jews, who are most manifestly pointed at, is continued: and

is gathered out of many people against the mountains of Israel; or rather, “to the mountains of Israel”^{f658}; for it seems to design the land of Judea, that is, the people of it; who shall be gathered out of the several nations where they are now dispersed, and brought into their own land; described by the mountains of Israel, because a mountainous country, and a very fruitful one; (²³⁷⁰Ezekiel 34:13,14), and not the army of Gog gathered out of many nations, as before observed, to march against the people of the Jews; though this seems to be the sense of the Targum,

“in the end of years thou shalt come into the land, against which are turned those that slay with the sword, who are gathered out of many people against the mountains of the land of Israel:”

which have been always waste: of a longer time than the seventy years’ captivity, even ever since the destruction of it by the Romans; and if the time of the carrying captive of the ten tribes by Salmanezer is respected, it is longer still:

but it brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them; that is, the people of the Jews, the proprietors of the land of Israel, shall now be brought forth out of each the nations where they are scattered, and shall inhabit their own land, and dwell in the utmost security, having nothing to fear from their most potent enemies, even Gog himself; and though he shall come against them in the following manner.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm*, &c.] That comes suddenly, looks black and terrible, and causes darkness and horror; makes a great noise, and is very threatening of danger; signifying, that the Turks will come into the land of Judea suddenly to surprise it, and with great wrath and fury, and threaten them with utter destruction; so the king of the north is said to come like a whirlwind, which many interpret of the Turk also, (²⁷¹⁴⁰Daniel 11:40):

thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land; with darkness and distress; suggesting the vast number of his army, which should overspread the land of Judea, as it follows:

thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee; his own army should be very numerous, and this increased by his confederates, or such who will voluntarily join him in this expedition.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord, it shall also come to pass*, &c.] Who is the Lord God omniscient, and knows the thoughts of men’s hearts afar off; which, though they are contingent and voluntary, yet certain to the foreknowledge of God; who knows them before they are conceived, and can foretell what they will be, and which come to pass accordingly: it is now above two thousand years ago since this was said, and as yet is not fulfilled, but certainly will be: that

at the same time shall things come into thy mind; when the Jews shall be in their own land, dwelling in great security; and when Gog or the Turk shall

make preparation to disturb them, and shall enter into their land suddenly and furiously; many thoughts shall come into his mind, many schemes and devices, but not good ones:

and thou shall think an evil thought; to do mischief to the Jews; to disturb their peace, to dispossess them of their land, and plunder their substance.

Ver. 11. *And thou shall say*, &c.] What came into his mind, and what he thought of; this he shall say to his privy counsellors and ministers of state; or to the generals and officers of his army; or to his confederates and allies, and even to them all, to have their opinion and approbation of it; and to encourage them to join him, and go with him:

I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; a land which has nothing but villages in it, and those no walls about them to protect them: this he said by way of contempt; and the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it “the abject land”; and to observe how easily he could conquer it, there being nothing in his way to hinder him, or give him trouble:

I will go to them that are at rest, and dwell safely: as the Jews will do in the latter day, when they shall own and acknowledge the Messiah, (^{<2275>}Jeremiah 23:5,6), and dwell in their own land, where they will be quiet and peaceable, and think and do no harm to any, nor mistrust their neighbours doing any harm to them; but shall live in the utmost tranquillity and security; and which Gog or the Turks will take the advantage of; and from hence promise themselves an easy conquest of them:

all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; no walls to their cities; no gates to walls; nor bars to gates; but without either; being under the protection of God, and putting their trust in him, who is a wall of fire round about his people; and is better to them, than gates with bars.

Ver. 12. *To take a spoil, and to take a prey*, &c.] These are the words of Gog continued; suggesting that he should have no occasion to fight; should have nothing else to do but to seize upon the goods and plunder the substance of these people:

to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited: such as were before desolate, and had lain long so, but now peopled and cultivated; these he would attack and demolish, and make a spoil and prey of:

and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations; a description of the Jews, as before; (³⁸⁸Ezekiel 38:8)

which have gotten cattle and goods; so that it should seem that Gog or the Turks will not immediately attack the Jews upon their possession of the land of Judea; but some time after, when they have settled in it, and have acquired much wealth and riches in cattle and goods, and then think to have a fine booty of them:

that dwell in the midst of the land; or, “the navel of the land”^{f659}; which may design Jerusalem, situated in the midst of the land of Israel, and so called the navel of it, as that is in the midst of the body; as Enna is said by Cicero to be the navel of Sicily: or, as Kimchi thinks, the land of Israel itself is meant; which is in the midst of the world, and so the navel of it; though the former seems best.

Ver. 13. *Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, &c.*] These are not any of the people that shall come along with Gog on his expedition; but some neighbouring nations bordering on Judea, who will address him in the following manner, as he passes through them, or by them. Sheba and Dedan design the Arabians inhabiting that part of Arabia which lay near to Judea, even Arabia Petraea and Felix; and the merchants of Tarshish are the Tyrians and Zidonians that traded by sea, as Tarshish sometimes signifies; or to Tartessus in Spain, where they had much traffic; and may design the people of those places that will at this time be living in Palestine, that trade by sea to foreign parts. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it the “Carthaginian merchants”, or “the merchants of Carthage”:

with all the young lions thereof; which some interpret of sea pirates, for their cruelty and voraciousness. The Targum paraphrases it, all the kings thereof; and so Kimchi thinks kings and princes are meant; but the Septuagint version renders it, all their villages; and so the Syriac version, all the cities:

shall say unto thee, art thou come to take a spoil? either out of compassion to the people of the Jews; or rather by way of congratulation, and as expressive of joy at it; or else out of envy that they have no share in it; suggesting that they would gladly join with him, and partake of the booty:

hast thou gathered thy company together to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? all

which it is supposed might easily be done; only they might wonder that so rich a potentate as the Turk should give himself the trouble to raise such an army, and come so far, for cattle and goods, and silver and gold of which he had such plenty. Gog gives no answer, but God does.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, &c.*] Since these are his thoughts and designs, and those his big words, and which he will endeavour to put in practice, and be applauded for it by others; deliver this prophecy to him, or concerning him:

thus saith the Lord God, in that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shall thou not know it? that Israel are returned to their own land? that they dwell in it safely? that they have abundance of cattle, gold, and silver that they have no walls, gates, and bars to protect them? that they live without fear or suspicion of any enemy to annoy them, and therefore may be easily surprised and taken? this, when it comes to pass, will soon be known by the Turks, through their spies and informers: or, “shall thou not know?”^{f660} or experience the divine vengeance for thy wicked thoughts, intentions, and attempts against Israel? he should. So the Targum,

“shalt thou not know the vengeance of my power?”

or shalt thou not know that all attempts to make them uneasy and uncomfortable will be in vain?

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, &c.*] Whose original was from Scythia, or Cathaia in Tartary, that lies to the north of China; and who will bring with him many people from the Euxine and Caspian seas, and from the northern parts of lesser Asia; and the Turk is, by many interpreters, thought to be the king of the north, in (²⁷¹⁴⁴Daniel 11:44) as before observed:

thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses; the Turkish armies consisting chiefly of horse, as has been observed on (²⁵⁸⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4):

a great company, and a mighty army; for quantity many, for quality strong and mighty. The Targum is, “many armies, and much people;”

the Turks usually have large armies; (see Gill on “²⁵⁸⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4”).

Ver. 16. *And thou shall come up against my people of Israel, &c.*] Which is repeated for the certainty of it; and not for his comfort, but his ruin; not to the terror of Israel, but for the glory of God:

as a cloud to cover the land; the land of Israel, so great should be his army; (see Gill on “²⁸⁸⁹Ezekiel 38:9”),

it shall be in the latter days; of the Gospel state, or kingdom of the Messiah, when the Jews shall be converted, and are returned to their own land, (³⁸⁵Hosea 3:5):

and I will bring thee against my land; not to possess it, nor to hurt it, or to any injury to the people of it: but

that the Heathen may know me; the Pagan kingdoms of China, and others; who by God’s judgments on the Turks will come to the knowledge of the true God, and acknowledge him, and will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, (⁶¹¹⁵Revelation 11:15 16:12):

when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes; that is, when God shall appear to be a holy and just God, in inflicting deserved punishment on the enemies of his people; when his omniscience and omnipotence, his power and faithfulness, and other perfections of his will be displayed, in fulfilling those prophecies concerning Gog or the Turks; infidels will be convinced of the truth of divine revelation; of the God of Israel being the true God; of Jesus being the Messiah; and of the Christian religion being of God, and shall profess the same. The, Targum is,

“that the people may know the vengeance of my power, when I shall be sanctified in thee, who shall see thy vengeance, O Gog.”

Ver. 17. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Putting the question that follows:

art thou he of whom I have spoken of old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I will bring thee against them? certainly thou art he: but who were the prophets that prophesied of Gog before Ezekiel, since he is the first that makes mention of him? to this it may be replied, that though he is not mentioned by name, yet he might be prophesied of under other names, as by Isaiah under the name of Leviathan, (²⁷⁰¹Isaiah 27:1) and by Micah under the name of the Assyrian, (³⁰⁸⁵Micah 5:5). The Jews^{f661} say that Eldad and Medad prophesied of him, which Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana remark; who all

observe, agreeably to the Talmudists in the place referred to, that these two are the prophets meant; and therefore it is directed to be read not “shanim”, years, but “shenaim”, two; namely, those two prophets prophesied one prophecy at one time, or together; but this is not to be depended upon: it should be observed, that this must be considered as spoken at the time of the accomplishment of this prophecy, and so may have respect to the Prophet Ezekiel himself, or to Joel, (^{<290E>} Joel 3:1,2), and to Zechariah, (^{<384E>} Zechariah 14:1,2), and even to the book of the Revelation, (^{<6664>} Revelation 16:14,16 19:19).

Ver. 18. *And it shall come to pass at the same time, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, &c.*] As before prophesied of and described:

that my fury shall come up in my face; as a man’s blood rises up in his face, and his colour appears, when he is wroth and angry: or, “in my nose”^{f662}; as men when they are angry puff and blow, expand their nose, breathe through it; but against whom is all this wrath and fury? Starckius, a modern interpreter, thinks it is against the land of Israel, against the church; but it rather seems to be against Gog himself; the Lord being provoked at his attempt against the land of Israel, and the wicked designs he had to spoil and plunder it.

Ver. 19. *For in my jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken, &c.*] Not against his people Israel, but against Gog, who had thought evil against them, and now was about to put it in practice; and therefore in zeal for his own glory, and for the good of his people, and in indignation against his and their enemies, he declares, resolves, and determines:

surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; not a consternation among the people of Israel frightened at the armies of Gog, and the terrible appearance they shall make, and the devastations they threaten; but in Gog himself, and his army, through the wrath of God upon them, and the vengeance he will take of them in the land of Israel, they will enter upon to destroy; not but that there may be some dread in the minds of the Jews upon the appearance of so formidable an army in their land: this shaking, according to Jarchi, will be by thunder and lightning. Kimchi understands it of an earthquake, in a literal sense, and compares with it (^{<384E>} Zechariah 14:4,5), see also (^{<6668>} Revelation 16:18), which speaks of an earthquake that will be about this time.

Ver. 20. *So that the fishes of the sea shall shake at my presence, &c.]*

From whence it appears that this great shaking shall not be on account of the army of Gog, and the devastations that it shall make; but on account of the powerful presence of God, which will be manifest in the destruction of his army: and what is here said of the shaking of the fishes of the sea,

and the fowls of the heaven, and the beast of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the earth, must be understood figuratively and hyperbolically, as Kimchi observes, and in allusion to earthquakes, which both shake and terrify all kind of creatures; the blow given to Gog will be so terrible, that all nature will seem to be thrown into a convulsion and agitation by it; (see ^{<2024>}Jeremiah 4:24,25):

and the mountains shall be thrown down; as they are sometimes by earthquakes; and as the mount of Olives will at this time cleave asunder; and perhaps other mountains will, as Kimchi observes, (see ^{<3842>}Zechariah 14:2-4 ^{<2022>}Isaiah 2:12-15 30:25):

and the steep places shall fall; the Targum renders the word “towers”; and so the Syriac version, and Piscator: the word signifies stairs or steps^{f663}, such as in a ladder; and is translated “stairs”, (^{<2024>}Song of Solomon 2:14) it seems to me to design such mounts as are raised by besiegers of a city, by means of which they may be able to scale the walls of it, which Jarchi suggests; though he says he had heard it said that these, are rocks bending over and hanging, and appear as if they were falling; which agrees with our version; and it may be observed, in some of those precipices, there are like stairs or steps to go up them:

and every wall shall fall to the ground: this shows that the words are not to be taken literally, but figuratively; only to express how sensibly the power of God should be felt and perceived by all creatures, and in all parts of the land; since now the Jews will dwell in a land of unwalled villages, and in cities without walls, bars, and gates; (see ^{<2581>}Ezekiel 38:11).

Ver. 21. *And I will call for a sword against him, &c.]* That is, against Gog; or, as I would choose to render the words, “for I will call for a sword”, so the particle is rendered, (^{<2589>}Ezekiel 38:19) and which Noldius^{f664} agrees to; and this gives a reason why there should be such a commotion in the land of Israel; because the Lord, who has the swords of

princes at his command, will call for the Christian kings to come to the assistance of the Jews, and fight against the Turk: who will pursue him

throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God; throughout the land of Israel, which is mountainous; and is called the Lord's, because he hath chosen it for his people, given it to them, and now dwelt among them; and in all parts of it where the enemy is, the sword of the Jews, and of those princes that should come in to their assistance at the call of God, shall be sent against them, and cut them off: and not only so,

but every man's sword shall be against his brother; as the swords of the Midianites were, (^{<0722>}Judges 7:22), and of the enemies of Jehoshaphat, (^{<1022>}2 Chronicles 20:22,23). The Turkish army will consist of a mixed people of many nations, who will quarrel among themselves, and destroy one another.

Ver. 22. *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood,* &c.] Not only the sword of the Jews and the sword of Christian princes shall be drawn against him, and the sword of Gog's soldiers against one another; but the Lord himself would plead with him by his judgments, or take vengeance on him, as the Targum; and send a pestilence in his army, which should destroy vast numbers of it; as the army of Sennacherib was destroyed by one when before Jerusalem; and make a great slaughter among them by that and other judgments:

and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain; a horrible tempest of divine wrath, (^{<1916>}Psalm 11:6) as he came into the land of Israel like a storm, so he shall be destroyed by one much more terrible:

and great hailstones; such as were cast upon the Canaanites, (^{<6601>}Joshua 10:11) and as there will be on men, the enemies of the church of God, at the pouring out of the seventh vial, (^{<6602>}Revelation 16:21):

fire and brimstone; as God rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, (^{<0124>}Genesis 19:24), signifying that in like manner will God deal with those enemies of his people; so at the battle of Armageddon, which seems to be the same with this here, the beast and the false prophet will be taken alive, and cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, (^{<6620>}Revelation 19:20), and to this rain or tempest of fire and brimstone upon Gog there is an allusion in (^{<6609>}Revelation 20:9).

Ver. 23. *Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself,* &c.] Show the greatness of his power, and the strictness of his justice and holiness, and glorify these, and all other of his perfections, in the destruction of the enemies of his people:

and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord; Heathen nations shall now come to the knowledge of the true God, and his Son Jesus Christ, and of the Christian religion, and shall embrace and profess it; (See Gill on “²³⁸¹⁶Ezekiel 38:16”), the kingdoms of the world will now become the Lord’s, (⁶¹¹⁵Revelation 11:15).

CHAPTER 39

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 39

This chapter is a continuation of the prophecy of the destruction of Gog, which is both repeated, and more largely described, (^{39:1-8}Ezekiel 39:1-8), then follows an account of the burning of his weapons of war, which will last seven years in burning, during which time there will be no need of the use of wood, (^{39:9,10}Ezekiel 39:9,10), and of the burial of him, and many of his army; the place where, and the time that will be taken up in doing this, even seven months, are observed, (^{39:11-16}Ezekiel 39:11-16), and every feathered fowl and beast of the field are called upon to feed on the flesh of those that are left unburied, (^{39:17-20}Ezekiel 39:17-20) and by all this the glory of the Lord will be seen, known, and acknowledged, both by the Heathens, and by the house of Israel, (^{39:21,22}Ezekiel 39:21,22), and the former will also be informed that the present captivity of the Jews has been for their sins and transgressions, (^{39:23,24}Ezekiel 39:23,24), and the chapter is concluded with a promise of their return from captivity, when they shall know the Lord, and their interest in him; who will after this no more hide his face from them, but pour out his Spirit upon them, under whose influence they shall ever continue, (^{39:25-29}Ezekiel 39:25-29).

Ver. 1. *Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, &c.*] As he had been ordered to do before, and must still continue to do it:

behold, I am against thee, O Gog; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and to inject terror into him; for terrible it is to have God against any:

the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; (see Gill on "^{38:2}Ezekiel 38:2"), the Septuagint version adds "Ros" here as there.

Ver. 2. *And I will turn thee back, &c.*] Not from the land of Israel; for thither it is said in the latter part of the text he would bring him; but the meaning is, that he would "turn him about", as the word ^{f665} signifies, in his own land, and lead him about at his pleasure, and bring him out of it, unto the land of Israel; signifying hereby that the providence of God would be greatly concerned in this affair; and in which much glory would be brought unto him by the destruction of such a potent enemy of his people; which is

the design of bringing him out; (See Gill on “^{2580b}Ezekiel 38:4”):

and leave but a sixth part of thee; meaning, not that a sixth part only should escape the vengeance of God, and all but a sixth part be destroyed in the land of Israel; for it looks as if the whole army would be utterly destroyed, and none left; but that, when he should come out of his own country upon this expedition, a sixth part of his subjects only should be left behind; five out of six should accompany him; so numerous should his army be, and so drained his country by this enterprise of his. Some render the words, “will draw thee out with an hook of six teeth”^{f666}; that is, out of his own land; and this clause stands in the same place and order as the phrase and “put hooks into thy jaws” does in (^{2580b}Ezekiel 38:4) and so may be thought to explain one another, and agrees with what follows: for, as for the sense of it given by Joseph Kimchi and others,

“I will judge thee with six judgments^{f667}, (^{2580c}Ezekiel 38:12), pestilence, blood, an overflowing rain, hailstones, fire, and brimstone,”

it must be rejected; seeing as yet the account of his punishment is not come to; only an account is given how and by what means he shall be drawn out of his own land; wherefore much better is the Targum,

“I will persuade thee, and I will seduce thee;”

so Jarchi seems to understand it: and the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “I will lead thee”, agreeably to what follows:

and will cause thee to come up from the north parts; (See Gill on “^{2580d}Ezekiel 38:15”)

and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel; not to inherit them, but to fall upon them, as in (^{2580e}Ezekiel 39:4).

Ver. 3. *And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand*, &c.] In which it is usually held, to have the arrow fitted to it:

and I will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand; where they are commonly held when put into the bow, and then the bow is drawn with it; signifying hereby, that though he should come into the land of Israel, he should not succeed; he would be stripped of his armour, and it would be useless to him: bows and arrows are put for all kind of warlike instruments;

and are particularly mentioned because they were chiefly used in war when this prophecy was delivered.

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, &c.]* Be slain, and his carcass lie there; so the Targum,

“upon the mountains of the land of Israel thy carcass shall be cast:”

thou and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee; Gog and his army, auxiliaries and allies:

I will give thee to the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured: a great part of his army being slain, should not be buried, but be devoured by birds of prey, and savage beasts; such as eagles and vultures of the former sort, and lions, bears, wolves, &c. of the latter. This was always reckoned a very sore judgment and dreadful calamity, not to have a burial, but to be exposed to birds and beasts of prey; this was threatened to the Israelites, in case of disobedience to the law of God, (^{<1335>}Deuteronomy 28:26) and to the wicked Jews in the times of Jeremiah; and to that evil king of Judah, Jehoiakim, (^{<2164>}Jeremiah 16:4 22:18,19) and is lamented as one of the greatest evils that could befall good men, (^{<1710>}Psalms 79:2), and nothing was more dreadful among the Heathens themselves; hence Homer^{f668}, among the many calamities Achilles was the cause of to the Grecians, mentions this as one, that he was the means of giving the bodies of a great number of their heroes to the dogs, and to the fowls of the air; so Virgil^{f669} represents the want of a burial, and being left to be fed upon by birds of prey, as severe a punishment of a wicked man as can be wished for.

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt fall upon the open field, &c.]* Some part of his army should fall upon the mountains, and others upon the plain; wherever they will be found, they will be destroyed, either by the sword of the Jews and Christian princes, or by God’s judgments from heaven:

for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and therefore it should surely come to pass, since no word of his ever fails; this is added to assure of the truth of it, since it might be thought incredible that so large an army should be destroyed.

Ver. 6. *And I will send a fire on Magog, &c.]* On the land of Magog; (see ^{<5810>}Ezekiel 38:2), while Gog is in the land of Israel, and he and his army perish there, his country shall be destroyed by fire, or by some judgment or

judgments of God, which shall consume like fire. The Septuagint version renders it, “I will send a fire on Gog”; but he before is said to fall upon the mountains of Israel; his country is meant; it designs the destruction of the Ottoman empire:

and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: that belong to the Turkish dominions; not only the habitants of the Continent shall be consumed, but those that dwell in islands, and think themselves safe and secure, and so live carelessly; or such who live on the sea coasts, it being usual in Scripture to call such places isles; and may intend those who dwell near the Exine and Caspian seas:

and they shall know that I am the Lord: by his judgments executed upon them.

Ver. 7. *So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel,* &c.] That is, his perfections; his holiness and justice in punishing their enemies; his truth and faithfulness in fulfilling his promises to them; his power in inflicting judgments on Gog and his army; and his goodness in their preservation and protection:

and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: either the Heathens round about who before blasphemed it, saying that God was not able to deliver his people from such a potent enemy; but now their mouth will be stopped, and they will not dare to speak any more after this manner: or else the Israelites, who shall be so influenced by the grace and goodness of God unto them, as to fear the Lord and his goodness, and not dare to commit the sins they formerly did, whereby his name was polluted and blasphemed among the Heathens:

and the Heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel; they shall know, by these judgments and providences, that he is the true God, and they shall acknowledge and confess it; and that he is a holy and just God, and dwells in Israel, and grants his gracious as well as powerful presence to his people; nor shall they dare to molest them any more.

Ver. 8. *Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God,* &c.] That is, the salvation of his people, and the destruction of their enemies; the prophecy concerning all this is come to pass, and the whole is accomplished; thus, because of the certainty thereof, it is represented as if the time was actually come, and the thing was really done; for the event is as sure as if it was now fulfilled:

this is the day whereof I have spoken; by the Prophet Ezekiel and others; (See Gill on “²³⁸⁷Ezekiel 38:17”).

Ver. 9. *And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, &c.*] Out of their houses into the streets, where Gog’s soldiers will lie dead, and their armour by them; or rather out of their cities, where they dwelt safely, and where they kept themselves, and were secure from the enemy: these seem to be distinct from the militia of Israel, engaged in battle with Gog; these were the inhabitants that will stay at home, and yet share in the spoil and plunder; (see ¹⁹⁸²Psalm 68:12), these, after the battle is over, and the victory obtained, of which they will have information, will then march out without fear into the open fields and mountains, where the army of Gog will fall, (²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 39:4,5):

and shall set on fire and burn the weapons; the armour of Gog’s army, which they shall find lie by the dead, or upon them; or which they that flee will cast away; these they shall gather together, and lay on a heap, and burn, as sometimes has been the practice of conquerors; or rather they shall take them to their own houses, and make fuel of them, and burn them, instead of wood out of the fields and forests, as the following verse shows:

both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows; which were the weapons that Gog and his associates used; (see ²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 38:4 39:3),

and the handstaves, and the spears; the “handstaves” were either half pikes or truncheons, as some think; or javelins, as others:

and they shall burn them with fire seven years; which some take to be a certain number for an uncertain, and others an hyperbolic expression; but when it is considered what a vast army this of Gog’s will be, and what prodigious numbers of weapons of all sorts must be carried by them, and the little use of fire in those hot countries: it may be very well taken in a literal sense, and the meaning be, that so great will be the quantity of warlike weapons that will be found and gathered, that they will serve for fuel for the space of seven years.

Ver. 10. *So that they shall take no wood out of the field, &c.*] During that seven years; or they shall have no need to do so, as the Syriac version; having a sufficiency of armour:

neither cut down any out of the forest: out of the forest of Lebanon, or any other, where they used to fetch wood for their necessary uses; but so great

a quantity of armour shall now be brought home by them to their houses, that they should have no need to be at the trouble and expense of fetching wood from the forests:

for they shall burn the weapons with fire; the reason of which will be, because they will have no occasion for them hereafter; for when this battle is over, which seems to be the same with that at Armageddon, there will be an entire destruction of all the enemies of Christ and his church; the world will be cleared of them, and there will be war no more, and so no more use of weapons; this will be the last battle that will be fought; (see ^{<3114>}Isaiah 2:4 ^{<3013>}Micah 4:3):

and they shall spoil those that spoil them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God: not only take their weapons and burn them, but strip them of their garments, and take away their gold, and silver, and jewels, and everything of value they shall find about them.

Ver. 11. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, &c.] When this destruction of the army of Gog shall be made:

that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel; or, “a place there, a grave in Israel”^{f670}; he that thought to have subdued the whole land, and taken possession of it, shall have no more of it than just a place for a grave, to be buried in; a place fit for a grave, as the Targum; and where that will be is next observed: “the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea”; a valley through which travellers used to pass from Syria, Babylon, and other places, to Egypt and Arabia Felix, which lay east of the sea; not the Mediterranean sea, which lies west of Judea; but either the Dead sea, the sea of Sodom, a sulphurous lake, to which there may be an allusion, (^{<690>}Revelation 19:20) or the sea of Chinnereth, or Genesareth, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; the same with the sea or lake of Tiberias and Galilee, mentioned in the New Testament; which sense is approved of by Gussetius^{f671}; where was a passage from the land of Canaan to the east of the same sea. Calmet^{f672} thinks it stands for the great road at the foot of Mount Carmel, to go from Judea, Egypt, and the country of the Philistines, into Phoenicia, which road was to the east of the Mediterranean sea.

And it shall stop the noses of the passengers; or the passengers shall stop their noses, because of the ill smell of the carcasses^{f673}; or their mouths, the mouths of blasphemers, who shall no more blaspheme the God of Israel, when they shall observe this monument of his power, in the destruction of

his and his people's enemies. It may be rendered, "it shall stop the passengers^{f674}; from passing that way, because of the multitude of the carcasses that shall fall there", and which is the reason of their being buried out of the way; this sense Jarchi takes notice of. The Targum is,

"and it is near to two mountains;"

as if this clause described the situation of the valley.

And there shall they bury Gog, and all his multitude; all his army, such of it as the fowls and beasts had not devoured, and the bones they had left; not his army only, but himself also, the Sultan or Grand Seignior of the Turks, the general of his mighty army: this was not true of Antiochus; he died not, nor was he buried in the land of Israel.

And they shall call it the valley of Hamon-gog: Hamon signifies a multitude; and this name will be imposed upon the place of Gog's sepulchre, because of the multitude slain and buried here, and to perpetuate the memory of it: there never was yet a place of this name in the land of Israel, which shows that this event is yet future. Calmet takes it to be the valley of Jezreel, in which he thinks the army of Cambyses was defeated, after the death of that prince; wrongly taking Cambyses and his army for Gog and Magog.

Ver. 12. *And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, &c.]* So long time will the burial of Gog's army take up, because of the multitude of it, and by reason their bones will be scattered here and there; which will require time to gather them together, and bring them to one place: the reason of the burial of them will be, partly out of humanity, which the Christian religion, which will then be embraced by the Jews, teaches and encourages; and partly because of the disagreeable sight and ill smell of the carcasses of the slain, and to prevent the air being infected therewith, which might cause noxious diseases. Jarchi gives the reason of it, because Gog is of the seed of Japheth, who covered his father's nakedness, and therefore worthy of a funeral: but a better reason follows,

that they may cleanse the land: not from ceremonial uncleanness, a place being unclean, by the ceremonial law, where dead carcasses, or the bones of dead men, lay; for the ceremonial law, as it is abrogated, will now be disused by the Jews themselves, when converted; but from natural pollution, before mentioned.

Ver. 13. *Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them, &c.*] That is, a great number of the common people of the land of Israel, especially of those that dwell near the field of battle, shall be employed in burying the slain; and which they will be very ready to do, for the reasons above mentioned:

and it shall be to them a renown; or, “for a name”^{f675}; they shall be commended for their humanity to their enemies, and shall be spoken of with honour, as being the peculiar people of God, whom he has so remarkably appeared for, protected, and defended:

the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God; the day that will be renown to them will be to the glory of God; whose greatness, goodness, power, and wisdom, will be seen in saving his people, and destroying their enemies.

Ver. 14. *And they shall sever out men of continual employment, &c.*] That is, the principal of the house of Israel, their magistrates and governors, shall select certain persons, to be daily employed in the following work, till ended:

passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it; these men will be appointed to go through the land of Israel, to gather up such carcasses and bones of dead men as remain anywhere after the seven months’ burial before observed; and all passengers or travellers shall be assisting to them in it, both in directing where any such carcasses and bones may lie, and in bringing them to the common place of burial; that so the land may be thoroughly cleansed from such disagreeable objects:

after the end of seven months shall they search or begin to search, as the Targum; when seven months are ended, in which the people in general will be employed in burying the dead; these men before mentioned will be sent out into each part of the land, to search in caves, and dens and ditches; among thickets, thorns, and briars, where the slain may fall; or where soldiers, being wounded, might betake themselves and die; or their carcasses or bones be dragged and left by beasts and fowls; to find them out, and bring them to the place of interment.

Ver. 15. *And the passengers that pass through the land, &c.*] Not along with the searchers, but that travel through it upon business in it, or in other lands:

when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it; as he passes along, if he happens to see a human bone in the way, or hard by, he shall stop and lay a stone, or a heap of stones, by it, or some such mark or token, signifying that a man's bone lies there:

till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog, that is, which sign shall continue till searchers come that way and take up the bone, and carry it to be buried in the valley of Hamon-gog; for carcasses and bones were not to be buried in the place where they were found, but to be brought and interred in this common place of sepulture.

Ver. 16. *And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah, &c.]* The name of the city nearest to this place, where Gog and his multitude shall be buried, shall be called Hamonah from thence, which signifies a multitude; or Polyandriion, as the Septuagint version, a place where many graves are; or perhaps a new city will be built near this place, and so called, to perpetuate the memory of it; or else, as Kimchi observes, Jerusalem will be so called, from the multitude of those that will be slain near it; but, however, neither that nor any other city in the land of Israel have ever bore any such name; from whence it may be concluded that this prophecy does not refer to the times of Antiochus, or any yet past, but to time to come:

thus shall they cleanse the land; thoroughly and completely, so that not a bone shall be left unburied.

Ver. 17. *And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* What the prophet is ordered by the Lord to say is to creatures not then in being, nor yet; and, were they, they could not understand his words; but however, when the time comes, partly by an instinct in nature, and partly by a particular direction of Providence, they will be gathered together upon so great a slaughter of men; for what follows, though mentioned in this place, will be between the slaughter of Gog's army, and the burial of it, as Kimchi well observes; after the burial such an invitation would be impertinent; and which is made not for the sake of creatures, but of men, to denote the certainty of this great carnage that shall be made:

speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field; this must be understood of such fowls, and such beasts, as devour dead carcasses, for all will not feed on them; a like invitation is given after the battle at Armageddon, the same with this here, (~~66917~~ Revelation 19:17) only with this difference, there an angel is said to cry, here the prophet; there to the fowls

only, here to the beasts of the field also; no doubt respect there is had to this passage:

assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifices that I do sacrifice for you; such a slaughter of men is called a sacrifice, because there is a likeness between that and the killing of beasts for sacrifice; besides, these enemies of God and his people will fall a victim to his justice, as well as be a repast for fowls and beasts, who are invited, as to a feast, to feed upon them; and there being so much of the power and providence of God in all this, it is ascribed to him, and is called “the supper of the great God”, (⁴⁶⁹⁷Revelation 19:17):

even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel; where Gog’s army will fall, (²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 39:4), and in such vast numbers, that it may well be called a great sacrifice; the sacrifice of a great army by the great God, and for such great number of creatures:

that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood; the flesh and blood of the sacrifices, even of slain men, which carnivorous creatures delight in. The Targum is,

“draw near everywhere round about to the slain, which I slay for you with a great slaughter upon the mountains of Israel, and ye shall eat the flesh, and drink the blood.”

Ver. 18. *Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty*, &c.] Of the soldiers, men of strength and courage, and fit for war, with which the army of Gog will abound:

and drink the blood of the princes of the earth: both the princes of his own family and court, and those of his allies and auxiliaries that will come along with him:

of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks; which the Targum Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret of kings, princes, dukes, rulers, and governors; and so does John, in the Revelation, of kings, captains, and mighty men, (⁴⁶⁹⁸Revelation 19:18):

all of them fatlings of Baasha; which was a country in Israel, very fruitful, and full of pastures, where much fat cattle were bred; and to which these great personages in Gog’s army are compared, for their bulk, strength, and wealth. So the Targum,

“all of them rich in substance.”

It may be rendered, “all of them the merie of Bashan”; for “meri” is the name of an ox or buffle; and Jarchi says that a fat ox is called in the Arabic language <Arabic Text> “almari”^{f676}.

Ver. 19. *And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, &c.*] The fat of men; and such as before described generally are fat, and of which they shall have enough; and, though voracious creatures, shall eat to satiety:

and drink blood till ye be drunken; as men are with wine, who become mad with it; and so birds and beasts of prey grow fiercer by drinking blood: the meaning is, they should have their fill of the flesh, fat, and blood, of slain men:

of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you; the Targum is,

“of the flesh of the slain, which I have slain for you;”

(See Gill on “⁴⁶⁹¹⁷Ezekiel 39:17”).

Ver. 20. *Thus shall ye be filled at my table with horses and chariots, &c.*] With the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, as John interprets it, (⁴⁶⁹¹⁸Revelation 19:18), and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions: and with the flesh of men that ride in chariots used in war; for chariots themselves cannot be eaten; and with these the birds and beasts of prey will be filled at the Lord’s table, which he will furnish for them on the mountains of Israel, on the field of battle, where Gog and his army will fall: and thus as the Lord’s supper is called the table of the Lord, (⁴⁶⁹¹²1 Corinthians 10:21), so this table of the Lord is called the supper of the great God, (⁴⁶⁹¹⁷Revelation 19:17), this is further explained,

with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God; that is, with the flesh of valiant men, generals, captains, officers of all sorts, and common soldiers, even of all men, great and small, bond and free, (⁴⁶⁹¹⁸Revelation 19:18).

Ver. 21. *And I will set my glory among the Heathen, &c.*] The glory of his divine perfections, particularly his power and his goodness, in destroying the enemies of his people, and saving them; which will be set in a clear point of view to the Heathen, that they cannot but observe it; and this is the ultimate end of this strange event, as it is of all that the Lord does, even his own glory, subordinate to which is his people’s good:

and all the Heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them; his vengeance and power, as the Targum; the punishment inflicted by his mighty hand on Gog and his army: these Heathens are the Pagan kingdoms of China, &c. and of Tartary, Persia, and the whole Turkish dominions, being Mahometan, which are no better than Heathen; these will be converted to the Christian religion, in consequence of this event; for this will be the passing away of the Turkish woe, which will make way for the sounding of the seventh trumpet; and when these kingdoms will become Christ's, and way be made for the kings of the east to come over to him, (~~6114~~ Revelation 11:14,15 16:12).

Ver. 22. *So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God,* &c.] That has chosen them, redeemed them, called them, manifested his covenant love and grace to them, and protected and defended them: this destruction of their enemies will be a proof of it; and they will hereby be led into a clearer knowledge of him, and of his goodness to them; and make a more firm and constant profession of him,

even from that day and forward, to the end of time; for after this the Jews will no more apostatize, but will for ever remain the people of God and Christ.

Ver. 23. *And the Heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity,* &c.] Before this they thought the captivity of the Jews, and all their distresses, were owing to their own weakness, and the weakness of the God they served, and to the superior strength of their enemies, and the power of their gods; but now, by this strange and amazing destruction of Gog and his army, they will see that it was not owing to those things, but to the sins and transgressions of the people of the Jews:

because they transgressed against me; prevaricated with him, acted a perfidious and treacherous part to him, as the word¹⁶⁷⁷ signifies; which they did, when they delivered Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, into the hands of the Gentiles, to be crucified; it is their disbelief of Christ, and rejection of him, and maltreatment of him, that is here more especially pointed at; and which is the cause of their present long captivity and exile, and of all the afflictions and troubles they have since met with: so the Targum renders it,

“they dealt falsely with my Word;”

the Word made flesh, the incarnate Saviour:

therefore hid I my face from them; took no notice of them, showed them no favour, took no care of them; disregarded their prayers and cries, and removed his presence from them, and all the tokens of it. So the Targum,

“I caused my Shechaniah (or majesty) to remove from them;”

and thus it has been ever since, and now is:

and gave them into the hand of their enemies; the Romans, who took away their place and nation; which they feared would be the case, should many believe in Christ; but the true reason of it was because they did not believe in him, (⁶¹¹⁴⁸John 11:48):

so fell they all by the sword; that is, through the sword of the conquering Romans; they fell into their hands; some perished by the sword, and others were carried into captivity; and all were punished for their iniquity, trespass, and perfidy.

Ver. 24. *According to their uncleanness*, &c.] Not ceremonial, but moral; they were an impure and adulterous generation, as our Lord calls them, (⁴¹²⁹Matthew 12:39 16:4):

and according to their transgressions have I done unto them; or “rebellions”, as the Targum renders it; or defections, as the word ^{f678} signifies; their rebellions against the King Messiah; their defections from him; their contempt of him, and rejection of his yoke, and non-submission to his ordinances; according to the desert of such crimes, the Lord dealt with them;

“took vengeance on them,”

as the Targum is; in the destruction of their nation, city, and temple: “and hid my face from them”; or caused his Shechaniah to remove from them, as the same paraphrase; (See Gill on “²⁵⁹²³Ezekiel 39:23”).

Ver. 25. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*, &c.] The Jews having been long punished for their sins; and being brought to repentance for them, and to faith in Christ, as they will be in the latter day: hence it follows,

now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob; or the captives of Jacob, the people of Israel, that have been carried captive into all lands; these shall be gathered from thence, and brought into their own land:

and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; all the twelve tribes; which shows that this has not respect to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; for then the Lord had mercy on the house of Judah only; or the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; but their return from their present captivity, and future conversion,

when all Israel shall be saved; as the fruit and effect of the rich sovereign grace and mercy of God unto them, (^{<6125>}Romans 11:25,26):

and will be jealous for my holy name; or, “zealous”^{f679} for the glory of it, that it be no more blasphemed among the Heathen; and that it be glorified among his own people.

Ver. 26. *After that they have borne their shame*, &c.] And disgrace, among the nations where they are scattered; being captives, exiles, in distress and affliction, and under the manifest tokens of the divine wrath and vengeance: it may be rendered, “and they shall bear their shame”^{f680}; that is, as Jarchi glosses it,

“when I shall do good to them, and not render to them according to their wickedness, then they shall bear their shame, and be confounded, and not able to lift up their face;”

as penitent persons, under a sense of divine wrath, blush, and are ashamed to look up to God; (see ^{<5916>}Ezra 9:6-10). Menachem interprets the word in the sense of atonement and forgiveness, as it is used in (^{<4921>}Psalm 32:11), as if the meaning was, then they shall have their sins, which caused shame, forgiven them. Kimchi’s gloss is,

“they shall carry in their mouths, and make mention of their shame they had in captivity.”

And all their transgressions whereby they have transgressed against me; that is, the punishment of all their trespasses in their captivity, or the shame of them, being now brought to repentance; and which will be aggravated to them, when they remember that these were committed by their forefathers, and since approved of by them.

When they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid; as they did in the times of Christ; they were in entire peace, and no enemy disturbed them; and were in the possession of their own land, and enjoyed

the blessings of it, and had their religious as well as civil liberties; and yet rejected the Messiah, his doctrine, ordinances, and salvation by him.

Ver. 27. *When I have brought them again from the people, &c.]* That is, then shall they be ashamed, and repent of all their trespasses and sins:

and gathered them out of their enemies lands; from the provinces of their enemies, as the Targum; when they are collected together in a body out of each of the nations where they are now dispersed, and brought to their own land:

and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; when they shall publicly repent of their sins, and forsake them, and seek the Lord their God, and the King Messiah, and embrace and profess him, and acknowledge that God has been righteous and holy in all his dispensations towards them.

Ver. 28. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, &c.]* (See Gill on “^{39:22}Ezekiel 39:22”);

which caused them to be led into captivity among the Heathen; for their sins and transgressions: and so the Targum adds,

“because they sinned before me:”

but I have gathered them into their own land; being now penitent for their sins, and believing in the Messiah: and so the Targum,

“and now, because they are converted, I have gathered them, &c.”

and have left none of them any more there; among the Heathen, or in the land of their enemies; everyone shall be returned to the land of Canaan, be they where they will, as when they came out of Egypt: and this is typical of the salvation of God’s elect, or mystical Israel; not one of them shall be lost or perish, but all shall be brought to repentance: this again shows, that this prophecy did not respect the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; since then many were left behind.

Ver. 29. *Neither will I hide my face any more from them, &c.]* The Jews, upon their future conversion, will always have the worship of God among them, and his presence with them; he will always take notice of them; they will ever be under his protection and care; he will never remove his Shechinah from them any more, as the Targum: a further proof that this

refers to future times; for, after their return from Babylon, God did hide his face, and remove his presence from them, and left them to ruin and destruction by the Romans:

for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God; this refers not to the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but to one that is yet to come, when the Jews will be converted in the latter day; after which God will no more depart from them, nor shall they depart from him; (see ^{<3820>}Zechariah 12:10 ^{<3819>}Isaiah 59:19-21).

CHAPTER 40

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 40

This and the eight following chapters contain a vision of a city and temple herein described, and are thought to be the most difficult part of the whole Bible. The Jews forbid the reading of it till a man is arrived to thirty years of age; and then he must expect to meet with things in it he does not understand, and which must be left until Elijah comes to explain them. Many Christian commentators have omitted the exposition of these chapters; and all acknowledge the difficulties in them. Something however may be got out of them, relating to the Gospel, and Gospel church state, which I am fully persuaded is intended by the city and temple; for that no material building can be designed is clear from this one observation; that not only the whole land of Israel would not be capable of having such a city as is here described built upon it, but even all Europe would not be sufficient; nor the whole world, according to the account of the dimensions which some give of it. The circumference of the city is said to be about eighteen thousand measures, (^{<3685>}Ezekiel 48:35); but what they are is not certain. Luther makes them to be thirty six thousand German miles; and a German mile being three of ours, the circuit of this city must be above a hundred thousand English miles; and this is sufficient to set aside all hypotheses of a material building, either of city or temple, the one being in proportion to the other. The Jews dream of a third temple to be built, by their vainly expected Messiah; but nothing is more clear than that the true Messiah was to come into the second temple, and by that give it a greater glory than the former ever had; as is evident from (^{<3016>}Haggai 2:6-9) and, according to Malachi, he was to come suddenly into his temple, which could be no other than the then present one, (^{<3481>}Malachi 3:1), and into which Jesus came, and where he often appeared and taught, as well as entered into it with power and authority, as the Lord and proprietor of it; by which he appeared to be the true Messiah, as by many other characters; (see ^{<4122>}Luke 2:22,46 21:37 ^{<4112>}Matthew 21:12,13). There are some who think that Solomon's temple, as it was before it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and as it was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, is here described; and that partly to let the Jews know what a glory to their nation they lost

by their sins; and partly that they might have a complete pattern for the rebuilding of it, as well as to comfort them under its present ruins; but there is no agreement between them. This temple was to be built at a distance from the city, several miles; according to some ten, others twenty, and by the best account twenty seven miles; (see ^{<361B>}Ezekiel 45:1-5), whereas Solomon's temple, and that built by Zerubbabel, were in the city of Jerusalem: nor from either of these flowed waters, which rose up to a river, on the bank of which were many trees for food and medicine, and whose waters were healing, and quickened wherever they came, as from this, (^{<370B>}Ezekiel 47:1-12), nor do we ever read of the east gate of these temples always shut, as this, (^{<364D>}Ezekiel 44:2), and besides, both these temples were profaned and destroyed; whereas this shall never be, but God will dwell in it forever, (^{<363D>}Ezekiel 43:7), neither place, structure, nor worship, agree. Nor is this city here the same with the New Jerusalem John had a vision of; for though he borrows some of his expressions to describe it from hence; and in some things there is an appearance of agreement, as of the river of water of life, and the tree of life on both sides of the river, (^{<621A>}Revelation 22:1,2), yet the description agrees not, either with respect to its gates, or its compass; and though there was no temple in that John saw, as there was none in this, it being without the city; yet here is a temple in this vision, and the greatest part of it is taken up in the description of it. It remains that this must be understood mystically and figuratively of the Gospel church, which is often spoken of as a city and temple, (^{<3812D>}Hebrews 12:22 ^{<612B>}Revelation 3:12) and which began to have its accomplishment in the first times of the Gospel, immediately after the death and resurrection of Christ; when his disciples had a commission to preach the Gospel to all nations; and who accordingly did, even before the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the material temple, so that Gospel churches were planted in all parts of the world; and especially this was the case, when the Roman empire, called the whole world, became Christian: though the further and greater accomplishment of this vision will be in the latter day; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when Jews and Gentiles will be converted, and Gospel churches be set up everywhere; so that the Gospel church state, or kingdom of Christ, signified by the great mountain in (^{<212B>}Daniel 2:35), and by this large city here, will fill the whole earth: and the rather this may be thought to be the design of this vision to represent it, as it follows the prophecies of the Jews' settlement in their own land; and of the destruction of Gog, or the Turk, attempting to dispossess them; of which in chapters 37-39. In this

chapter are first an account of the vision in general, the time, manner, and place of it, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:1,2), a description of the person, the builder and owner of the house; and by whom the prophet is shown each of the parts and dimensions of it, whom he calls to him for that purpose, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:3,4), and then a particular account is given, which begins with the outward wall around the house, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:5), then the east gate, with its posts, porch, and chambers, and the outward court with its chambers, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:6-19), then the gate of the outward court to the north, with its chambers, and the gate of the inner court over against that, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:20-23), then the gate to the south, with its posts, arches, and chambers, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:24-31), then the inner court to the east, its gate, chambers, and arches, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:32-34), then the north gate, with its posts, chambers, and arches, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:35-38), in the porch of which are the tables, on which the sacrifices are slain, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:39-43), after which are described the chambers for the singers and the priests, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:44-46), then the inner court and altar in it; and the chapter is concluded with the dimensions of the porch of the house, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:48,49).

Ver. 1. *In the five and twentieth year of our captivity*, &c.] That is, from Jeconiah's captivity, from whence this prophet begins his dates: he calls it our captivity, because he himself was then carried captive; and this was twenty years after his first vision; (see ^{260B}Ezekiel 1:1,2):

in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month; the Jews had two beginnings of their year, the one on civil accounts, which was in the autumnal equinox, in the month Tisri, which answers to part of our September; and if this is meant here, the tenth day of it was the day of atonement, in which the Jews were to afflict their souls; but on this day the prophet has a view of the Gospel church, which receives the atonement by the sacrifice of Christ: the other beginning of the year, which was on ecclesiastic accounts, was in the vernal equinox, the month Nisan, which answers to part of our March; and the tenth day of it was the day that the passover lamb was separated from the flock, and kept up till the fourteenth; the time between Christ's public entry into Jerusalem, and his being sacrificed as the passover for us. Some interpreters go one way, some the other: it is not easy to determine which is meant; though I think more probably the latter, since church affairs are chiefly here represented. This, according to the Talmudists^{f681}, was the year of the jubilee: Bishop Usher^{f682} places it in the year of the world 3430 A.M., and before Christ

574; and makes the day to be the thirtieth of April, and the third day of the week (Tuesday); and, as to the year, Mr. Whiston^{f683} agrees with, him:

in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten; taken, broken up, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; its walls demolished; its houses burnt, and inhabitants put to the sword, or carried captive. This was in the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, to which add the fourteen years from hence and they make twenty five, as reckoned from Jeconiah's captivity:

in the self-same day the hand of the Lord was upon me, and brought me hither; that is, on the tenth day of the month, of the new year, begin when it will. The Spirit of the Lord, which is sometimes called the finger of God, and the power of God, this fell upon him, or was laid on him, and impressed his mind and soul; and he in a visionary way, as appears by what follows, was brought into, the land of Israel, and to Jerusalem, according as things were represented to his mind; though, as to his body, he was still in the land of Chaldea. The Targum interprets "the hand of the Lord" the spirit of prophecy; (see ^{<300B>}Ezekiel 1:3).

Ver. 2. *In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, &c.]* Or by the spirit of prophecy, as the Targum again; that is, being under the impressions of the Spirit of God, it appeared to him, in a visionary way, as if he was really brought out of Chaldea, and set in the land of Israel; (see ^{<300B>}Ezekiel 8:3), as John was carried away in the spirit to see the New Jerusalem, (^{<6210>}Revelation 21:10):

and set me upon a very high mountain; as John also was, that he might have a view of this large city and temple, which were to fill the whole world: thus Christ was taken up to an exceeding high mountain, to be shown the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, (^{<400B>}Matthew 4:8), it is needless to inquire what this mountain was, whether Moriah, on which the temple was formerly built, or any other mountain near Jerusalem, since no material temple is exhibited to be built upon it; nor would such a mountain, especially Zion or Moriah, have been a proper place, if material temple at Jerusalem was here designed, which must have stood upon it; but this is visionary, as well as the city and temple; if it respects anything, it may the strength, the visibility, and exalted state of the church of Christ in the latter day; (see ^{<300B>}Isaiah 2:2):

by, which was as the flame of a city on the south: the prophet in the vision, and as to his view of things coming from Babylon, which lay north of

Judea, has a prospect of the south of the city and temple; and, first, there appeared to him, to the south of the mountain on which he stood, the plan of a city; or which was as one, for the city is not described till last; the description is of the temple first; and which for its wall, gates, courts, and towers, looked more like a city than a temple; nothing is more common than for the church of Christ to be compared to a city, especially as in the latter day; (see ^{<187B>}Psalm 87:3).

Ver. 3. *And he brought me thither*, &c.] Being brought into the land of Israel in vision, and to a high mountain in it, by which were as the frame of a city; he was from thence brought to the city or temple itself, which looked like one:

and, behold, a note of attention and admiration:

there was a man; one in human form; not a created angel, but the Messiah, the builder and owner of the city and temple, whom it was proper the prophet should first have a view of; and by whom he was to be made acquainted with the several parts and dimensions of those buildings: he is called a “man”, not that he was a mere man, but the eternal God; or otherwise he would not have been fit to be the architect or builder of such a fabric; nor as yet was he really man, but is so called, because it was determined he should, and it was agreed by him that he would become man, and it was foretold as a certain thing; and besides, he often appeared in a human form before his incarnation, as he now did, being most suitable to the prophet, and making himself more familiar to him; as well as it was prelude of his future incarnation, and of what he be when this vision would be fulfilled:

whose appearance was like the appearance of brass; denoting the glory and splendour of his divine Person, being the brightness of his Father’s glory; also the glory of his human nature, in his state of exaltation, and the glory of his office, as Mediator; and especially the glory and brightness he will appear in when this vision will take place, with which he shall enlighten the whole earth, and slay antichrist; (see ^{<660B>}Revelation 18:1 ^{<510B>}2 Thessalonians 2:8), also it may denote his purity and holiness in both his natures, divine and human; not only in the former, but in the latter, in which he is free from sin, original and actual; and even now from sin imputed, having made full satisfaction for it, without which he will appear when he comes a second time, (^{<300B>}Hebrews 9:28), this may likewise point at his great strength, as God, and man, and Mediator; who has made the

world, and holds all creatures in being; who is the mighty Redeemer of his people; has bore their sins, and conquered their enemies; supports their persons; bears their burdens, and supplies them with strength: once more, it may intend his duration; who, though he was once dead, is alive, and lives for ever; his priesthood is unchangeable; his kingdom an everlasting one; and he the same yesterday, today, and for ever, and his years fail not:

with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed: one in one hand, and the other in the other hand; the one to measure greater, the other lesser matters; and both signify the sacred Scriptures, the rule and measure of faith and practice; and to which, in the latter day, all will be reduced; the doctrines then preached will be quite agreeable to them; the ordinances will be administered as they were first delivered; the form, order, and discipline of the churches, will be according to the primitive pattern; there will be no deviation from it; (see ^{<301>}Zechariah 2:1,2 ^{<610>}Revelation 11:1 21:15):

and he stood in the gate; of the house or temple, as being Lord and proprietor of it; having the keys of it, to open and shut, let in and keep out, at his pleasure; (see ^{<386>}Hebrews 3:6 ^{<607>}Revelation 3:7) and as the guide of the prophet, to lead him into each of the courts and apartments, and give him the dimensions of them, that he might show them to the house of Israel, to be observed by them; and here, as Cocceius observes, he stands, invites and calls persons to come into his house, and partake of all the privileges and entertainments of it; (see ^{<303>}Proverbs 1:20 8:1,2,9 9:1-5), yea, here he stands, as being not so much the doorkeeper, as the door and gate itself; as he is the way to his Father, the gate that leads to eternal life, so the door into a Gospel church; (see ^{<616>}John 14:6 10:1,9).

Ver. 4. *And the man said unto me, Son of man, &c.]* The glorious and illustrious Person before described, who appeared in a human form, spoke to the prophet, calling him “the Son of man”, a title often bestowed upon him in this prophecy; and here used to put him in mind of his original and decent, and of his meanness and unworthiness; thereby teaching him humility, which is necessary in order to receive instruction, and learn the knowledge of divine things: and also he might use this free and familiar way of speaking, both to express his philanthropy or good will to men, and to take off all terror from the mind of the prophet at his appearance; that he might more diligently attend to what he should see and hear, which he next advises him to:

behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears; look with both eyes, and hear with both ears; that is, look wistfully, and hear attentively; for if persons only have a glance or superficial view of anything or hear in a careless and indifferent manner, what they see and hear will make little impression upon them; nor will they retain, but soon forget it, and be incapable of relating it unto others:

and set thy heart upon all that I shall show thee; let thy mind be intent upon it; thoroughly consider it, and ponder it within thy heart; let it engross all thy thoughts and affections; so it will be imprinted upon thy mind, and be remembered by thee; for, unless a man's heart is taken with what he sees and hears, it will soon be gone from him; and besides, these were things of great moment and importance, which were about to be shown the prophet: as Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle shown him in the mount; and as David had the pattern of the temple given him by the Spirit and in writing, which were both typical of the church; and as John had a view of the New Jerusalem; so the prophet here is shown the form and order of the Gospel church in the latter day:

for to the intent that I might show them unto thee art thou brought hither; this was the design of his being brought in a visionary way out of Chaldea into the land of Israel, that he might have a view of the fabric after described; and there it was highly proper that he should diligently view it, and listen attentively to everything that was said to him about it; and the rather, as he was to relate the whole to others, as follows:

declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel; to the people of Israel then in captivity; and to the church of God in every age, to whom this prophecy should come, and by whom it should be read; that the people of God in all succeeding times might know what will be the state and condition of the church of Christ in the latter day; and how far they now come short of Gospel order and discipline; (see ^{<360>}Ezekiel 43:10,11). It becomes the ministers of the word faithfully to declare what has been shown them, whether respecting doctrine or practice, even all things, and keep back nothing that may be profitable and useful.

Ver. 5. *And behold, a wall on the outside of the house round about, &c.]* The first thing that presents itself to the view of the prophet, after the sight of the architect or chief builder, is a wall encompassing this strange and wondrous building; which was like the frame of a city, as before observed: this wall was five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad; (see

⁽³⁵²¹⁾Ezekiel 42:20), now this wall was both for separation and protection; that it was for separation is certain from (⁽³⁵²¹⁾Ezekiel 42:20), it was to separate between the sanctuary land the profane place; that is, between the church and the world: the people of God were always a distinct and separate people; they were so from eternity, are so in time, and will be so to all eternity; they were distinguished from others by the everlasting love, of God; by his eternal choice of them, and taking them into the covenant of his grace, in consequence of it; and by the redeeming grace of Christ, who has redeemed them out of every kindred, people, and nation; and by the efficacious grace of God, in the effectual calling, by which they are separated from the world, and become a distinct people from them; and so they will be in the resurrection morn, and in the day of judgment, and in heaven for evermore: and what separates and distinguishes them is not any native goodness in them, nor any good thing done by them; but the purpose and grace of God, like a wall built firm and sure; not upon the works of men, but the will of God; and is unalterable and eternal; a wall that can never be battered down: it is this by which the church is enclosed as a vineyard and garden, to which it is sometimes compared, because separate and distinct from the waste, common, and field of the world; as here to a building encompassed by a wall, and divided from it: the church of Christ in all ages does or should consist of persons gathered out of the world, separated from it by the grace of God; but in the latter day it will more visibly appear to consist of such: it will be openly distinguished from the world, by the purity of its doctrines; by the faithful administration of ordinances; strictness of its discipline, and by the holy lives of the members of it; these, by the grace of God, will be a wall of separation round about it, to keep out profane persons and things; moreover, a wall is for protection, preservation, and safety; and such a wall the Lord himself will be to his people; he will be round about them, on their side, and on every side of them: yea, a wall of fire to enlighten, warm, and comfort them, and to consume their enemies, (⁽³⁵¹⁶⁾Zechariah 2:5) he will be a wall about his church in his love to them, with which he encompasses them; and which is built, not on their loveliness, love, or obedience, but upon his sovereign will and pleasure; and the dimensions of which, its length, breadth, height, and depth, are unmeasurable: it is a wall impregnable; it can never be broken down, and secures from all enemies whatever; and so he will be in his power, by which his saints are kept as persons in a garrison, or any fortified place well walled about, and which is invincible; to which may be added salvation by Jesus Christ, which will be for the walls and bulwarks of

the city and church of God in the latter day, to which belong the prophecies in (^{230B}Isaiah 26:1 40:18), which salvation flows from the love of God; is secured by his purpose; established in his covenant; wrought out by Christ, and is an everlasting one; and is the firm security and safety of his church and people now, hereafter, and to all eternity:

and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit, and an hand breadth; as in (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:3) and this being the measure used in taking the dimensions of the whole building, it was proper it should be explained what it was, before they are taken, and the account given: it consisted of six cubits; but then as these differ, there being a common cubit, and a sacred or royal one, it was necessary it should be clearly pointed at, as it is; by observing that these cubits were to be understood of a cubit and a hand's breadth; the common cubit were eighteen inches, a foot and a half, or half a yard; and a hand's breadth were three inches; so that this measure consisted of three yards and a half. Some indeed are of opinion that the hand's breadth is to be added only to the six cubits, and not to each of them; but the text is clear and express that these cubits were by or according to a cubit and a hand's breadth. So the Targum paraphrases it,

“and in the man's hand measuring reeds, one of which was six cubits by a cubit, which is a cubit and a hand's breadth;”

and this is confirmed by what is said in (^{261B}Ezekiel 43:13),

the cubit is a cubit and a hand's breadth; to which may be added, that such was the royal cubit at Babylon, where Ezekiel now was, according to Herodotus^{f684}; who says,

“the royal cubit is larger by three fingers than that which was usually measured with, or the common cubit;”

in this way Jarchi and Kimchi understand it; though they make the common cubit to be but five hands' breadth, or fifteen inches, and this six hands' breadth, or eighteen inches: what this mystically signifies, (see Gill on ^{260B}Ezekiel 40:3”),

so he measured the breadth of the building one reed, and the height one reed; not of the whole building of the house or temple, but of the wall before mentioned; the breadth or thickness of which was one reed, or three

yards and a half; and the height of it was the same; denoting the great security, safe protection, and strong defence of the church of God.

Ver. 6. *Then came he unto the gate which looketh toward the east, &c.]* Or, “whose face is the way to the east”^{f685}; to the east of the house or temple; not to the eastern gate of the wall about the house; but to the eastern gate of the outward court; (see ^{340B}Ezekiel 40:20), for the man came from the wall he had measured unto this gate; which, with the other gates after mentioned, spiritually design Christ himself, who is the way, door, and gate, (³⁴⁶John 14:6 10:7,9 ^{407B}Matthew 7:13,14) and this eastern gate more especially, where the prince sat, (^{344B}Ezekiel 44:3), and which led into the outward court; and over against which was another that led into the inner court, and so straight on to the holy of holies, at the west end of the house. Christ and faith in him, and a profession of him, are the way into the outward visible church, and to the external ordinances of it, baptism and the Lord’s supper; he is also the way or gate that leads into the inner court, or into spiritual communion and fellowship with God; he is the way of access to the Father, and through whom saints have communion with him; for there is no coming to him, nor enjoyment of him, but through a mediator; and Christ is he, and he only, by whom we can draw nigh to God, have audience of him, and acceptance with him: he is the gate also that leads to eternal life; the way to heaven and happiness lies through his person, blood, and righteousness; he is the only way, the new and the living way; the plain way, and open gate, yet strait and narrow:

and went up the stairs thereof; or the steps unto it, which were seven; (see ³⁴²Ezekiel 40:22,26) and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions express it here, and read, “seven steps”; according to Jarchi, there were twelve steps, which he takes from the Misnah^{f686}; that there was a “chel” of ten cubits, and there were there twelve steps. It is certain that to the north and south gates there were but seven steps; though Lipman^{f687} observes, that it is possible there might be a greater declivity on the east side, which required so many steps. Some of the Jewish writers think this is to be understood of the height of the court of Israel above this court; as if it was said, from this court they went up seven steps to the court of Israel; but the plain meaning, as Lipman^{f688} observes, is, that these steps were without the gate, and are the height of the court from the mountain of the house to it: these Cocceius very ingeniously illustrates by the seven trumpets in the Revelation; which indeed are so many steps or gradual advances towards the kingdom of Christ, and the glorious and spiritual state of his church in

the latter day; which will be introduced by the blowing of the seventh trumpet, when the mystery of God will be finished, and the kingdoms of this world become Christ's, (^{<600>}Revelation 10:7 11:14,15) perhaps the man leading the prophet up these steps or stairs to the gate may signify the gradual increase of spiritual light and knowledge of the saints, in the person, offices, and grace of Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; indeed the whole work of grace on the heart is gradual; it is carried on by degrees; it is but begun, not yet finished, particularly the work of faith; believers proceed from one step to another; first see Christ by faith, then go to him, then lay hold on him, and retain him; their faith increases, and they go from strength to strength; and sometimes it grows exceedingly; the advances in it are many and manifest:

and measured the threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad; of the same measure. The Hebrew word^{f689} signifies both a threshold and the upper lintel; and the one may intend the one; and the other the other, and both these: some think they point at the two Testaments; or, as others, the two natures in Christ, and the strength of them, who is the gate, the way to God, the Mediator between him and man, and the mighty Redeemer. Cocceius, because mention is made of a third threshold, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 40:7), fancies that these three thresholds design the three witnesses, Father, Word, and Spirit; which three are one, and found in one gate, which is Christ; so that he that believes in him believes in all three; and he that has the one has the other: but it is a mistake of this learned man that these three thresholds belong to one gate; for that after mentioned is the threshold of the inner, and not the outer gate. Jarchi and Kimchi understand not the thresholds of the gate, but the posts of it.

Ver. 7. *And every little chamber was one reed long, and one reed broad, &c.]* The length and breadth were equal, three yards and a half long and broad; a perfect square. There were several of these little chambers or apartments in this building, at each of the gates, and in other places after mentioned; of these chambers which were in the gates of the courts; as there were also others, according to Kimchi, on the wall of the mountain of the house; Lipman^{f690} says there is no mention made of them in the building of the second temple: these design not the hearts of particular believers, where Christ has a place, takes up his residence, and takes his rest; nor the many mansions in Christ's Father's house in heaven, where the saints shall dwell with him to all eternity; but each of the congregated churches of Christ. The fabric described in this and the following chapters intends the

Gospel church state in general; and these little chambers the several particular churches which will be set up in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south. These may be called “chambers”, partly for their secrecy, (^{<1162>}2 Kings 6:12 ^{<2110>}Ecclesiastes 10:20) here the Lord’s hidden ones are, who, though well known to him, are unknown to the world; here the secrets of God’s heart, of his love, grace, and covenant, are made known to his people; here Christ, whose name is secret, and the mysteries of his grace, are revealed to babes, while they are hid from the wise and prudent; and besides, the affairs of Christ’s churches should be kept secret, and not published to the world: and partly for safety; (see ^{<1130>}1 Kings 20:30 22:25 ^{<2112>}2 Kings 11:2 ^{<2350>}Isaiah 26:20), church fellowship, the word and ordinances, being the means of strengthening faith, and preserving from apostasy; salvation is as walls and bulwarks to them; and the roof of them, which is Christ, (see ^{<2603>}Ezekiel 40:13), secures from all inclemencies, from the wind, storms, and tempests of divine wrath; he having bore it, and delivered from it; and from the scorching heat of persecution, and from all afflictions, as well as from the temptations of Satan, so as to be hurt and destroyed by either of them: likewise they may be called chambers, because quiet resting places, as well as secret, safe, and sure ones, (^{<2328>}Isaiah 32:18), these are the resting places of God, who has desired them, and dwells in them; and of Jesus Christ, where his rest is glorious, and where he gives spiritual rest to his people; and especially these will be such to the saints in the latter day, and great shall be the abundance of it: as also because of that communion and fellowship herein enjoyed, both among themselves, and with Father, Son, and Spirit; (see ^{<2104>}Song of Solomon 1:4), to which may be added, that here souls are begotten and born again to Christ; these are the chambers in which they are conceived and brought forth, (^{<2104>}Song of Solomon 3:4), and these may be said to be “little” chambers, in comparison of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which includes all the elect of God, and redeemed of the Lamb, a number which no man can number; as that is called little in comparison of the whole world, that lies in wickedness; and besides, those that dwell in these chambers are little and contemptible in the eyes of the world, as they are low and mean in their own eyes; even each less than the least of all saints: now these little chambers or churches are represented of an equal measure, denoting that they will be exactly according to the pattern of God’s word; will have the same officers, the same doctrines and ordinances, and the same laws and rules; and will be of equal authority, not having one more power than another, or one over another; but entirely

independent of each other: and being foursquare, as the New Jerusalem is said to be, (^{f6216}Revelation 21:16), may denote the perfection of them; that they will now be brought entirely to answer the rule of the word; and also the firmness and stability of them:

and between the little chambers were five cubits; not a wall five cubits thick, as the Targum; and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it^{f691}; but a space of five cubits, or of two yards and a half, one foot and three inches; so that these chambers were not contiguous; but a space was left between, which made them more airy; and by which means they had more of the benefit of the light, and heat of the sun, and afforded commodious places to walk in; all which shows the churches of Christ to be separate, distinct, and independent communities; and yet may have a communication with each other; as well as they all share the advantage of the light and heat of Christ the sun of righteousness rising on them:

and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed: or three yards and a half; this gate within was that which lay westward, and was nearer the temple; between which and the outer gate before mentioned was a porch, on both sides of which were little chambers; and the threshold or thresholds (one being put for both) were of the same dimensions with those of the thresholds of the other; and so point to the same things.

Ver. 8. *He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed.*] This was either the measure of the breadth of the porch between the opposite chambers on both sides; or rather of the length of that space, which was between the third little chamber and the last gate; and such a space must be supposed to be between the first gate and the first little chamber, which space were three yards and a half; which shows how spacious the churches of Christ will be, and how exactly measured.

Ver. 9. *Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits, &c.*] This could not be the length of the porch from gate to gate, or from east to west, as Lipman^{f692}; since there were five cubits between every little chamber; but the breadth of it from north to south, and was four yards and two feet over:

and the posts thereof two cubits; these were columns or pillars placed on each side of the porch, or at the portal of the gate, of two cubits, or a yard and half a foot thick; which, added to the other eight cubits, made the

entrance ten cubits, as in (^{2301b}Ezekiel 40:11) what these posts, pillars, or columns signify, see on (^{2304a}Ezekiel 40:14,16):

and the porch of the gate was inward; this was the porch of the inward gate; or this was the measure of the porch within the gate.

Ver. 10. *And the little chambers of the gate eastward, &c.*] Where the man now was, and was measuring; and the like chambers there were in the other gates, and of the same measure; of which chambers (See Gill on “^{2307b}Ezekiel 40:7”):

were three on this side, and three on that side; three on the right side of the porch to the north, and three on the left side of it to the south:

they three were of one measure; one reed, or three yards and a half square, as in (^{2307b}Ezekiel 40:7)

and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side; on the right and left, north and south of the inward gate of the porch, which measure was two cubits, (^{2309b}Ezekiel 40:9).

Ver. 11. *And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits, &c.*] Five yards, two feet and a half: this was the measure of the eastern gate, whether outward or inward; for they were both of a measure, as appears from the thresholds being alike:

and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits; that is, the height of it; it was seven yards and three inches high; a prodigious gate this! a fit emblem of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the open door, the gate of life, through which whoever enters shall be saved; and there is room for multitudes to enter.

Ver. 12. *The space also before the little chambers was one cubit on this side, &c.*] Or, “a border”^{f693} of half a yard and three inches to the front of the chambers; where those that belonged to them might walk, or have seats to sit on; such a space there was before the three little chambers on the north side of the porch:

and the space was one cubit on that side: a space or border of the same measure was to the front of the three little chambers on the south side of the porch: this may denote the Christian liberty of the members of Gospel churches; which they may use without any breach of piety towards God, or of charity one to another:

and the little chambers were six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side; they were of the same measure, those on one side, as those of the other, even six cubits square; or one reed, which is the same; (see ³⁰⁷Ezekiel 40:7), (See Gill on “³⁰⁷Ezekiel 40:7”).

Ver. 13. *He measured then the gate from the roof of one little chamber to the roof of another, &c.*] That is, the whole porch, from the extreme part of the roof of one of the little chambers on the north side, to the extreme part of the roof of another of the little chambers on the south; of the roof of these chambers, and the spiritual meaning of it, (see Gill on “³⁰⁷Ezekiel 40:7”):

the breadth was five and twenty cubits; reckoning six cubits to one chamber on one side, and six to one chamber on the other side, which make twelve; and a cubit and a half to each back wall of the chambers on the north and south; or two cubits to the spaces before the chambers, and a cubit and a half to each of the caves of the chambers, which either way make fifteen cubits; and ten cubits the breadth of the gate; in all five and twenty cubits; or fourteen yards and three inches:

door against door; not the door of the outward gate against the door of the inward gate; nor the door of one of the little chambers at the east, to the door of another at the west, running lengthways, and so affording a sight quite through the temple; but the door of one of them on the north side over against the door of another on the south, they answering exactly to each other; which still more confirms the similarity and equality of Gospel churches; (see Gill on “³⁰⁷Ezekiel 40:7”).

Ver. 14. *He made also posts of threescore cubits, &c.*] Jerom thinks, that between the outward wall which surrounded this building, and the building itself, these posts or pillars were placed for ornament, which took up the space of sixty cubits; but rather these design the posts or columns of the gate, which supported the arch over it, on which were rooms or stories, and these were sixty cubits high; for of their height is this measure to be understood. So the Targum,

“and he made posts, sixty cubits was their height;”

in the Targum, in the Polyglot Bible by Montanus, it is,

“and he made sixty posts, their height a cubit:”

and to this agree Jarchi and Kimchi; these were thirty five yards high, the height of the temple ordered to be built by Cyrus, (^{<318B>}Ezra 6:3). The man that measured is said to “make” these posts, he being the builder as well as the measurer of this edifice; and might be said to make these as, by measuring, he pointed out the size and proportion of them: these posts may design the true members of Gospel churches, such who are pillars in the house of God; of which see more on (^{<3016>}Ezekiel 40:16), compare the phrase of “making” these posts or pillars with (^{<682>}Revelation 3:12):

even unto the post of the court round about the gate; that is, there was the same measure to every post or pillar in every court, at every gate round about; at the southern and northern gates, as at this eastern one; they were all exactly of the same measure as the posts in this; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it.

Ver. 15. *And from the face of the gate of the entrance, &c.]* That is, from the outward gate as you went into the porch, and was to the east, so called from people’s passing and repassing^{f694} in it; so Jarchi takes it to be the eastern gate; the Targum calls it the middle gate:

unto the face of the porch of the inner gate; which opened at the other end of the porch, into the outward court, and was to the west: from gate to gate

were fifty cubits; as he measured the breadth of the porch before, (^{<303>}Ezekiel 40:13), here the length; there were three chambers six cubits long, which made eighteen; and between each chamber were five cubits, which were ten cubits; and the space between the chambers and the gates at each end were six cubits each; (^{<308>}Ezekiel 40:8), which make twelve more; and then allow ten cubits for the thickness of both walls of each gate, and there will be fifty cubits, or twenty nine yards and half a foot.

Ver. 16. *And there were narrow windows to the little chamber, &c.]* The walls being sloped both within and without, that the light let in might be spread the more: as those “little chambers” signify the several congregated churches of Christ in the Gospel dispensation; (see Gill on “^{<307>}Ezekiel 40:7”), so these windows design the word and ordinances therein administered, which are the means of letting light into them; (see ^{<219>}Song of Solomon 2:9 ^{<3412>}Isaiah 44:12 60:8), in attending on these, the light of God’s countenance is enjoyed, which lies in the discoveries of his love; in the manifestations of himself; in his gracious presence, and in communion

with him; than which nothing is more desirable or delightful: through these ordinances Christ the sun of righteousness shines in upon his people; he looks in at these windows, and shows himself through these lattices; he is seen through the glass of the Gospel; he is held forth in the ordinance of the supper; and by means thereof the souls of God's people are enlightened, comforted, and warmed: also in this way are communicated the illuminations of the Spirit, both at first conversion, and in after discoveries of the things freely given of God; of the doctrines of the Gospel; of the blessings of grace, and of the glories of heaven. The Gospel itself is a great and glorious light; and the ministers of it are the light of the world, and of the churches; and by the light being diffused through these little chambers, the churches, those who are in them see to walk on in Christ, as they have received him, and becoming his Gospel, and their profession of it; and also see to work, not for life, justification, and salvation, but to evidence their faith, and adorn their profession; to glorify God by their shining lights, and to cause others to glorify him; and by the whole, the light of joy, peace, and comfort, is transmitted to all the inhabitants of Zion. These windows are said to be "narrow", or "shut", or "closed"^{f695}; that is, comparatively, not absolutely, for then they would be of no use. The ordinances of the Gospel dispensation are no doubt clearer, and the light of it larger, than of the legal dispensation, but this light has been darkened by the Papacy; and though it increased at the Reformation, yet before the latter day glory will break forth it will be as a twilight, neither clear nor dark, day nor night, (^{<3846>}Zechariah 14:6,7) and though the light that then will break out will be exceeding great, as the light of the sun, and that as the light of seven days, (^{<2316>}Isaiah 30:26), yet in comparison of the light of the New Jerusalem state, when there will be no need of the sun or moon, but the Lord will be the everlasting light of his people; and in comparison of the ultimate glory, when the saints shall see face to face; the light even of this dispensation will be like what is let in at narrow windows; (see ^{<6923>}Revelation 21:23,24,25 ^{<4632>}1 Corinthians 13:12).

And to their posts within the gate round about; that is, to the posts of the doors that led into these chambers, over the lintel of them, were windows to let in light to those that were entering them, as well as were in them; and so there were to all the chambers round about the porch on one side and the other, between the two gates:

and likewise to the arches; or "porches"^{f696}; to these doors, to which there were windows giving light to those that passed through:

and the windows were round about inward; in all the chambers within the grand porch, on the north and south:

and upon each post were palm trees; that is, on every post, column, or pillar, belonging to the chambers; and very probably on all the other before mentioned, (³⁴⁰⁹Ezekiel 40:9,10,14), these posts or pillars signify either the ministers of the Gospel; so called for their strength, being mighty in the Scriptures, able ministers of the New Testament, capable of retaining and defending the truths of the Gospel, and of bearing reproach and persecution for them, and also the infirmities of weak believers; and for their stability, being steadfast and immovable in the work and cause of Christ, and not to be taken off from it either by the frowns or flatteries of men; and for their usefulness, in supporting the cause and interest of the Redeemer, and the minds of weak Christians, as well as the glorious truths of the Gospel; and may with great propriety be called the pillar and ground of truth; (see ³¹⁰⁰Proverbs 9:1 ⁵⁴⁸⁵1 Timothy 3:15), yea, all true believers, and proper members of the churches of Christ, are pillars there, and such as shall never go out, (⁶⁸²Revelation 3:12), the word ^{f697} used has the signification of strength, as pillars should be strong; and such believers are, not in themselves, but in Christ, in his power and grace, and through his Spirit; whereby they can do all things, perform all duties, exercise all grace, and engage with all enemies. They are like pillars that stand firm and stable; grounded in the love of God; secured in election grace; settled in the everlasting covenant; laid on the sure foundation Christ, and established in the truths of the Gospel; so that they never go out of the heart of God, the hands of Christ, the family of the saints, or church of God. They are as pillars; some more useful to support in an external way the interest of religion, giving liberally to the maintenance of ministers, the relief of the poor, and the defraying of all necessary charges; and others to strive and contend for, and so maintain and preserve, the truths and ordinances of the Gospel; and others to comfort and confirm weak believers. Now on these posts or pillars were “palm trees” painted, two on each, one on one side, and one on the other, as appears from (³⁴²⁶Ezekiel 40:26), which are also an emblem of true believers in Christ; (see ¹⁹²²Psalms 92:12 ²¹⁰⁷Song of Solomon 7:7,8) comparable to them for their uprightness, (²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 10:5) these looking upwards to Christ by faith, and moving heavenwards in their affections and desires, and being upright in heart and life; and for their bearing pressures, and growing the more under them, as the palm tree does. Saints have many weights on them, a body of sin and death,

reproaches, afflictions, and persecution; but they bear up under all, and are not left to desert the cause, they are engaged in; yea, grow the more hereby, in numbers and grace, like the children of Israel, (^{<6112>}Exodus 1:12) the force of the palm tree is in its top or head; if that is taken away it dies: Christ is the believers' head, from him they have their life, grace, strength, nourishment, and fruitfulness; could they be separated from him, all would be gone. The palm tree grows best in sunny places, is fruitful, an ever green, and lasts long: and such are the people of God; they grow most under the warm beams of divine love, and rays of the sun of righteousness; in the churches of Christ, where the Gospel is preached, and ordinances administered, which make their hearts burn within them; they are fruitful in grace and good works, retain their leaf of profession, and never perish. Once more, the palm tree is a token of joy and victory, and has been used on such occasions, (^{<6230>}Leviticus 23:40) (^{<6122>}John 12:12,13 ^{<6170>}Revelation 7:9), and may denote the victory and joy upon it, which saints have through Christ, over sin, Satan, the world, and death.

Ver. 17. *Then brought he me into the outward court, &c.*] The divine and glorious Person in human form, having brought the prophet up to the eastern gate, and through it, and the porch that belonged to it, to the inner gate of it, which lay westward; and having measured that gate, its threshold, the porch, the posts or pillars, and little chambers in it; introduced him into a spacious piece of ground, that lay open to the air, and surrounded the whole building; and answers to the court of the Israelites in the temple, where they worshipped promiscuously, good and bad: and so may design the outward visible state of the Gospel church, consisting of good and bad, of wise and foolish virgins; like a field that has both wheat and tares in it; or a corn floor that has wheat and chaff upon it; which in the latter day will grow worse and worse, and be given to the Gentiles, (^{<6112>}Revelation 11:2) but shall be recovered again, and make a considerable part of this fabric; which represents the state of the church, and the outward administration of the word and ordinances in it, and the visible fellowship of the saints together in them.

And, lo, there were chambers; in the outward court, in various parts of it; which signify, as before, visible congregated churches, formed according to the order of the Gospel; in which the word is preached, ordinances administered, and saints have fellowship one with another. It is a different word here used from that in (^{<3407>}Ezekiel 40:7,10,12,16), and is by some rendered "cells, storehouses, treasuries"^{f698}; and here, the unsearchable

riches of Christ are preached, and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him are brought forth, and presented to the view of the saints.

And a pavement made for the court round about; as this court went round about the whole building, so there was a pavement upon it all around. The word ^{f699} used has the signification of a “burning coal”. Probably this pavement appeared as made of stones of various colours, of black, white, and red, like a chequered work of black and white marble; or as made of the porphyry stone, which is variegated with divers colours. This pavement was for those that dwelt in the chambers to walk in, and converse together: and it may denote the walk of the saints, both in the ordinances of the Gospel, and in their outward conversation, as becoming it; in love to them that are within, and in wisdom towards those that are without: and this is walking as on a pavement, on firm ground, in a plain and even way, where there is no occasion of stumbling; it is walking clean, in righteousness and holiness, and not in the mire and dirt of sin; and it is pleasant walking in the courts of the Lord, and in the ways and paths of wisdom; and beautiful it is to see the saints walk harmoniously and comfortably together here, conversing with each other, and building up one another upon their most holy faith.

Thirty chambers were upon a pavement; according to some, fifteen on each side of the eastern gate, as you came out of it into the court; or rather, according to Cocceius’s tables, these were all around the court, eight to the east, eight to the north, eight to the south, and six to the west; or, as Villalpandus, seven to the east and west each, and eight to the north and south apiece. This suggests that there will be visible congregated churches in the latter day in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south; (see ³⁴⁵Isaiah 43:5,6).

Ver. 18. *And the pavement by the sides of the gates over against the length of the gates was the lower pavement.*] That is, this pavement, which went along by every gate, and answered the length of them, and what appertained to them, east, west, north, and south, was either lower than the pavement in the inward court, adjoining to this, to which there was an ascent by steps; or the middle part of this pavement rose up in a convex form, and on all sides there was a declivity; by which means all filth was washed away, and it was kept clean, and always fit to walk on. This distinction of a higher and lower pavement, whether on one account or another, may point out; the one, the believer’s walk by faith on Christ; and

the other, his walk in the ordinances of Christ, and in all becoming conversation.

Ver. 19. *Then he measured the breadth from the fore front of the lower gate, &c.]* That is, from the front of the inner eastern gate before mentioned, (³⁶⁰⁷Ezekiel 40:7), called the lower gate, in respect of the gate opposite to it, which led into the inner court, to which there was an ascent of eight steps; and which the Targum calls the middle gate, because it lay between the eastern outward gate, and the gate of the inward court. Now there were from hence,

unto the fore front of the inner court without, an hundred cubits; to the outside of the gate was such a length, or fifty eight yards and one foot:

eastward and northward; as so it was from east to west, so from north to south, and from south to north; there was just the same distance from the gate that led into the outward court to that which led into the inward court, on all sides; (see ³⁶¹³Ezekiel 40:23,27) a man may be a long while an outward court worshipper before he is an inward court worshipper; the passage through the one to the other is long.

Ver. 20. *And the gate of the outward court that looked toward the north, &c.]* Or the north gate of this building: having finished the dimensions of the eastern gate, those of the north gate are taken:

he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof; as he had the eastern gate, and which were the same; and so of the south gate, (³⁶¹⁶Ezekiel 40:24), which denotes the uniformity in religion in the latter day, in the way of entrance into the churches, and in doctrine, discipline, worship, and ordinances.

Ver. 21. *And the little chambers thereof were three on this side, and three on that side, &c.]* As in the eastern gate, and the measures the same, (³⁶¹⁷Ezekiel 40:7). Gospel churches in the latter day will be all on the same plan, and modelled according to the same pattern, and be in just the same order, one as another:

and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, were after the same measure of the first gate; the eastern gate: believers will be all pillars in the church of God, and partakers of the same like precious faith:

the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits; (see ³⁴⁰³Ezekiel 40:13,15).

Ver. 22. *And their windows, and their arches, and their palm trees, were after the measure of the gate that looked towards the east, &c.]*

(³⁴⁰⁴Ezekiel 40:14,16), signifying that the light of the churches, their privileges, and flourishing condition, will be alike everywhere, as in one part of the world, so in another; (see ²⁵¹⁸Isaiah 52:8 11:9 ²⁷⁰⁴Daniel 12:4):

and they went up unto it by seven steps; or stairs, (³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:6), the number of them is not there mentioned as here, but the same in both; (see Gill on “³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:6”):

and the arches thereof were before them; the steps; or “within” them, as the Septuagint; the steps led to the arches of the gate, or to the porch of it, which were more inward.

Ver. 23. *And the gate of the inward court was over against the gate toward the north, and toward the east, &c.]* Or, “and as to the east”^{f700}; that is, the north gate of the inner court was directly opposite to the north gate of the outward court; just as the eastern gate of the inward court was in a straight line opposite to the eastern gate of the outward court:

and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits; from the north gate of the outward court to the north gate of the inward court; and it was exactly of the same distance from one another as on the left side; (see ³⁴⁰⁹Ezekiel 40:19).

Ver. 24. *After that he brought me toward the south, &c.]* Having taken the dimensions of the east and north gates, the prophet was had on the south side of the building:

and behold a gate toward the south; that led to the southern part of this fabric, and to the outward court there, exactly like the other two; there was no difference in them, which raised the prophet’s wonder and attention; for, as Lipman^{f701} says, there was no outward court in the second temple, but to the east of the inward; and it did not encompass the other sides; and so the more wonderful:

and he measured the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according, to these measures; the measures of the east and north gates, which were just alike; for these all signified but one gateway or door into the church below,

into heaven above, or into the presence of God here and hereafter, which is Christ, (^{<614>}John 14:6 10:1,7,9).

Ver. 25. *And there were windows in it, and in the arches thereof round about, &c.*] That is, in the little chambers, though not expressed; and in the porches of them on each side, as you passed from the outer to the inner gate:

like those windows; that were in the chambers that were in the east and north gates, (^{<2507>}Ezekiel 40:7,16,22),

the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits; (see ^{<2503>}Ezekiel 40:13,15).

Ver. 26. *And there were seven steps to go up to it, &c.*] To the south gate, as there were to the east and north gates, (^{<2506>}Ezekiel 40:6,42):

and the arches thereof were before them; (see Gill on “^{<2502>}Ezekiel 40:22”):

and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof; that is, on the posts of this gate were palm trees, two on each post, one on one side, and the other on the other: this verse shows us how many palm trees were painted on the posts, and how they were disposed of; (see Gill on “^{<2506>}Ezekiel 40:16”).

Ver. 27. *And there was a gate in the inner court toward the south, &c.*] Which answered to the gate of the outward court before mentioned:

and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits; from the gate of the inward court, to the gate of the outward court southward, were just the same dimensions as in the east and north gates, and between their respective ones, (^{<2509>}Ezekiel 40:19,23).

Ver. 28. *And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate, &c.*] Having done with the outer court, east, north, and south, the prophet is brought into the inner court by the south gate, which was nearest to enter by. No mention is made of a western gate, there was one in Solomon’s temple; for there were porters appointed westward by David, and fixed by Solomon, (^{<1302>}1 Chronicles 9:24 26:16,18), but Josephus^{f702} says, in the second temple the western part had no gate, but a continued wall; for those that came out of the captivity, as Kimchi on (^{<2505>}Ezekiel 40:5) observes, built it (as much as they could) according to the form of what they saw in Ezekiel’s temple, which shall be in time to come.

And he measured the south gate according to these measures; the gate which led into the inner court; for the south gate, which led to the outward court, he had measured before, (^{<341D>}Ezekiel 40:21).

Ver. 29. *And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures, &c.]* These were at the gate of the inner court; and so they stand in Cocceius's tables; and were of the same measure with the little chambers, posts, and arches, that were at the several outward gates before described; and design the churches and members of them as spiritual worshippers, who, besides the outward form, have the power of godliness:

and there were windows in it, and in the arches thereof round about; these are not said to be narrow, as the other; which perhaps may denote the greater and more increasing light of the churches, ministers, and members:

it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad: that is, the space or portico where these chambers were; and this was the same measure with that where the other chambers were, (^{<340B>}Ezekiel 40:13,15).

Ver. 30. *And the arches round about were five and twenty cubits long, &c.]* That is, high; this was the height of them; these were the frontispiece of the gate to the inner court without, and faced the outward court, as appears by the following verse; these were a kind of portico over the eight steps to this gate after mentioned; they were fourteen yards and three inches high, from the bottom to the top of them:

and five cubits broad; two yards and a half, one foot and three inches; and which very probably were the breadth of the steps that came up to them: none of these arches were in the second temple, as Lipman^{f703} observes.

Ver. 31. *And the arches thereof were toward the outward court, &c.]* And so not within the gate of the inward court, but on the outside of it, towards the outward court, at the front of the gate as you went in:

and palm trees were upon the posts thereof; of the gate, or of these arches or porticos; signifying that none should enter here but righteous persons; this is the gate of the righteous, (^{<348B>}Psalms 118:19,20 ^{<331D>}Isaiah 26:2), (see Gill on "^{<340B>}Ezekiel 40:16");

and the going up to it had eight steps; one more than the ascent to the outward gates; some say eight more, and make these to be fifteen,

answerable to the fifteen steps by which the Levites went up from the court of the women to the court of Israel^{f704}, and sung upon them the fifteen songs of degrees, mentioned in the Psalms: but here are only eight; and denote the gradual progress of believers in faith and holiness; and that the nearer they come to the holy of holies, the greater their proficiency should be, and more advances made in the knowledge of divine things.

Ver. 32. *And he brought me into the inner court toward the east, &c.*] Into that part of it which lay to the east, having gone through that which lay to the south:

and he measured the gate according to these measures; that is, the eastern gate of the inner court; for the eastern gate that led to the outward court he measured first, (³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:6), and this was according to the measure of that, and of the rest.

Ver. 33. *And the little chambers thereof, &c.*] These, and what follow in this verse, are exactly the same with those of the south gate of the inner court, (³⁴⁰⁹Ezekiel 40:29).

Ver. 34. *And the arches thereof were toward the outward court, &c.*] As those of the south gate, (³⁴¹⁸Ezekiel 40:31), and the palm trees on the posts, and the steps up to it, the same as there.

Ver. 35, 36, 37. *And he brought me to the north gate, &c.*] That is, of the inner court, for he had measured before the north gate that led to the outward court, (³⁴⁰¹Ezekiel 40:20), and here the little chambers, posts, arches, and steps, in all things agree with those of the other gates: what were observed in it different from the rest, an account is given of it in the following verse.

Ver. 38. *And the chambers, and the entries thereof, were by the posts of the gates, &c.*] Of the north gate; the plural for the singular; for not at the other gates, only at the north gate, were the sacrifices slain and washed; as under the law, only on the north side of the altar, (⁸⁰¹¹Leviticus 1:11), now, by the posts of this gate, or at the entrance of it on one side,

stood a cell or chamber, and a door into it^{f705}, as the words may be rendered; for they are singular in the text:

where they washed the burnt offering; its legs and inwards, (⁸⁰⁰⁹Leviticus 1:9), according to the law, there were lavers in Solomon's temple, to wash

the sacrifices in, (¹⁴⁰⁶2 Chronicles 4:6), but there was no such cell or chamber there for such a purpose as here: and as this refers to Gospel times, and to the church in the latter day, no legal sacrifice can be intended here, which are all abolished; but this must be mystically and spiritually understood, and designs no other than the sacrifice of Christ, a sweet smelling savour to God: that this kind of offering was typical of the sacrifice of Christ is clear from (^{3831B}Hebrews 13:11-13), which whether of the herd, a bullock, represented Christ in his strength and laboriousness; or of the flock, and was either a sheep, an emblem of the innocence and patience of Christ; or a goat, which pointed him out as in the likeness of sinful flesh, traduced as a sinner, and made so by imputation; or of fowls, turtle doves, denoting his meekness and modesty; and all without spot or blemish signified the purity of his, nature and life; and these being burnt with fire were expressive of the pain and shame he endured when he bore our sins, and the wrath of God was poured on him as fire; the washing of the burnt offering denotes the purity of Christ's sacrifice, being offered up without spot. Some, as Polanus, have thought the ordinance of baptism is here designed, as the Lord's supper is by the tables next mentioned; and it is a note of Starckius upon the passage, that,

“he who is washed in the divine laver may be regaled with the heavenly feast.”

Ver. 39. *And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, &c.*] This is still the north gate of the inward court, which had a porch that reached from the outward to the inner gate of it, in which were three little chambers on each side, (³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:36), between each of which were a space of five cubits, (³⁴⁰⁷Ezekiel 40:7), so that there were two such spaces on each side; and in these spaces, as Starckius well conjectures, these tables were placed, two on one side, and two on the other: the use of them was,

to slay thereon the burnt offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; all typical of the sacrifice of Christ: concerning the “burnt offering”, as such, (see Gill on “³⁴⁰⁸Ezekiel 40:38”); and as for the “sin offering” and “trespass offering”, which in the Hebrew language signify sin and guilt itself, they represented Christ, who had no sin in his nature, nor ever did any in his life, yet was made sin for his people; having all their sins laid upon him, with all that belong unto them, or are deserved by them: these were, the one for errors, strayings, and sins of ignorance; the other

for known and wilful sins; and both show that Christ is a sacrifice for all sorts of sin, even for the most vile and enormous: now these tables were for those sacrifices to be slain upon them, or to be laid upon them, being slain; and signify in Gospel times the table of the Lord, (~~4602~~1 Corinthians 10:21) or the ordinance of the Lord's supper; in which there is not a reiteration, but a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ; here he is evidently set forth as crucified and slain; his death as a sacrifice is shown, and held forth to the faith of the Lord's people, for their joy and comfort, (~~4881~~Galatians 3:1 ~~4612~~1 Corinthians 11:26).

Ver. 40. *And at the side without, as one goeth up to the entry of the north gate, were two tables, &c.*] Or, “the door of the north gate”^{f706}; not the first, upon coming up the eight steps; but passing through that gate, and along the porch where the three little chambers and the two tables on each side were, before mentioned; and coming to the inmost gate, which opens directly into the inward court, on the outside of that towards the altar, were two other tables, for the same use as before:

and on the other side, which was at the porch of the gate, were two tables; there were two on one side of the gate, and two on the other, that is, the last gate of the porch, in all eight tables; four within the spaces between the little chambers in the porch, and four as you come out of it, on each side of the last gate.

Ver. 41. *Four tables were on this side, and four tables were on that side, by the side of the gate, &c.*] These are the same tables repeated, to observe more diligently the situation and use of them; there were four on the right hand, two between the little chambers in the porch, and two on the outside of the inmost gate; and there were four on the left hand, two between the little chambers there, and two on the other side of the said gate:

eight tables, whereupon they slew their sacrifices; the four tables last mentioned were for the same use as the four first; (see Gill on “~~3449~~Ezekiel 40:39”).

Ver. 42. *And the four tables were of hewn stone, &c.*] These are either the same tables as before, the four that were on one side, and the four that were on the other; they were all made of hewn stone: in the second temple they were made of marble; so it is said in the Misnah^{f707},

“the marble tables were between the pillars;”

and they were made of marble, as the commentators^{f708} say, because that cools the flesh, and preserves it from corruption: they were both decent and durable; and may denote the continuance of the ordinance of the Lord's supper till his second coming; and which is a decent and becoming ordinance, as well as perpetual: or these were other four tables, as Cocceius thinks; and which he places without the porch, near the cell or chamber, where the burnt offering was washed, (³⁶¹⁸Ezekiel 40:38), and these are said to be for that, as follows,

for the burnt offering: and also for the sin offering, and for the trespass offering, though they are not mentioned:

of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad; just a foursquare:

and one cubit high; these were the dimensions of each table:

whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice: the knives with which they slew the creatures offered, and cut them to pieces, and the bowls and basins in which they received their blood; these were laid upon the tables, as the sacrifices were: and may signify, that in the ordinance of the Lord's supper are not only represented the sacrifice of Christ, but the means, instruments, causes, and occasion of it; the sins of his people, for which he was wounded and bruised in his body, and with which he was pierced in his soul; and here we may look on him whom we have thus pierced, and mourn; and yet rejoice that there is healing by his stripes, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice.

Ver. 43. *And within were hooks, a hand broad, fastened round about, &c.]* These, very probably, were fastened on the posts of the gate, near which were the washing room for the sacrifices, (³⁶¹⁸Ezekiel 40:38), on which they were hung, when they were flayed, or the skin took off: in the slaughter house in the second temple, to the north of the altar, there were eight low stone pillars, upon which were boards of cedar foursquare, and iron hooks were fixed in them; and there were three rows of them in each, on which they hung the sacrifices^{f709}, which were one above another; on the lowest they hung a lamb, on the middlemost a ram, and on the highest a bullock; these hooks stood out a hand's breadth from the pillars^{f710}: such like iron hooks were fixed on the walls and pillars in the court, where they slew the passover lamb, on which they hung it, and skinned it^{f711}: this may

denote either, as Cocceius suggests, the exaltation of Christ, who suffered and was raised for our justification; or rather the lifting of him up, and holding him forth to view, as a suffering Saviour, in the ministry of the word, and in the ordinance of the supper.

And upon the tables was the flesh of the offering: here another word is used, and may design that part of the flesh of the sin offering that was eaten by the priest, (^{<RB65>}Leviticus 6:25,26) so that these tables were feasting tables also; as the table of the Lord, or the ordinance of the Lord's supper, is a feast of fat things, a feast of love; a table where the flesh of Christ is laid, which is meat indeed, and only to be fed upon by those that are made kings and priests unto God. Now these tables being many show that there will be a large number of Gospel churches everywhere; and wherever they are there will be tables: the ordinance of the Lord's supper will be celebrated in the four parts of the world; at present it is chiefly in the northern part, and where these tables were seen in this vision.

Ver. 44. *And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers,* &c.] These singers are true believers in Christ, members of Gospel churches; whose duty and privilege it is to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; which is a part of internal, spiritual, and evangelical worship, (^{<RB69>}Ephesians 5:19 ^{<RB66>}Colossians 3:16), these are the spiritual harpers, that have harps in their hands, and make melody in their hearts, and are able to sing the songs of electing, redeeming, calling, pardoning, justifying, and adopting grace; these deservedly have a place in the churches of Christ, in the inward court, being inward court worshippers, even all such who sing with the spirit and the understanding; for these chambers were in the inward court: the prophet being brought through the inner northern gate, into the open space between the inward court, saw these chambers; for it follows,

in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; in that part of the court which lay near the north gate, where now the prophet and his guide were:

and their prospect was toward the south; that is, some of these chambers, one row of them, were by the side of the north gate, and these faced the south; north and south being opposite to each other:

one at the side of the east gate, having the prospect toward the north: another row of chambers for the singers was in that part of the inner court

which was on the side of the east gate, on the north side of it, and so faced the north part of the court. The Septuagint version, if admitted, makes the sense of it more clear, but different,

“and he brought me into the inner court, and behold two chambers in the inner court; one at the back of the gate that looks to the north, bearing to the south; and one at the back of the gate to the south, looking to the north.”

Ver. 45. *And he said unto me, &c.*] The illustrious Person that appeared in a human form, measuring the several parts of the temple, said to the prophet, as follows:

this chamber, whose prospect is toward the south; the row of chambers that were on the side of the north gate, facing the south:

is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house; that observe the keeping of it; observe all the laws and ordinances of God’s house, and are careful that the worship of God may be maintained and preserved, to his glory, and their mutual edification: and which is, or should be, the concern, not of ministers only, but of all true believers, who are priests unto God; that present their bodies and souls before him, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice, which is their reasonable service; and offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise to him, through Christ, (~~4006~~ Revelation 1:6 ~~4005~~ 1 Peter 2:5 ~~4520~~ Romans 12:1).

Ver. 46. *And the chamber whose prospect is towards the north, &c.*] The row of chambers on the side of the east gate; that side of it that was towards the north, and which the chambers in it faced:

is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar; the ministers of the Gospel, that take care of the altar, of public worship; that preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances; and who are to be taken care of themselves, and live of the Gospel, and have everything provided for them that is necessary, (~~4003~~ 1 Corinthians 9:13,14):

these are the sons of Zadok, among the sons of Levi; these Levites, or priests, were of the family of Zadok; who descended from Aaron, and was the eldest house of Aaron, to whom the priesthood belonged; though it had been usurped a long time by the family of Ithamar; but, in Solomon’s time, Abiathar, of that family, was dispossessed of it, and Zadok was placed in his stead, whose name signifies “just”, or righteous; and was a type of

Christ, the holy and just One, whose spiritual children and offspring are here meant:

which come near to the Lord to minister unto him; both preachers and people, who have near access to God through Christ, and minister before him in holy things, in praying, preaching, administering ordinances, and attending on the same.

Ver. 47. *So he measured the court, &c.*] The inward court, where the prophet and his guide now were; and the gates leading to which he had been measuring, with the chambers, arches, and tables belonging thereunto:

an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; the floor, or area of this court, which was a hundred cubits in length and breadth; so that it was a perfect square, equilateral, east, west, north, and south, and above fifty yards each way; such a court as never was in any temple whatever: hence Kimchi observes, there was no such court in the second temple; no, nor in the first neither: in the second temple, the length of the court of Israel, according to Abarbinel, was a hundred and thirty five cubits, and the breadth eleven, but this was a hundred by a hundred; these things, says Lipman^{f712}, are wonderful in my eyes: this denotes the large increase of the church, and of spiritual worshippers, in the latter day; and the foursquare of it signifies the order, perfection, and stability of it; (see ~~6216~~ Revelation 21:16):

and the altar that was before the house; the altar of burnt offering, which stood before the house or temple, in the midst of the inward court; so that it might be seen by all in the inward court and chambers; and even by all in the outward court, through the several gates, which directly opened and led to it. This was typical of Christ, the altar, we Christians have a right to eat of; which sanctifies every gift offered upon it, and which every worshipper should by faith look unto for the expiation of their sins. The dimensions of this altar were now taken, and are given in (~~3613~~ Ezekiel 43:13-17).

Ver. 48. *And he brought me to the porch of the house, &c.*] Having passed through the inner court, and measured that, he came to the body of the fabric, the principal part of it, the house or temple; to the porch that led into it. Here of right a new chapter should begin, for this and the next verse more properly “belong” to the following chapter. This porch was a large roof, and was a covering both from cold winds and storms, and from the

scorching heat of the sun; and was an emblem of Christ, the hiding place from the wind, and the covert from the tempest of divine justice and vengeance, and the wrath of God; and from the heat of a fiery law, of Satan's fiery darts or temptations, and of the persecutions of men: it was also, as is thought, a place for the priests to pray in, before they went into the temple; as Christ is the way in which the priests of the Lord go unto him, and pray before him; in whose name, and for whose righteousness sake, they present their supplications to him.

And measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side; these posts stood, one on the north side of the porch, and the other on the south, and were each five cubits thick:

and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side; this gate signifies Christ, the door, or gate, or way of entrance into the spiritual temple the church, (~~BOOK~~ John 10:1,7,9) and it had two leaves, that on the north was three cubits broad, and that on the south was of the same measure: this two leaved gate may show, that both Jews and Gentiles, being converted, may enter into the Gospel church; as they will in the latter day, when the Jews shall be called, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; here will be an open door set; the gate will be wide enough to let them all in, (~~BOOK~~ Revelation 3:8,9).

Ver. 49. *The length of the porch was twenty cubits,* &c.] From east to west; from the first gate of it to the last; which led directly into the house, or temple:

and the breadth eleven cubits; which may be thus accounted for; two cubits apiece being allowed for each post, and three for each leaf of the door that were hung upon them, and one for the upright post in the middle on which they shut; in all eleven:

and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it; as there was an ascent of seven steps to the several gates that led into the outward court; and another of eight steps, which led from that to the gates of the inner court; so there was an ascent from the inner court to the porch of the house, or temple; but how many steps there were is not said. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read ten steps; and the Vulgate Latin version eight steps. According to the Misnah^{f713}, there were twelve in the second temple; so say Jarchi and Kimchi, with whom Josephus^{f714} agrees. Cocceius thinks there could not be more than two, since the ground of the

inward court and temple were continued; but as their number is not given, a determination cannot be made; only it may be observed, that the saints' progress in the knowledge of Christ, and of divine things, and in faith and holiness, is gradual.

And there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side; one on the north side, and the other on the south, somewhat like the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz, in Solomon's temple; which some apply to the ordinances of the Gospel saints partake of at their entrance into the Gospel church; but rather they are an emblem of Christ, the supporter of his church, and of all those that aright enter into it; and who, through his grace and strength, become pillars there also, (~~and~~ Revelation 3:12), he is their Jachin, who establishes them on himself, the sure foundation; and their Boaz, in whom their strength is, and from whom they have it to exercise grace, discharge duty, and persevere to the end.

CHAPTER 41

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 41

In this chapter the divine and illustrious Person, the prophet's guide, brings him to the temple itself, and gives the dimensions of the posts and doors, both of the holy and the most holy place, (²⁶⁴⁰⁰Ezekiel 41:1-4), then of the wall of the house, its side chambers, the winding about to them, and the doors of them, (²⁶⁴⁰⁵Ezekiel 41:5-11), next of a building before the separate place, its doorposts, narrow windows, and galleries, (²⁶⁴¹²Ezekiel 41:12-17), after that each of the ornaments of the house are described, (²⁶⁴¹⁸Ezekiel 41:18-21), then the altar of incense, (²⁶⁴²²Ezekiel 41:22), and the chapter is concluded with observing the decorations and lights on the doors, porch, and side chambers of the temple and sanctuary, (²⁶⁴²³Ezekiel 41:23-26).

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me to the temple, &c.]* Having measured the porch into it, its posts, and gate. This is the body of the building, which was the "frame" of a city first shown, the principal fabric; for hitherto he had been only measuring the outward and inner courts, and their gates, and what were in them; but now he is come to the house itself, called a temple; by which not only particular Gospel churches are called, (⁴¹⁸¹⁶1 Corinthians 3:16,17 ⁴¹⁸¹⁶2 Corinthians 6:16 ⁴¹⁸²¹Ephesians 2:21), but the Gospel church state in general, (³⁸¹²Zechariah 6:12,13), and especially as in the latter day; so the Philadelphian church state, which represents the spiritual reign of Christ, or the glory of the latter day, is called the temple of my God, (⁴¹⁸¹²Revelation 3:12), which will be a holy temple to the Lord where he will dwell in a gracious manner, and be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and here his glory will be seen; it will be built up of precious and costly stones, even living and lively ones; a spiritual house to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise: and, as in the material temple or holy place stood the candlestick and table of shewbread; here the light of the Gospel will burn clearly; and Christ the bread of life be held forth in the ordinance of the supper; where, as at a table, saints shall have intimate fellowship with him:

and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side these were the posts of the door of the temple, and

stood on each side of it, on the north and south; and this was the thickness, six cubits or a reed each, three yards and a half; this was the frontispiece of the door of the palace of the King of kings:

which was the breadth of the tabernacle; the tabernacle of Moses; that is, these posts, or this frontispiece, were as broad as the whole tabernacle of Moses was; which had eight boards in the breadth, each board being a cubit and a half, made twelve cubits, just the breadth of these two posts, (^{<10236>}Exodus 26:16,25), this shows how far superior the Gospel church is to the old synagogue; how larger is the one, and the entrance into it wider, than the other. Some understand by “the tabernacle” the upper lintel, of the same breadth with the posts; and was in a recurve, and as a covering to the door; so the Jewish commentators, and others that follow them.

Ver. 2. *And the breadth of the door was ten cubits*, &c.] The temple door: great care is taken to observe and give the dimensions of the doors and gates of various places; to put us in mind of Christ the door and gate into the church, and into fellowship with God: this was as broad again as the door of Solomon’s temple; for that was but the fourth part of the wall of it, five cubits, (^{<1000>}1 Kings 6:1,33):

and the sides of the door were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side; the side walls of the door, both on the north and south, were five cubits each; which, with the ten, the breadth of the door, made twenty; and is just the breadth of the temple or holy place afterwards given:

and he measured the length thereof forty cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits; that is, the length of the temple from east to west, and the breadth of it from north to south, were of this measure; which exactly answers to the dimensions of Solomon’s temple, a figure of the Gospel church, as this; (see ^{<1000>}1 Kings 6:2,17).

Ver. 3. *Then went he inward*, &c.] Through the temple or holy place he had measured, to the holy of holies:

and measured the post of the door two cubits; this was the door into the most holy place; there was one in Solomon’s temple; but in the second temple there was none; but two rails instead of it, which were rent at the death of Christ; and two cubits was the thickness of the post, on which this door was shut:

and the door six cubits, and the breadth of the door seven cubits; this door was a two leaved one; each leaf consisted of three cubits broad, and the post in the middle on which they shut one cubit broad, which made seven: though some think that the side walls of the door are meant, as in (^{<340D>}Ezekiel 41:2), which were each seven cubits; and the breadth of the door, six cubits, made twenty cubits; which was the breadth of the most holy place, as answering to the breadth of the holy place, as in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *So he measured the length thereof twenty cubits, &c.*] That is, of the most holy place, from east to west; which was the measure of it in Solomon's temple, (^{<100D>}1 Kings 6:20):

and the breadth twenty cubits before the temple: that is answerable or according to the breadth of the temple or holy place; which was also twenty cubits in breadth: this stood at the west end of it, and was equal in breadth to it; (see ^{<100D>}1 Kings 6:2,20):

and he said unto me, this is the most holy place; the divine Person in human form said to the prophet, take notice of this building; this answers to the most holy place in the temple. This was an emblem of the most holy and perfect state of the church on earth; it represents the New Jerusalem church state, that holy city, and into which nothing shall enter that defiles; and, as in the most holy place, the divine Shechaniah or majesty of God dwelt; so here will dwell in person the God-man and Mediator, the head of the church, our Lord Jesus; whose tabernacle will now be with men, in this perfect state, raised from the dead, and he will dwell among them: and as this most holy place in its dimensions is a foursquare, so is the holy city described; denoting its stability and perfection; (see ^{<60D>}Revelation 21:2,3,16,27).

Ver. 5. *After he measured the wall of the house six cubits, &c.*] Or a reed, three yards and a half thick: this was the wall of the holy of holies, or which divided that from the holy place, and was not in the second temple; or rather the wall of the temple, the whole house or building, both of the holy place, and of the most holy, which were contiguous: such a strong wall is the Lord to his church, and especially will be in the latter day, when salvation will be for walls and bulwarks against all enemies, and to preserve from all hurt and danger, (^{<230D>}Isaiah 26:1 60:18 ^{<300D>}Zechariah 2:5), the New Jerusalem also will have a wall great and high, and made of a precious stone, (^{<60D>}Revelation 21:12,18):

and the breadth of every side chamber four cubits round about the house on every side; or, “of every rib”^{f715}; as ribs are to the body, so were these side chambers or buildings to the fabric, as Ben Melech observes, who interprets them of beams: adjoining to the above wall were chambers all around the holy place and the most holy on each side, north and south; for there could be none on the east, that being the entrance into the holy, and so into the most holy place; and the floor of these chambers were four cubits, or two yards and a foot broad; that is, those of the lower storey: these were for the priests, where they lodged, and laid up and ate their most holy things, and put their garments in which they ministered; (see ^{<3623>}Ezekiel 42:13,14), and design, as the chambers everywhere do, particular congregated churches; where such as are made priests to God by Christ have a place, and communion with God in holy things; and appear in the righteousness of Christ, and in the beauties of holiness.

Ver. 6. *And the side chambers were three, one over another, and thirty in order*, &c.] There were three stories of them, and thirty in every storey, in all ninety; there were such chambers round about Solomon’s temple, and so many stories of them, though their number is not expressed, (^{<1085>}1 Kings 6:5,6), but Josephus^{f716} says they were thirty, and one above another, three stories of them, as here. Some think twelve were on the north side, twelve on the south, and six on the west; or fifteen on the north, and fifteen on the south. The Misnic doctors^{f717} say there were thirty eight in the second temple, fifteen on the north side, fifteen on the south, and eight on the west. The Targum is,

“the chambers were chamber over chamber thirty three, eleven in a row;”

and so some^{f718} understand it, that they were in all but thirty three, eleven in the first storey, as many in the second, and the same number in the third; and place them four in the north, four in the south, and three in the west, so Starckius; but the first account seems best. This denotes the number of churches in Gospel times, especially in the latter day; when there will be large conversions, and room enough for all the converts: and as there are many mansions in heaven for all the saints; so there will be room enough in the New Jerusalem, the more perfect state of the church on earth, to hold the whole palm bearing company, whose number no man can number; and all the nations of them that are saved, who will walk in the light of it, (^{<600>}Revelation 7:9 21:24):

and they entered into the wall which was of the house for the side chambers round about, that they might have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house; the beams of the floors of those side chambers rested indeed upon the wall of the house which was built for them; but were not inserted into it, or laid in it, as we see in some buildings; but there were projections or buttresses in the wall, or what are called narrowed rests, (^{<1005>}1 Kings 6:6) or rebatements of the breadth of a cubit, on which they were laid and rested; and so it was in the upper stories, as in the lowermost; there being an abatement of a cubit in the thickness of the wall in each storey, as in the following verse. This shows the firmness of this spiritual building resting upon such a wall and such buttresses as God himself is to it; (see Gill on “^{<2405>}Ezekiel 41:5”).

Ver. 7. *And there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers, &c.*] These chambers, as they rose up in stories one above another, were larger and larger; those in the middlemost storey were larger than those in the lower storey by a cubit; so much being taken out of the thickness of the wall, to make the rests or rebatements for the beams of the floor to rest upon, by which so much was gained in breadth for the chambers; and those in the upper storey, for the same reason, were a cubit broader than those in the middle, and two cubits broader than the lowermost; the floor of the first and lower storey was four cubits broad, (^{<2405>}Ezekiel 41:5) the floor of the second five cubits; and the floor of the third or uppermost six cubits. The wall of the temple at the bottom was six cubits thick, (^{<2405>}Ezekiel 41:5), at the middlemost storey five cubits; and at the uppermost four: and all this may denote the enlargement of the church of Christ, as it comes nearer the heavenly state; the present state of the church may be signified by the lower storey, where the chambers are narrowest; the state of the church in the latter day glory, or spiritual reign of Christ, by the middlemost, when it will be enlarged; its converts being very numerous, (^{<2409>}Isaiah 49:19,20) (^{<2404>}Isaiah 60:4,5) and the New Jerusalem church state by the uppermost storey; which city or state will be very large, and next to heaven, or the ultimate glory; (see ^{<6216>}Revelation 21:16). The “winding” that went upwards to the side chambers were winding stairs, which went up from one storey to another, higher and higher; (see ^{<1008>}1 Kings 6:8). The Misnic doctors say^{f719}, that in the second temple these winding stairs went from one side of the temple to the other, from the north east to the northwest; by which they went up to the roofs of these chambers and to the upper room over the sanctuary. These may

signify the various afflictions and tribulations, trials and exercises, in which the Lord leads his people, and by which the churches of Christ pass from one state to another:

for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: not on the outside, but within; properly round about the chambers, which are here called the house:

therefore the breadth of the house was still upward; became broader and broader, as it rose up higher and higher:

and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst; from being only four cubits broad in the lowest storey, it became five cubits in the middlemost, and from thence six cubits in the highest.

Ver. 8. *I saw also the height of the house round about, &c.*] Not of the temple itself, but of the chambers, and the three stories of them, which went round about it; and particularly the height of the highest storey, which yet is not given: it could not be so high as the temple itself; for then there would have been no room for windows to let in light into it:

the foundations of the side chambers were a full reed of six great cubits; not of the lowest storey of them, for that was but four cubits broad, (^{2340B}Ezekiel 41:5), nor of the middlemost, which was five; but of the uppermost, which was six; and these were cubits of the largest size, a hand's breadth larger than the common cubit, and made one full reed, or three yards and a half; (see ^{2340B}Ezekiel 40:5), these foundations signify the same as the twelve foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem; and which are no other than the one foundation Christ, ministerially laid by his twelve apostles; and who is the only foundation of his church and people, and is a sure one, (⁶⁶²¹⁴Revelation 21:14,19 ⁴⁰²⁰Ephesians 2:20 ⁴⁶⁸¹1 Corinthians 3:11 ²³²⁸⁶Isaiah 28:16).

Ver. 9. *The thickness of the wall, which was for the side chambers without, was five cubits, &c.*] This is the outward wall of the chambers, north and south, which was five cubits thick, made of stone; (see Gill on "^{2340B}Ezekiel 41:5"),

and that which was left was the place of the side chambers that were within; this was a void space, not built upon, which was before the chambers that stood within it; and was a space to walk in for those that dwelt in the chambers, or to go in from chamber to chamber; which also

was five cubits in breadth, as appears from the next verse. This may denote the communion of churches, and the members of them one with another.

Ver. 10. *And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits, &c.]* Not the side chambers before mentioned, as if there was the space of twenty cubits between each chamber; for another word is used; more probably the meaning is, that between the side chambers, or the void space before them of five cubits, and the chambers which were in the court facing them, was such a wideness of twenty cubits:

round about the house on every side; on all sides of the temple, where the above chambers were, west, north, and south.

Ver. 11. *And the doors of the side chambers were towards the place that was left, &c.]* These opened to the void space before them; that is, those of the lower storey; the others must open to the winding staircase that led down to it:

one door toward the north, and another door toward the south; which is not to be understood as if each chamber had two doors; but either of the two doors, which opened at the top of the staircase to the north and south; or of the doors of those chambers, which were on the north, and opened towards it; and of those that were on the south, that opened to that: indeed the Misnic doctors say^{f720} that each chamber had three doors; one to the chamber on the right; another to the chamber on the left; and a third to the upper chamber: and in the north east corner were five doors; one to the chamber on the right; and one to the upper chamber; a third to the winding stairs; a fourth to the little gate; and the fifth to the temple; these signify the free entrance of men into the churches of Christ in the latter day, whose gates shall be opened to let in the righteous nation; and shall stand open continually, that the forces of the Gentiles and their kings may be brought, (^{<2311>}Isaiah 26:2) (^{<2311>}Isaiah 60:11,18) and in the New Jerusalem there are gates, east, west, north, and south, even twelve of them, and at them twelve angels; and which gates shall not be shut day nor night, (^{<6212>}Revelation 21:12,13,25):

and the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about; the void space that was left before the side chambers; (see ^{<2310>}Ezekiel 41:9).

Ver. 12. *Now the building that was before the separate place, &c.]* The “separate place” is the holy of holies, which was separated by a vail under the second temple, and by a wall as in this, and the first from the holy

place: “before or over against” which was a building, as it is rendered, (³⁴¹⁵Ezekiel 41:15), a new building, not before taken notice of: and it was situated

at the end toward the west: or “sea”,^{f721} the Mediterranean sea, which lay west to the land of Canaan. The meaning is, that this building was to the west of the temple, at which end stood the holy of holies, and this near to that: what building is here meant is not easy to say, there being nothing in the first or second temple which answered to it: it seems to be a new building; and what the mystical sense of it is cannot be easily guessed at. Cocceius thinks, that as the holy of holies signifies the heavenly or more perfect state of the church on earth, this, being over against it, or behind it, as in (³⁴¹⁵Ezekiel 41:15), may design heaven itself, the happiness and glory of the saints treasured up and reserved there:

it was seventy cubits broad; Jerom seems to have the same mystical sense in view; since he observes, that after labours and perils, and the floods and shipwrecks of this world for seventy years, we come to enjoy the eternal rest:

and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about; which may answer to the vast gulf fixed between the godly in heaven, and the wicked in hell; so that there is no going the one to the other, (²¹⁶⁵Luke 16:26):

and the length thereof ninety cubits; there are no outgoings to this building, as Hafenrefferus^{f722}, a German divine, observes; so that those that are brought into it shall ever remain in it, which is the case of the saints in heaven.

Ver. 13. *So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long, &c.*] The whole temple, the parts of which he had measured; and this is the sum total:

and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long; these are the several parts of the house or temple: the “separate place”, the holy of holies, the building, the sanctuary or holy place; which, with the walls thereof, made a hundred cubits in length from east to west, thus; the thickness of the wall of the east porch, six cubits; the passage through the porch, eleven cubits; the wall between the porch and the temple, six cubits; the temple or holy place, forty cubits; the wall between that and the most holy place, two cubits; the holiest of all, twenty cubits; the thickness of the west wall, six cubits; the chambers at the end of

it, four cubits; and the outer wall of them, five cubits; in all a hundred cubits: for this cannot be understood of the separate place, and the building before it, or rather behind it; since the separate place, or holiest of all, was twenty cubits, and the building ninety cubits; besides the thickness of each wall, five cubits a piece; in all a hundred and twenty.

Ver. 14. *Also the breadth of the face of the house, and the separate place toward the east, &c.*] The whole front of the temple, the holy and most holy place, which looked to the east: and was measured from north to south,

an hundred cubits: which some reckon thus; the breadth of the temple twenty cubits; the thickness of the outward walls, twelve cubits; the side chambers, eight cubits; the walls of these chambers, five cubits on each side: the breadth of the void space, five cubits on each side; and twenty cubits round about the house; so that the length and breadth of this structure was the same, and made a perfect foursquare, as the city of the New Jerusalem is said to be, (^{f6216}Revelation 21:16).

Ver. 15. *And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place, &c.*] Which was ninety cubits, as appears from (^{f3412}Ezekiel 41:12), when measured by itself:

which was behind it; that is, behind the separate place, or holiest of all, at the back of it, at the west end. Noldius^{f723} renders the words, “he measured the length of the building before the separate place, and behind it”; or its back part, as the Syriac, and interprets it thus; that he measured the building or the porch which was before the temple, that is to the north; and the porch opposite to it, that is to the south: this “building” behind it, with the Jews^{f724}, is the same with Bethchaliphoth^{f725}, or the house of knives, which the priests used in sacrificing:

and the galleries thereof on the one side, and on the other side, an hundred cubits; as the above is the length of this building from east to west, this is the breadth of it from north to south; the breadth of the building itself was seventy cubits, (^{f3412}Ezekiel 41:12), and the galleries on the north and south sides of it, and the thickness of the walls, which were five cubits each, made thirty more; in all a hundred cubits; which is equal to the breadth of the temple, as in the preceding verse: these galleries, or balconies, or porticos, supported by pilasters, design places for the saints to walk in, converse, and commune with one another; and where Christ the

King of saints is held forth, and seen in his beauty and glory; (see ~~<3877>~~ Zechariah 3:7 ~~<2105>~~ Song of Solomon 7:5 ~~<4872>~~ John 17:24):

with the inner temple, and the porches of the court; or, “and the inner temple”^{f726}, &c. that is, and he also measured the inner temple or holy of holies, with all the porches, chambers, and their walls, and with all the spaces and appendages to it, which were of the same measure; (see ~~<5415>~~ Ezekiel 41:15).

Ver. 16. *The door posts and the narrow windows*, &c.] Of the inner temple or holy of holies; for this is what is last mentioned; of the door posts of it, (see ~~<3403>~~ Ezekiel 41:3), in the holy of holies, both in Moses’s tabernacle, and Solomon’s temple, were no windows; Jehovah dwelt in thick darkness, (~~<1182>~~ 1 Kings 8:12), but in this inner temple, or the more perfect state of the church on earth, there will be much light: these windows are said to be “narrow”, that is, without, but broad within; and let in a great deal of light, which, though not discerned by those without, yet comfortably enjoyed by those within; and will be so great, that there will be no need of the sun or moon; Christ the Lamb will be the light of this state; and the nations of the saved and their kings will walk in the light of it, (~~<6213>~~ Revelation 21:23-25):

and the galleries round about on their three stories; these seem to be the same with the side chambers, which were three storey high, and were on the three sides of the house, west, north, and south; (see ~~<5406>~~ Ezekiel 41:6):

over against the door, cieled with wood round about: with cedar wood, as the Targum: or, “answerable were the doors cieled with wood”^{f727}; door, for doors; that is, the doors of these side chambers, which answered to one another, were lined with cedar wood; all which doors, door posts, windows, and galleries, were severally measured:

and from the ground up to the windows; from the bottom of the floor of the most holy place up to the windows, which were above the third storey of the side chambers, he measured also:

and the windows were covered; either by the jetting out of the side chambers, so that they could not well be seen in the courts below; or they were lattice windows with such small holes as at a distance were scarcely discernible; or were covered with curtains within; or being very narrow on the outside, though broad within, looked as if they were covered; denoting how impenetrable the glories of this state are to those that are without, (~~<6215>~~ Revelation 22:15).

Ver. 17. *To that above the door, even unto the inner house, &c.]* The meaning is, either there were such windows as before described above the door of the eastern gate, that led into the holiest of all, and even unto the inner house, or holy of holies: and without; and to all the side, chambers that were built without it:

and by all the wall round about within and without; both within the holy place, and without, in the places adjoining to it, on all sides, west, north, and south; or all were cieled with cedar wood, that it might be more capable of being ornamented, either with gold, or with the decorations mentioned in the following verses: or the sense is, that all these were measured exactly: for it follows, “by measure”; or to all these “were measures”^{f728}; the dimensions were taken; every thing in the Gospel church state, whether in its less or more perfect state, will be all according to rule and measure.

Ver. 18. *And it was made with cherubim and palm trees, &c.]* That is, all the wall of the house round about was ornamented with these, even both of the holy and of the most holy place; with these the curtains of Moses’s tabernacle, and the vail that divided between the holy and the most holy place, were decorated; as also the walls, both of the sanctuary and oracle, in Solomon’s temple, (^{<0201>}Exodus 26:1,31 ^{<1023>}1 Kings 8:23-32). The former, according to the commonly received notion, were an emblem of angels; the latter of true believers, or holy upright men: why these are called palm trees, (see Gill on ^{<2506>}Ezekiel 40:16”),

so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub; these were so placed all around, that there was first a cherub, next a palm tree, and then a cherub again, and so on; and if angels and saints are meant, and that notion could be supported, which some have given into, that the number of men redeemed by Christ is the same with that of the angels that fell, and their places are filled up by them; this would serve to illustrate it, particularly as these were all around the walls of the most holy place; a type of heaven, as here of the New Jerusalem state; that as there was a cherub and a palm tree, a cherub and a palm tree, throughout all the house, so an angel and a saint, an angel and a saint, throughout all the mansions in the holy city, and in the heavenly glory:

and every cherub had two faces: which, by what follows, were the faces of a man, and of a lion. The “cherubim” Ezekiel saw in his first vision had four faces, (^{<3010>}Ezekiel 1:10) and so these must be supposed to have,

though only two were seen; because these were carved or painted on the walls, so that the hindmost faces, those of the ox and eagle, could not be perceived.

Ver. 19. *So that the face of a man was toward the palm tree on the one side, &c.]* The cherubim in this verse are the same with the living creatures this prophet saw by the river Chebar, and which he knew to be the cherubim, (^{<300>}Ezekiel 10:20) and the same with John's four beasts or living creatures in (^{<600>}Revelation 4:7,8) and he being the last that wrote concerning them, gives the clearest account of them; and by which the best judgment may be formed about them; and from which it appears that they are men redeemed by the blood of Christ; and as they are on the one hand distinguished from angels, so on the other from the four and twenty elders, or common Christians, (^{<600>}Revelation 4:8,9 5:8-12) and plainly design the ministers of the word, and who are everywhere to be understood by them: their having the face of a man shows they are men, and have to do with men, and should be humane, kind, and tender, knowing and understanding as men; (see Gill on "^{<300>}Ezekiel 1:10"), and their face being

towards the palm tree shows that they should be upright and sincere in their doctrine, ministry, and conversation; that they should bear all weights and pressures laid upon them patiently; and rise up heavenwards in their affections and desires, and in their expectation of help and assistance in their work, and triumph in Christ, through whom they are conquerors; the palm tree being an emblem of these things:

and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side; this face of the cherubim denotes the strength of Gospel ministers they have from Christ to do their work, defend the Gospel, withstand gainsayers, and support the weak, and bear with their infirmities; as also their boldness, courage, and intrepidity, in preaching the Gospel of Christ without fear of men; of this their face, and the other two not mentioned here, (see Gill on "^{<300>}Ezekiel 1:10"):

it was made through all the house round about; that is, the cherubim and palm trees were carved or portrayed in the form and order here described throughout the holy of holies, as Jarchi interprets the house; and signifies that Gospel ministers shall have a place, and peculiar honour done them, in the New Jerusalem state, who will be particularly rewarded then, (^{<600>}Revelation 11:18).

Ver. 20. *From the ground unto above the door, &c.*] From the floor of the holy of holies to above the door of it to the east, where was the entrance into it; or from thence to the cieling, as the Septuagint version: “were cherubim and palm trees made”; either in rows one above another, quite up to the place mentioned; or they were made so large, that each cherub and palm tree reached from the ground to above the door, or to the cieling:

and on the wall of the temple: that is, they were not only thus placed in the holiest of all; but in the temple, or holy place on the wall of it all around; and shows, that in the state of the church in the latter day, which this part of the building represents more especially, will be great numbers of Gospel ministers, who will faithfully and uprightly preach it to men; (see ^{<270>}Daniel 12:4 ^{<646>}Revelation 14:6,7,8).

Ver. 21. *The posts of the temple were squared, &c.*] Or, were “foursquare”^{f729}; the two posts on each side the door, the lintel and the threshold, made a square; the posts themselves were not round, as pillars, but flat and square; and the upper part was not arched, as in some buildings, but square. Jarchi says he had heard that the posts of Solomon’s temple were foursquare; but that is not certain; however, these were. The Vulgate Latin version renders it “four cornered”; as doors formerly were: this was the ancient way of building, as Philander^{f730} observes; almost everything in this wonderful building was foursquare; denoting the firmness, stability, and perfection of all things in it:

and the face of the sanctuary; the appearance of the one as the appearance of the other; that is, the front of the holy of holies was like that of the temple; they both had the same appearance, though one was larger than another. The posts of the one were squared, even as the posts of the other; showing that the same is the way of entrance into the Gospel church and into the New Jerusalem church state, and even into the heavenly glory, which is Christ; and, whether in the less or more perfect state of the church on earth, there are the same precious faith, and love, and communion, though different degrees. The Targum is,

“and the face of the house of the propitiatory; and its appearance as the appearance of its glory;”

which Jarchi interprets, as the appearance of the throne of glory, seen by the prophet at the river Chebar, (^{<202>}Ezekiel 1:26-28).

Ver. 22. *The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits, &c.*] This was the altar of incense, and was typical of Christ in his intercession and mediation. It was made of “wood”; that in the tabernacle of Moses was of shittim wood, a kind of cedar; and that in Solomon’s temple was of cedar, (^{<0200>}Exodus 30:1 ^{<1060>}1 Kings 6:20) and may signify the human nature of Christ, in which he mediates and intercedes; which is excellent as the cedars: fair and beautiful, strong, durable, and incorruptible: though its original is of the earth, as wood: or was made of a woman; of the earth, earthly; but produced without sin. This altar, both in the tabernacle and temple, was covered with gold; as it was fit it should be with some hard substance that would bear incense to be burned on it; and therefore was called the golden altar, (^{<0200>}Exodus 30:3 ^{<0400>}Numbers 4:11 ^{<1060>}1 Kings 6:20,22) and so the altar at which our Lord officiates as Mediator and Intercessor is called a golden one, (^{<0400>}Revelation 8:3), which may denote the deity of Christ, that gives virtue to his mediation; or the glorification of his human nature in heaven, in which he ministers; and also the preciousness of his intercession, and the duration of it. The incense burnt on this altar may signify both the mediation of Christ, which is pure and holy, though for sinners; large and frequent, continually made, and very fragrant and acceptable; and the prayers of the saints which are offered up on this altar, which sanctifies them; and through the much incense, which perfumes them, whereby they ascend up to God, and are sweet odours to him, being fragrant and fervent, pure and holy. This altar in the tabernacle of Moses, and probably in the temple of Solomon, though its dimensions there are not given, was foursquare, (^{<0200>}Exodus 30:2) very likely so was this; and indeed the Septuagint version adds,

and the breadth two cubits; which, being the same with its length, made it foursquare; and so may point at the firmness, unchangeableness and perfection of this part of Christ’s priesthood, his intercession, which is true of the whole of it, (^{<0300>}Hebrews 7:19,24,25) and it may be observed, that the altar here was a cubit longer, and a cubit broader, as well as a cubit higher, than the Mosaic one, (^{<0200>}Exodus 30:2). Kimchi says this altar was not like to that which Moses or Solomon, or the children of the captivity, made; it was larger than any of them; which shows that the intercession of Christ our high priest is larger and more extensive than that of the priests under the law; they offered incense only for the people of Israel: but Christ, as he is the propitiation, so the advocate for Gentiles, as well as Jews;

though not for the whole world of men, yet for the world of the elect; and of all blessings of grace and glory for them, (^{<610>}1 John 2:1,2 ^{<617>}John 17:9,20) and, moreover, that under the Gospel dispensation there would be more praying souls, and more use made of the Mediator, of his name, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and intercession; and a greater spirit of grace and supplication poured out, especially in the latter day; hence we read of Christ's much incense, (^{<616>}John 16:23,24 ^{<620>}Zechariah 12:10 ^{<618>}Revelation 8:3):

and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood; that is, the horns that were at the four corners of it; and the top of it, which was its length and breadth; and the sides of it, called its walls, were all of wood, though covered with gold. The mystical sense of which has been given; only it may be observed, that the four corners or horns of it may denote the strength of Christ's intercession; and to which men have recourse, and lay hold on for their relief, even from all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south:

and he said unto me, this is the table that is before the Lord; that is, either the altar before described is the table before the Lord, which he has spread, and where his people feed in his presence; the intercession of Christ being a feast to the faith of saints: or it may be, that the divine guide of the prophet, turning himself to the right hand of the altar, pointed to the table of shewbread, which stood in the same place; and said this or that which stands yonder is the table before the Lord; and which also was typical of Christ, the true bread that comes down from heaven, who is the food of his people; for quality, the finest of the wheat; for quantity, enough and to spare; for savour, such as gracious souls desire always to have; for duration, continual bread, set forth by priests, and only eaten by them; and, like that,

bread of faces, as the shewbread is called^{f731}; denoting the intercession of Christ, the Angel of God's presence; and who always appears in the presence of God for his people, bearing on him the names of the children of Israel, to which the twelve shewbread loaves answered. The "table" on which they were set signifies the communion saints have with Christ in his word and ordinances; which are called a feast, of which Christ is the sum and substance; and where, as at a table, he sits and favours them with fellowship with himself; (see ^{<610>}Proverbs 9:2 ^{<612>}Song of Solomon 1:12 5:1 ^{<618>}Revelation 3:20) The Jews^{f732} have an observation upon this text,

that it begins with an altar, and ends with a table; and further observe, that, while the temple stood, the altar atoned for a man, but now a man's table atones for him: but this is not a man's table, but the Lord's table; and Christ the sacrifice held forth on this table does indeed atone for a man.

Ver. 23. *And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.*] Or the house of propitiatory, as the Targum; that is, the most holy place; not two doors apiece, but each had one door, which made two; the door of the temple was ten cubits broad, and the door of the most holy place six cubits, (^{<341D>}Ezekiel 41:2,3) showing the door is wider, and more enter into the outward visible church, or less perfect state, even some bad, as well as good, than the door of the Jerusalem church state, or heavenly glory, into which fewer enter.

Ver. 24. *And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves, &c.*] Each of these doors had two leaves, which met in a middle post, and might be opened either singly or together, as occasion required; (see Gill on ^{<340B>}Ezekiel 40:48”):

two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other door; two for the door of the temple, and two for the door of the most holy place; or each leaf of both doors had two foldings; as there were two leaves in a door, there were two foldings in every leaf; so that the door might be opened wider or narrower, as was thought fit; denoting the greater number of persons let in, and the greater light and knowledge had, at one time than at another; (see ^{<105I>}1 Kings 6:31,34).

Ver. 25. *And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, &c.*] Both of the holy, and the most holy place:

cherubim and palm trees, like as were made on the walls; the doors of both places had the same decorations as the walls of each; (See Gill on ^{<341B>}Ezekiel 41:18-20”); and so it was in Solomon's temple, (^{<105D>}1 Kings 6:32,35), a cherub and a palm tree on each leaf, or on each folding of a leaf, according as it would admit of:

and there were thick planks upon the face of the porch without; on the outward front of the porch were some thick wainscot boards, which projected as a cover to the entrance into it; or, as it may be rendered, also on

the thick piece of wood in the front of the porch without^{f733}; which, as Starckius thinks, was a large wooden bar, which shut and held in the folding leaves of the door; and on this, or these thick planks, were cherubim and palm trees.

Ver. 26. *And there were narrow windows, &c.]* (see ³⁴¹⁶Ezekiel 41:16 40:16):

and palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch; upon the posts that were on each side the porch, north and south; (³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:16,26):

and upon the side chambers of the house, and thick planks; that is, there were palm trees upon the side chambers, which were in number thirty, (³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 41:6) and upon the planks also; every part of this fabric within and without were ornamented.

CHAPTER 42

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 42

In this chapter are a description of some chambers in the northern part of the outward court, (^{<3401>}Ezekiel 42:1-12), an account of the use made of them by the priests, (^{<3403>}Ezekiel 42:13,14), the measuring of the area, or whole compass of ground, on which the whole building before measured stood, with the wall that surrounded it, (^{<3415>}Ezekiel 41:15-20).

Ver. 1. *Then he brought me forth into the utter court, the way toward the north, &c.]* After the dimensions of the gates and courts of this building had been shown, and that of itself, the holy and most holy place, with the ornaments thereof; the prophet is brought by his guide into the outward court, which encompassed the building to the north part of it; probably he came out of the north gate of the house into it. So the Targum renders it,

“by the way of the gate which is open to the way of the north:”

and he brought me into the chamber that was over against the separate place; or holy of holies; (see ^{<3412>}Ezekiel 41:12), over against or before this, to the north of it, were a chamber or chambers; the singular being put for the plural; whither the prophet was brought to take a view of, being a new and distinct building from all others he had seen before; unto one of them, or to the place of them, as Jarchi, where they stood: there were two rows of them opposite to each other, and a walk between them; they are afterwards called the north and south chambers, (^{<3503>}Ezekiel 42:13):

and which was before the building toward the north; this chamber or chambers were over against or before the whole fabric, to the north of it. The Jews here confess their ignorance, there being nothing in the first or second temple answerable to these. Lipman^{f734} expressly says these chambers were not in the second temple; perhaps they may design the Protestant reformed churches in the northern parts of the world; the religion of Protestants is by the Papists called the northern heresy: and if our northern churches are here pointed at and described, it is a great honour that is done them, to have a particular apartment allotted them in this wonderful building; compare (^{<3482>}Psalms 48:2).

Ver. 2. *Before the length of an hundred cubits was the north door, &c.]* That is, the north door of the house opened to a space that lay between that and the chambers, which was a hundred cubits long:

and the breadth was fifty cubits; or the sense is, that the prophet was brought, as Noldius renders the words ^{f735},

to a place whose length was an hundred cubits towards the north door; so that they describe the length and breadth of these chambers, the whole of them; and to this agrees the Arabic version: this account of them makes them larger than Solomon's temple, (^{<100>}1 Kings 6:2), which may signify the largeness of these churches; the number of men in them; and the abundance of spiritual blessings and privileges, of light and knowledge, peace and joy, possessed by them: but the measure being oblong, and not foursquare, as the city of the New Jerusalem, (^{<6216>}Revelation 21:16), shows they are not yet come to stability and perfection.

Ver. 3. *Over against the twenty cubits which were for the inner court, &c.]* Starckius thinks that the breadth of the chambers being fifty cubits, is here parted, and disposed of, and accounted for. The chambers were in two rows over against each other; that row which looked to the south, and so to the temple, was twenty cubits broad; and because it led to the temple, its court is called the inner court:

and over against the pavement which was for the utter court: or that row which was over against the pavement of the outward court, to the north, was also twenty cubits broad, which make forty; and the walk of ten cubits between them, (^{<2604>}Ezekiel 42:4), account for the breadth of the fifty cubits:

was gallery against gallery in three stories; or, there was

post before post in three stories ^{f736}; each chamber had a post or pillar, so Jarchi; which distinguished or divided one from another, and ran up with the chambers three storey high; and as the chambers, so these posts in both rows answered to one another. These may denote the ministers of the Gospel, who are as pillars in the house of God, and churches of Christ; and every distinct church has its pillar or pastor, (^{<2000>}Proverbs 9:1).

Ver. 4. *And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits' breadth inward, &c.]* That is, within side, or between the two rows of chambers, there was a walk of this breadth, for those that lodged in the chambers to

walk in for their pleasure and profit, and to converse with one another. Such who by these “chambers” understand places of retirement for private devotion, or the duties of the closet, which fit and prepare for public worship, as these chambers were near and in sight of the temple, so by this walk then Christian conference and conversation is intended; and shows, that the whole of religious time is not to be spent between the church and the chamber; but some part of it should be allotted for spiritual discourse, about gracious experiences, the truths of the Gospel, and the duties of religion; but as chambers design churches, this walk denotes the outward walk and conversation of the saints; which should be according to the rule of God’s word, as becomes the Gospel, and worthy of the calling wherewith they are called. Starckius applies this to the decalogue or ten commandments, which is a broad way, (^{<1992>}Psalm 119:32,96) and the moral law, as in the hands of Christ, is a rule of walk and conversation to believers under the Gospel: and besides, there “was a way of one cubit”; which led into the chambers, and out of them into the broad walk: this is a narrow way, as Christ is said to be, (^{<1074>}Matthew 7:14) and whoever profess faith in him, and in this way enter into a Gospel church state, and into the kingdom of heaven, must be attended with much affliction and persecution, and pass through many tribulations; and there being both a broad walk and a narrow way, and these lying near one another, and a passage from the one to the other, may denote that the churches and people of God are sometimes in prosperity, and sometimes in adversity; one while they walk at liberty, as in a large place; and at other times in great straits and difficulties:

and their doors toward the north; that is, the doors of that row of chambers nearest the temple; these opened to the north into the walk of ten cubits; though one would think that the row opposite to them, their doors must be to the south, into the broad walk between them; unless this is to be understood of the doors that opened into the way of one cubit, and were to the north in both rows; but then the way of one cubit could not in both lead into the broad walk.

Ver. 5. *Now the upper chambers were shorter*, &c.] The chambers were in three stories, as in the following verse, one above another; the middlemost were shorter than the lowermost, and the upper shorter than either; just the reverse of the chambers in (^{<2507>}Ezekiel 41:7), they were not so high from the floor to the ceiling, nor so broad from side to side. The reason follows:

for the galleries were higher than these; or, “ate out of these”^{f737}, “than the lower, and than the middlemost of the building”; the meaning is, that the galleries or balconies in the middlemost and upper chambers were taken, out of them, and so made them lesser than the lower ones, and the upper ones lesser than either; or the posts or pillars, as the word may be rendered, (see ^{340B}Ezekiel 42:3), which supported the chambers, took more out of the uppermost than the others, and so made them shorter. This may signify the diversity of gifts and grace, of light and knowledge, and of liberty and comfort, in the churches; and that, as those that are uppermost have most light, they are usually the least, and fewest members in them; who are the few names in Sardis, (^{400B}Revelation 3:4), and are generally more straitened, afflicted, reproached, and persecuted.

Ver. 6. *For they were in three stories*, &c.] Not only the galleries or posts, but the chambers; they were one over another; there were the lowermost, middlemost, and uppermost; which, as before, may denote the difference in churches, and the different states, conditions, and characters of those that are in them; some being fathers, others young men, and others little children: or their different offices and relations; some being pastors, others deacons, and others private members: or their knowledge of and profession of faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; and their being baptized in the name of the three divine Persons; and their being built on Christ the foundation, a habitation for God through the Spirit:

but had not pillars as the pillars of the courts; those which supported the porticos and galleries in the courts of the temple, not pillars so thick and strong as they: so the churches represented by these chambers, though they have Gospel ministers, which are as pillars, and valuable members, which are as such, that shall not go out; yet they have not those external supports from great and rich men, but consist generally of the poor of this world, as churches on a civil establishment have, who are supported by the state:

therefore the building was straitened more than the lowest and the middlemost from the ground; the upper part of it, or the uppermost chambers, were more straitened, and had less room in them, than the middlemost, and the middlemost than the lowest; suggesting, that the more heavenly and spiritual men are, the farther they depart from the men of the world and their conversation, from the sentiments and practices of natural

men, the more they are exposed to their scorn and contempt, and are the more afflicted and straitened by them.

Ver. 7. *And the wall that was without over against the chambers, &c.]*

This wall separated and distinguished the chambers from the outward court, as well as was a protection of them; and signifies the grace and power of God, which separates his true churches from the world, and is the security of them; (see Gill on “^{391B}Ezekiel 11:5”)

this was towards the utter court, on the fore part of the chambers; or front of them, which seems to be to the north of them; since their doors were towards the north, (^{391B}Ezekiel 42:4), though Cocceius makes it to be to the west, which better agrees with what follows:

the length thereof was fifty cubits; which answers to the breadth of the chambers, (^{391B}Ezekiel 42:2) and what is called length here, with respect to the wall, is called the breadth with respect to the chambers. The wall of divine protection is equal to the length and breadth, and even the whole compass, of the churches of Christ.

Ver. 8. *For the length of the chambers that were in the utter court was fifty cubits, &c.]* Which was the reason why the wall was of the same length, that it might be answerable to them; here length is put for breadth; (see ^{391B}Ezekiel 42:2), this measure was from the north to south, as Lipman^{f738} observes:

and lo, before the temple were an hundred cubits; as the breadth of the wall and chambers was fifty, so in length, as they were over against the temple, they were an hundred cubits, as in (^{391B}Ezekiel 42:2), unless the account is to be taken thus; that the row of chambers towards the north were fifty cubits long, and the row towards the south over against the other was fifty cubits, and so both made a hundred; to which sense is the Septuagint version,

“for the length of the chambers that look to the outward court was fifty cubits, and those (that is, those that looked to the temple, or were before that) answered to them, the whole a hundred cubits;”

that is, both rows made a hundred cubits; but rather, as Lipman^{f739} says, the chambers contained from east to west a hundred cubits.

Ver. 9. *And from under these chambers, &c.]* Or, “from the lower part of these chambers”^{f740}; or, “from the lowest” of them there was a space, as may be supplied, and as is by Cocceius and Starchius; and as there was a wall to the west of them, so there was a void space to the east; and as follows:

the entry on the east side: or, “he that brought me from the east”^{f741}, as the Keri; and coming eastward to these chambers, one must needs go through this space:

as one goeth into them from the utter court; if a man went eastward into those chambers from the outward court he must go through this space, which lay to the east of the lowest chambers: or the sense is, that from under the north chambers to the south was an entry on the east side, which led from one to the other.

Ver. 10. *The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, &c.]* As there were chambers in the northern part of the outward court, some which looked to the north, and others to the south, so likewise some to the east; and these were built on the breadth, as it may be rendered, of the court wall to the east; signifying there will be churches raised in all the northern parts of the world:

over against the separate place, and over against the building; as the other chambers were; (see Gill on “~~350~~ Ezekiel 42:1”).

Ver. 11. *And the way before them was like the appearance of the chambers which were toward the north, &c.]* The way before these eastern chambers was exactly like to that of the northern chambers; which was either the way of one cubit into them, or the walk of ten cubits before them, or both; signifying that the way into Gospel churches is the same everywhere, and the walk and conversation of the saints the same in all places:

as long as they, and as broad as they; which seems to confirm that both the way and the walk are meant, which were the same in those eastern chambers as in the northern; the way being as long, of one cubit, and the walk as broad, of ten cubits:

and all their goings out were both according to their fashions, and according to their doors; the form and fashion of them were alike; they were built three stories high, were as long, and as broad, and the upper

shorter than the middlemost and lowest; the way of going into them, and coming out of them, were just the same; their doors were in the same position: in Gospel churches there are the same ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; the same laws and rules; the same privileges and immunities; the same graces in the members of them, like precious faith, hope, and love; whatever difference there may be in temporal things, there is none in spiritual ones; be they rich or poor, their communion is equal, their benefits the same.

Ver. 12. *And according to the doors of the chambers that were toward the south, &c.*] That is, the doors of these eastern chambers were exactly like to the doors of the southern chambers, as well as to the northern ones:

was a door in the head of the way; or beginning of the way; the door opened into the way of one cubit, and that led into the walk of ten cubits; and such a way and walk were before these eastern chambers as were before the southern and northern ones:

even the way directly before the wall toward the east, as one entereth into them: or, "also a way before the wall direct, a way to the east, as one goes into them"^{f742}; which seems to describe such a way from under these eastern chambers as were from under the northern or southern chambers, (³⁴⁰Ezekiel 42:9).

Ver. 13. *Then said he unto me, &c.*] The divine Person that measured and described these chambers, and brought the prophet to take a view of them, said to him, as follows:

the north chambers, and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they be holy chambers; these are the two rows of chambers before described, which were southward and northward to each other, though both in the northern part of the outward court; these were for holy persons to dwell in, and for holy things to be done in, as the churches of Christ are; they consist of holy persons, men called with a holy calling, and in them the holy word of God is preached, and holy ordinances administered:

where the priests that approach unto the Lord shall eat the most holy things; which is to be understood not of the ministers of the Gospel, for whom a proper maintenance is to be provided, and who should live of the Gospel they preach; but of all the saints, who are made priests to God by Christ; and who approach unto the Lord by him, in his name and

righteousness, and by the faith of him, with true hearts, in a spiritual manner; and which is profitable to themselves, and acceptable to God; for whom spiritual provisions are made in his house: these have most holy things to eat of, the holy word of God, the law part of which is holy, just, and good; and the Gospel part is our most holy faith, which is food for faith, savoury and salutary, milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and which is found and eaten, and digested by them: also our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the most holy, and is the sum and substance of the word and ordinances, and the food of believers, the bread of life, the hidden manna, the Lamb of God, and fatted calf; whose flesh and blood are meat and drink indeed, and are eaten and fed upon by faith.

There shall they lay the most holy things; lay up the word of God in their minds and memories, and remember the love of God, his sufferings and death, and the benefits arising from them, particularly in the ordinance of the supper:

and the meat offering; the “minchah”, or bread offering, made of fine flour, typical of Christ, the bread of life:

and the sin, offering, and the trespass offering; both typical of Christ, made sin for his people; and who, by one sacrifice of himself, has made atonement for it, and an end of it; (see Gill on “²⁶¹⁹Ezekiel 40:39”), these were called the most holy things, and were laid up in the sanctuary for the priests and their families to live upon, (¹⁸⁶⁷Leviticus 6:17):

for the place is holy: the place of these chambers holy, as the temple itself, where these most holy things and holy persons were.

Ver. 14. *When the priests enter therein, &c.*] Into the holy place, these holy chambers, and approach unto God, and eat of the most holy things, and minister therein to the Lord:

then shall they not go out of the holy place into the utter court; denoting, not that the ministers of the word should not concern themselves in secular employments, but give themselves up to the word and prayer, though so to do is right; but the perseverance of the saints in the house and worship of God, in grace and holiness, and in all the duties of religion; these should not relinquish their profession, desert their station and the service of God, and return to the world; but continue as pillars in the temple of God, and go no more out, but abide by the truths and ordinances of the Gospel:

but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister, for they are holy; these signify Christ's robe of righteousness and garments of salvation, that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints; and fitly represented by the linen garments of the priests, in which they ministered in their office, and were like them holy, pure, and spotless; in these only saints appear before God, and present their supplications to him, not for their own, but for Christ's righteousness sake, making mention of that only; and herein they have acceptance with God now, and shall be introduced into his presence hereafter, and behold his face, clothed with these garments, and serve him for ever:

and shall put on other garments, and shall approach to those things which are for the people; these are the conversation garments of the saints, which are not fit to appear in before God, being attended with imperfection and sin; but very proper to appear in before men, among whom their lights should shine, and their good works be seen, for the adorning of the doctrine of Christ, the recommending of the Christian religion, and the stopping of the mouths of gainsayers: for this respects not the different habits of ministers, when they are in their ministrations, and out of them; though the allusion is to the priests under the law, who wore their priestly garments only in the temple, and while ministering there, and never elsewhere, or when among the common people on civil accounts: so Josephus says^{f743}, the priests only wore their holy garments when they ministered; at other times they appeared in the habit of private persons; with which agrees what Maimonides^{f744} says, their garments are not upon them when they are not ministering in the priestly office, but then they are clothed as laymen; or when, as the Targum here has it,

“they were mingled with the people.”

There were places in the temple where they put on and off their clothes, and where they were laid up. So Adrichomius^{f745} says, speaking of the temple,

“there were rooms, otherwise called treasuries, and priests' apartments, which were houses on the side of it, like towers, long, broad, and high; in which the priests, when they went into the sanctuary, put off their common woollen garments, and put on their holy linen ones; and, when they had performed their holy services, laid them up there again.”

And another writer, quoted by Solomon Ben Virga^{f746}, observes, that

“here (that is, the temple) was a house for the priest whose office it was to clothe the rest of the priests at the time of service; and he gave to everyone of them four sorts of garments, as were commanded, and fetched them out of the chests of the wardrobe; and on every chest, which were at the walls of this house, that is, above everyone of them, was the name of the garment, that there might be no mistake nor confusion when they were wanted.”

And this agrees with what is said in the Misnah^{f747}, that there was one that was appointed over the priests’ garments, and who might be properly enough called the master of the wardrobe; on which one of the commentators says^{f748}, his business was

“to clothe the priests at the time of service, and to unclothe them after service was done, and to keep the garments of the priesthood in the chambers made for that purpose.”

Very wrongly, therefore, is the learned Selden^{f749} charged by Mr. Shoringham^{f750}, with a mistake, in denying that the priests wore their holy garments at any other time but when they were at divine service.

Ver. 15. *Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house,* &c.] The holy place, and the holy of holies, with all the courts and chambers belonging to them; even the whole building within the compass of the outermost wall, and all that pertained unto it; the chambers last mentioned, as well as the rest, the dimensions of, which are given in this and the two preceding chapters:

he brought me forth toward the gate whose prospect is toward the east: not to the east gate of the outward wall, but to the east gate which led into the outward court; the gate he was first brought unto, and which was first measured, (³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:6): and measured it round about; not the east gate, nor the outward wall that went all round the house; though this was measured, and its dimensions given, last of all; nor the house itself, which had been measured already; or the figure of it, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; but all that space that was between this building and the wall that surrounded it; the area or compass of ground on which the building stood.

Ver. 16. *He measured the east side,* &c.] He began with that, being at the east gate: the building was foursquare, and so was the wall about it, and

had each four equilateral sides, which were separately measured; here the east side, from the two angles of it, the north and south points:

with the measuring reed; which consisted of six cubits, and which cubits were larger than the common sort by a hand's breadth; so that a measuring reed measured three yards and a half: and the whole measure of the east side were

five hundred reeds: which make one thousand seven hundred and fifty yards:

with the measuring reed round about; not round about the building, since only one side, as yet, was measured; but round about that side, or from angle to angle, or from one side to the other: having finished one side, he went to another, until he had measured all round; but did not go four times round it, only once.

Ver. 17. *He measured the north side, five hundred reeds, &c.*] From the two angles of that side, east and west; and it was of the same dimension as the east side, just five hundred reeds, or one thousand seven hundred and fifty yards:

with a measuring reed round about; he measured with the same reed, from point to point; and having measured this side, he went to another.

Ver. 18. *He measured the south side, five hundred reeds, &c.*] From the two angles of that side, east and west; and it amounted to just the same number of reeds, even five hundred reeds, or one thousand seven hundred and fifty yards:

with the measuring reed; the same as before; here, and in the next verse, the phrase "round about" is not used, but is to be understood; and having been repeated, there was no need of mentioning it again.

Ver. 19. *He turned about to the west side, &c.*] And took the dimensions of that, from angle to angle, the south and north points of it:

and measured five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed; and it was exactly of the same measure with the other three sides.

Ver. 20. *He measured it by the four sides, &c.*] Which were equilateral, parallel to each other, each measuring five hundred reeds; which in all made up two thousand reeds, or seven thousand yards: this shows that no

material building can be designed; never was an edifice of such dimensions; this seems rather to describe a city than a temple; and denotes the largeness of the Gospel church state in the latter day, when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in:

it had a wall round about: the same with that in (³⁶⁰⁵Ezekiel 40:5):

five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad; it was foursquare, as the building was, and exactly answered to that in its dimensions. The Jews say^{f751} the mountain of the house was five hundred cubits by five hundred; that is, a perfect square of five hundred cubits on every side, two thousand cubits in the whole compass about. Josephus^{f752} says the whole circuit was half a mile, every side containing the length of a two hundred and twenty yards. Now, says Doctor Lightfoot^{f753}, if any will take up the full circuit of the wall that encompassed the holy ground, according to our English measure, it will amount to half a mile and about one hundred and sixty six yards; and whosoever will likewise measure the square of Ezekiel, (³⁶²⁰Ezekiel 42:20), will find it six times as large as this, (³⁶⁰⁵Ezekiel 40:5), the whole amounting to three miles and a half, and about one hundred and forty yards, a compass incomparably larger than Mount Moriah divers times over; and by this very thing is showed that that is spiritually and mystically to be understood; wherefore these measures no doubt did, as Mr. Lee^{f754} observes, signify the great fulness of the Gentiles, and that compass of the church in Gospel days should be marvellously extended. The use of it was,

to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place: the church and the world; the world is profane, and lies in wickedness, and the men of it ought not to be admitted into the church of God, and partake of holy things in it; a difference must be made between the precious and the vile; and greater care will be taken in the latter day of the admission of members into Gospel churches, (²⁸⁰¹Isaiah 52:1), (see Gill on “³⁶⁰⁵Ezekiel 40:5”).

CHAPTER 43

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 43

The temple or house of God being measured, the worship of God in it is pointed out and observed in this and the following chapter; and which, though evangelical, is expressed in the language of the Old Testament. An account is given of the glory of the Lord returning to the house, and the way he did, and his taking possession of it, which the prophet was favoured with a view of, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 43:1-5), a promise is made of his continuance there, provided his people behaved as they should, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 43:6-9), an order is given to the prophet, to show them the form and fashion, the laws, orders, and ordinances of the house to them, to be observed by them, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 43:10-12), then follows the measuring of the altar of burnt offerings; which, though measured before in chapter forty, the dimensions are here given, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 43:13-17), and the chapter is concluded with directions about the consecration of it, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 43:18-27).

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me to the gate, &c.*] The dimensions of this wonderful building being finished, the prophet's divine guide brought him from the wall about it, he had last measured, to the gate he first had him to, after he had observed to him the same wall, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 40:5,6):

even the gate that looketh toward the east; or, as the Targum, which was open to the way of the east. The reason of his being brought hither follows.

Ver. 2. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east, &c.*] The God of Israel is Jehovah the Father, the covenant God of literal Israel; and the covenant God and Father of the whole spiritual Israel, or his elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; whom he has taken into covenant, loves, cares, provides for, and protects: Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, whose glory is the glory of the only begotten of the Father, is here meant; and who has the same glorious attributes, the same glorious names, and the same worship, honour, and glory, his Father has; and in whom, as Mediator, is displayed the glory of all the divine perfections: he is said to "come from the way of the east";

which agrees with him in his character as the rising sun of righteousness; and with his incarnation, when as the day spring from on high, from heaven, he visited us, was born in the east, where his star appeared; from this part of the world his Gospel first came; here it was first preached, and churches planted; and though these parts have been forsaken by him a long time, he will return hither again; when he will dry up the river Euphrates, and make way for the kings and kingdoms of the east to be converted to him, (~~600~~ Revelation 7:2 16:12), to which a “behold” is prefixed, as a note exciting attention, and raising admiration; as it was matter of wonder and joy to the prophet, to see the glory of the Lord returning to his house, the same way he departed, (~~200~~ Ezekiel 10:4,19):

and his voice was like a noise of many waters; this is to be understood of his Gospel, in which he speaks to men, and which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; of peace and reconciliation; of pardon and righteousness; of life, liberty, and salvation: and the metaphor here used is expressive of the swiftness of its motion in the world; of its general spread in it, and all over it; of the noise it will make, as it always does among men, wherever it comes; and of the rapidity and force of it, being attended with almighty power; and is a soul shaking, heart melting, soul quickening, enlightening, alluring, and comforting voice; (see ~~270~~ Daniel 10:6 ~~605~~ Revelation 1:15). The Targum is,

“and the voice of them that bless his name is as the voice of many waters.”

The Septuagint and Arabic versions, the voice of the camp or army.

And the earth shined with his glory; with the brightness of his glory, as the Targum; with his glorious Gospel, in which the glory of his person, office, and grace, is displayed; this will be spread all over the earth, and that will be enlightened by it: it will remove the darkness and infidelity, error, superstition, idolatry, and all false doctrines from the world, and the darkness of calamity and distress from the church; which will cast a lustre and glory upon it; and with the brightness of which the Lord will destroy antichrist, and by it set up his kingdom in the world, and reign before his ancients gloriously: this will bring on Zion’s light and glory, to which kings will come, and upon which will be a defence; (~~680~~ Revelation 18:1 ~~308~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:8 ~~200~~ Isaiah 40:1,3 4:5).

Ver. 3. *And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, &c.]* Recorded in the first, ninth, and tenth chapters of this book; the form in which the glory of the God of Israel now appeared was like to what he then saw; in each of which visions was the likeness of a throne, and on it the appearance of the glory of God:

even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; the city of Jerusalem; not that the prophet destroyed it, or came to destroy it himself, which was to be done, and was done, by the Chaldeans; but to foretell the destruction of it; which prediction of his made it as certain as if it was done. So the Targum,

“when I prophesied to destroy the city;”

and this was, when he was bid to cause, in a visionary and prophetic manner, six men, with their destroying weapons, to draw near unto it, and smite it; at which time he saw the glory of the God of Israel go up from the cherub, (^{<200B>}Ezekiel 9:1-3).

And the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; the four living creatures and the wheels; the throne of sapphire stone, and the glorious appearance above it, (^{<200B>}Ezekiel 1:3-28 10:1-20) only with this difference, then he saw the glory of the God of Israel departing, especially in the last vision, but now returning:

and I fell upon my face; in reverence of such glorious majesty: affected with such a display of grace and goodness, and sensible of his own unworthiness to behold it: the clearer and fuller views saints have of the grace and glory of Christ, the more humble they are; (see ^{<200B>}Isaiah 6:1-3,5).

Ver. 4. *And the glory of the Lord came into the house, &c.]* Before described and measured; and being fitted and prepared, the builder and owner of it comes and takes up his residence in it; as Christ will do in his church, more especially and more visibly in the latter day:

by the way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east; which was the direct way into the outward court, and so to the inward court, and into the holy, and into the most holy place; and was the way by which he departed from hence, (^{<200B>}Ezekiel 10:18,19).

Ver. 5. *So the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court, &c.]*

The prophet was fallen down on his face, upon the sight of the glory of the Lord, and there he lay, until a wind came, as the word signifies; or the Holy Spirit, which is compared to the wind, for its invisible and irresistible power, came and took him up: humble souls are regarded by the Lord; he raises them up, and exalts them, and brings them into nearer and more intimate communion with God; and gives them clearer views still of the glories of Christ's person, grace, and love: and it is the Spirit of God only that does this, and that to priests only, such an one as Ezekiel was; for none but priests went into the inner court:

and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house; the body of it; both the holy and the most holy place, with all its courts and apartments; so the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle when that was set up in the temple of Solomon, when it was built; and the glory of the Lord will fill the church of God, yea, the whole earth, in the latter day, (^{230B}Isaiah 6:3), of this Christ's personal appearance in the second temple, which gave it a greater glory than the former, was an emblem and pledge, (^{301B}Haggai 2:7,9), here, it may be observed, no mention is made of a cloud, as at the setting up of the tabernacle, and dedication of the temple; denoting the clear light of the Gospel in those times, and how the glory of the Lord will be seen with open face by all the saints.

Ver. 6. *And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house, &c.]* The holy place, the prophet being in the inward court: this is Jehovah the Father, the God of Israel, whose glory entered into it; who utters his voice out of Zion; who speaks in his church by his word, and the ministers of it; and which is to be heard and regarded, not as the word of man, but as the word of God:

and the man stood by me: whom he saw at first with a measuring line in his hand, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:3), and with whom he had been all along, and had seen him measure the house, and all belonging to it: he stood by him as the Mediator between God and him; as the medium of communion with him; as the advocate with the Father: he stood by him to interpret what was said to him; to guide him further into the knowledge of divine things; to assist him, protect and defend him, to continue him in fellowship with God, and to preserve him in grace to glory. Here is an appearance of the three Persons in the Godhead; the Father speaking to the prophet out of the house; the

Son in human form standing by him; and the Spirit of the Lord, who had took him up from the ground, and had brought him into the inner court.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto me, son of man, &c.*] A kind, usual, and singular appellation, given to this prophet: these are the words either of the man that stood by him, so the Arabic version; or of Jehovah, speaking out of the house to him:

the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet: that is, this house, the church of God, is the place where the throne of the Lord is set; where he rules and reigns; where he sets his feet, and is his resting place; even his, whose throne is the heaven, and the earth his footstool; here Christ, as King of saints, dwells, and here he walks and shows the glory of his majesty:

where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever; not Carnal, but spiritual Israel; such as are Israelites indeed, or which the church will be full in the latter day, both Jews and Gentiles; and in the midst of these will Jehovah dwell, and grant his gracious presence, and never more depart from them: this shows that this house or building can not be understood of the second temple; since the Lord did not dwell in that for ever, but has left that house desolate hundreds of years ago: some Jewish writers^{f755} have owned that it belongs to the times of the Messiah:

and my name shall the house of Israel no more defile, or “profane”; or cause to be blasphemed by immoralities, or false doctrines, or superstition and will worship; denoting the holiness of life, purity of doctrine and worship, in the churches of Christ in the latter day; (see ^{<30B>}Isaiah 4:3 ^{<30B>}Joel 3:17 ^{<30B>}Zechariah 14:20,21):

neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom: that is, idolatry, which is spiritual fornication; such as the kings of Israel, and their subjects, were often guilty of, before their captivity in Babylon, though not after; nor will they ever return to it in the latter day, when converted; for they will never espouse the idolatries of Rome; and those kings and people that bear the name of Christians, and yet commit fornication with the whore of Babylon, shall do so no more after these times, (^{<67D>}Revelation 17:2,16):

nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places; or, and “their high places”^{f756}; that is, by both; by the carcasses of their kings being buried in or near the house of God; so the Targum adds, at their death^{f757}; or by human carcasses being sacrificed to Molech or Milcom, which signifies

their king: or else the idols themselves are so called, because lifeless and abominable; (see ^{<216B>}Jeremiah 16:18), and the worship of which the kings of Israel encouraged by precept and practice, order and example, and therefore called theirs; and also by their high places, which they made for idolatrous worship, and which were made where the carcasses of their kings were laid, as Ben Melech observes; and all which were done, especially in the reigns of Manasseh and Ammon: but now nothing of this kind shall be hereafter, or any thing now similar to it, in the antichristian state.

Ver. 8. *In their setting of their threshold by my threshold, &c.]* The threshold is the way of entrance into the house; when men open any other way of entrance into the house of God than he has directed, it is setting up their threshold by his: the Gospel way of entrance into the church of Christ is Christ himself, and faith in him, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism, (^{<630E>}John 10:1,7,9) (^{<4124E>}Acts 2:41 9:18,26) but when men make carnal descent, religious education, mere morality and civility, the way of entrance into church communion; this is opposite to God's way, and is resented by him; this shall not be hereafter:

and their post by my post; which is done when the ordinances of men are substituted in the room of the ordinances of God, or set upon a level with them; when the ordinances of God are changed and altered, or that brought into his worship which he has not commanded; and the commandments of men are taught for the doctrines of God: so the Pharisees set up the traditions of the elders as equal to the written word, and, made it of no effect by them; as the Papists do, by setting up their traditions, under the name of the traditions of the apostles, and of the church, upon a level with the Scriptures; and the same is done when men set up their own doctrines, concerning the Persons in the Godhead, concerning the power and purity of human nature, and the way of redemption; and oppose their own works to the grace of God, in justification, pardon, and salvation; the allusion is to the setting up of altars and idols in the house of the Lord, by his altar, (^{<1220E>}2 Kings 21:4,7):

and the wall between me and them; that these sins and abominable practices were a wall of separation between God and them, and caused him to hide himself from them, withdraw his presence, and deny them communion with him, (^{<2341E>}Isaiah 49:2), some render it, “for” or “so that

there was but a wall between me and them”^{f758}; so near were their thresholds, posts, and altars, to his:

they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: by their false doctrines, idolatrous worship, and immoral lives; such abominations as before mentioned:

wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger; as the Jews are now, and all the antichristian states will be.

Ver. 9. *Now let them put away their whoredom, &c.*] Idolatry, superstition, and will worship, with which the corrupt church of Rome abounds; and whatever appearance thereof is in the reformed churches:

and the carcasses of their kings far from me; their idols; (see Gill on “³⁸⁰⁷Ezekiel 43:7”),

and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever; now though the Jews were never guilty of idolatry after their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor even to this day; yet the Lord has departed from them, and left them to blindness and stupidity, they having rejected the Messiah he sent unto them; which shows that this passage refers not to those times, but to future times; when the whole Israel of God shall be cleared of all corruptions in doctrine and worship, and the Lord will take up his abode with them, and no more depart from them.

Ver. 10. *Thou son of man, show the house, &c.*] That is, the house the prophet had seen measured, its gates, courts, and all belonging to it; which he was at first bid to observe, that he might show it to others; the house that the glory of the Lord was now come into, and had filled; and which is no other than the Gospel church in its perfection and glory in the latter day. This the prophet, who is addressed under his usual character in this book, is bid to show “to the house of Israel”; either to the captives in Babylon, among whom he was, and to whom he often speaks in this book, being sent with a message to them: and this he is ordered to show them, both to comfort them in their present state, with a view of what would be hereafter; and to humble them, and bring them to a sense of their sins, and shame for them, which had brought them into the condition they were, and so greatly short of this happy one: or else to the Jews in the first times of the Gospel; the prophet representing the apostles of Christ, who delivered out the form of a Gospel church state to the believing ones, far superior to that they had been in, and into which they entered: or rather he represented

the ministers of the word in the latter day, showing to the Christians of those times the order, worship, and discipline of a pure Gospel church, who have been greatly deficient in their observance of them; and which is the work and business of Gospel ministers to do, as well as to preach the doctrine of the Gospel:

that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; how far short they have come of the model of true Gospel churches, and of observing the order, and maintaining the ordinances, and keeping up the discipline of such churches; and when persons are brought to blush and be ashamed, it looks as if they had a true sight and sense of their mistakes, and of repentance for them:

and let them measure the pattern; that is, of the house, and what belongs to it; by which they will see their defects, and correct them; (see ~~and~~ Revelation 11:1,2).

Ver. 11. *And if they be ashamed of all that they have done*, &c.] As sinful and, criminal, at least as very imperfect and defective, and not answerable to the pattern shown them, from which they have sadly deviated; if made sensible of this, and they acknowledge it with shame, not only the house in general, but the particulars of it, are to be shown with them; for, to sensible and penitent persons, more grace, light, knowledge, and judgment in divine things, are given:

shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof; the form and order of a Gospel church; which is not national, provincial, or parochial, nor Presbyterian, but congregational; consisting of persons called out of the world by the grace of God, and who are incorporated and knit together in Gospel bonds; among whom the word of God is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered, and furnished with proper officers, pastors, and deacons; the one to take care of the spiritual, the other of the temporal affairs of the church; and to see a church in such form and order, and thus organized, is a very beautiful sight.

And the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof; the gates and way of entrance into it, which is only by Christ, and a profession of faith in him; and care should be taken that none be admitted but such who appear to be regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God; to be righteous through the righteousness of Christ; and that keep the truth, and hold the doctrines of the Gospel: and also the way and manner of excluding unworthy persons, such who are immoral in their lives, and erroneous in their principles,

should be observed. And all the forms thereof; the decorations of it, signified by the cherubim and palm trees; so Jarchi and Kimchi; and these expressive of ministers of the word, and faithful men: this is often repeated, that it might be the more observed; for to have ministers to answer such characters is of great consequence.

And all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof; the ordinances are those of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are to continue until the second coming of Christ: the laws are, besides the moral law, in the hands of Christ the lawgiver, the law of loving one another, called the law of Christ, and his new commandment; and all the laws relating to worship and discipline, concerning the reproof of members, in case of private or public offences; and concerning the exclusion of disorderly or heretical persons:

and write it in their sight; the plan and model of this house, and all things belonging to it, that they may have it before them, as the rule of their conduct and behaviour:

that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them; for all this is shown, not for mere speculation, and to gratify curiosity, but in order to be put in practice; all these rules, laws, and ordinances, are to be kept in faith, from a principle of love, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God.

Ver. 12. *This is the law of the house*, &c.] Which follows, the more general one, which comprehends the rest:

upon the top of the mountain; denoting the exaltation and visibility of the church of Christ in the latter day, as well as its firmness and stability; (see ^{<38B>}Isaiah 2:2,3):

the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy; all belonging to it shall be as the most holy place in the temple, sacred to the Lord; laws, ordinances, doctrines, worship, members, ministers, all holy; nothing said or done, or have a place here, but what is holy; (see ^{<38D>}Zechariah 14:20,21):

this is the law of the house; the principal one, according to which are directed and governed.

Ver. 13. *And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits, &c.]* Of the altar of burnt offering, which though measured before, the dimensions were not given till now; (see ^{<3647>}Ezekiel 40:47), this altar was a type of Christ, (^{<5830>}Hebrews 13:10) with respect to his deity, which is greater than the sacrifice of his human nature, the support of it, which sanctified it, and gave virtue and efficacy to it, and rendered it acceptable to God, (^{<4239>}Matthew 23:19) and the measures of it are said to be after the cubits used in the measuring of places and things belonging to this house, described; and what these were appears by what follows:

the cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; not the common cubit, but what was larger than that by a hand breadth, or three inches:

even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit; or, “the bosom”^{f759}; that is, the foundation of the altar, as the Targum and Jarchi; the basis, foot, or settle of it; this was a cubit high, and a cubit broad:

and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span; the edge or “lip”^{f760}, of this bottom or settle, was a cubit broad, for the priests to stand and go round the altar, and to this there was a border of a span, or half a cubit, to prevent their slipping; or else to keep the blood, poured at the foot of the altar, from running upon the pavement:

and this shall be the higher place of the altar; or the projection or jetting of it out beyond others, which was further than any other part; otherwise it was the lower part of the altar.

Ver. 14. *And from the bottom upon the ground, even to the lower settle, &c.]* From the basis or foundation of the altar, as it stood upon the ground, to the lower settle or “court”^{f761}, as it is called, where the priests stood; and in which they could walk round the altar, to do their business:

shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; that is, two cubits high, and one broad:

and from the lesser settle or court, to the greater settle or court, shall be four cubits, and, the breadth one cubit; the lowermost settle is called the lesser, not in quantity, but in height, it being but two cubits high from the ground; but the upper settle was four cubits from that, and one broad, for the priests to walk on round about; in all six cubits from the bottom.

Ver. 15. *So the altar shall be four cubits, &c.]* That is, from the greater settle; so that in the whole it was ten cubits high, the same with Solomon's, (^{<400>}2 Chronicles 4:1) some make this to be eleven cubits high, one higher than Solomon's; it is here called "Harel", the mountain of God, because it looked like a mountain in the court, for its size: it was on a mountain our Lord was offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people; and which was far superior to all other sacrifices, and for more persons than those sacrifices offered up on the altar of burnt offerings.

And from the altar and upward shall be four horns; or, "from Ariel"^{f762}; which was the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the fire kindled, called "Ariel"; which some render the lion of God, because, as the Jewish Rabbins^{f763} say, the fire of the altar lay upon it in the form of a lion; or rather, because like a lion it devoured the sacrifices: this name of the altar agrees well with Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who was strong to bear the sins of men, and the wrath of God for them, whereby they are no more; though it rather signifies the fire of God, which consumed the sacrifice, and denoted the wrath of God on Christ, and also the divine acceptance of his sacrifice: now from hence and upwards were four horns at the four corners of the altar; which denote the strength of Christ, to save all that come unto God by him, and his being a refuge to them that by faith lay hold upon him; and that he is accessible to persons that come from all parts, from the four corners of the earth.

Ver. 16. *And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, &c.]* The length of it, from east to west, was twelve cubits; and the breadth, from north to south, was the same; so that it was a proper foursquare, as follows: Christ the altar, or the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of men, is the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ, and embraced by the twelve times twelve, the 144,000 that belong unto him:

square in the four squares thereof; as the altar in the tabernacle, and Solomon's temple, were, (^{<220>}Exodus 27:1 ^{<400>}2 Chronicles 4:1), denoting the largeness of Christ's sacrifice, the perfection of it, and its stability and permanency, to take away the sin, of his people.

Ver. 17. *And the settle shall be fourteen cubits long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof, &c.]* Here Kimchi confesses his ignorance. Jarchi interprets it, the top of the altar, with the place of the horns, and of the feet of the priests, and was twenty eight cubits by twenty eight, the fourteen mentioned being to be measured from the middle^{f764}; and he seems to be

right in making it to be the upper part of the altar, and not the lower settle, as some; the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the sacrifice burnt; and which had a projection of a cubit on each side, and so made the twelve cubits, the length and breadth of the altar, fourteen:

and the border about it shall be half a cubit; or the enclosure, as the Targum; the ledge about it, which went round the altar, to keep the fire or sacrifice from falling, or that the feet of the priests might not slip: the Jews expound it of the horns:

and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; or the foundation, as the Targum; which was between the altar, and the border on which the priests walked, when they went round it, to do the business of it: here Kimchi owns his ignorance again;

and his stairs shall look towards the east; steps to the altar were forbidden by the law of Moses, (⁴⁰²⁶Exodus 20:26) wherefore, as the height of the altar of Solomon, and so of the second temple, required some way and method of ascent to the top of it, to do the business upon it; the Jews had what they call “kibbesh”, a way made of earth thrown up, which rose gradually, and led to the top of it, and was about two and thirty cubits long, and sixteen broad⁴⁷⁶⁵; but here steps or stairs are expressly mentioned, which show that this refers to times when the Mosaic and ceremonial laws should be abolished. These stairs were placed eastward, so that those that went up them looked toward the west, toward the temple and house of God, where he dwelt; and turned their backs to the east, or rising sun, in direct opposition to the worshippers of the sun, whose faces were to the east. How many steps or stairs there were to the altar is not said; Starckius conjectures there might be twelve or fourteen of them, and allows for each step half a cubit; but as the altar was ten, or, as others, eleven cubits high, there should be twenty steps or more, of such a measure. These may signify the several ways and means of coming to, and increasing in, the knowledge of the doctrine of the altar, or of Christ’s satisfaction for sin; as hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto me, son of man, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* This is the voice of the Lord continued, speaking out of the house to the prophet; (see ²⁵⁸⁶Ezekiel 43:6):

these are the ordinances of the altar: not what go before, concerning the measures of it, but what follow, concerning the sacrifices to be offered on it:

in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and sprinkle blood thereon; this plainly shows that this altar is the altar of burnt offerings; such were to be offered on it, and the blood of them to be sprinkled thereon, as follows; that is, upon the horns, corners, and border of it, (³⁶⁶¹Ezekiel 43:20).

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites, that be of the seed of Zadok, &c.]* Who, in Solomon's time, was put in the room of Abiathar; (see ³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:46), his name signifies a "righteous" one, a type he was of Jesus Christ the righteous; and here his seed signify the seed of Christ, such whom he makes priests unto the Lord; to these, in a visionary way, the prophet was to give this altar, for them to serve at, and eat of; and all the rites and ordinances to observe and keep; and the sacrifices to offer on it, after mentioned:

which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God; (See Gill on "³⁴⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:46"):

a young bullock for a sin offering: typical of Christ, strong and laborious, able to bear the sins of his people; to become a sin offering, and to be made sin itself for them.

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, &c.]* Ezekiel being a priest. This must be understood in a visionary way; for, as Kimchi observes, Ezekiel did not live to come up out of the captivity, but died, and was buried in the land of Babylon, and so did not actually do this: though it is a mere dream of the same writer, that this is to be understood of the resurrection of the dead, when he supposes Ezekiel will be high priest, though Aaron be present; or however be the second, or deputy to him.

And put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about; that is, on the four horns of the altar, and on the four corners of the settle which went round it, for the priests to walk on, and do their business; either the uppermost, or as others the lowermost, and as some both; and also on the border or ledge that enclosed the settle. The prophet's doing this, putting the blood on these several things, represents the nature of the Gospel ministry, and the

business of it; which is to hold forth the blood of Christ, and the blessings of grace through it, as redemption, peace, pardon, righteousness, and life.

Thus shall thou cleanse and purge it; the altar; thus Christ, though without sin, and needed no cleansing and purging for himself, yet was sanctified by his own blood; that he might sanctify his people, and perfect by his sacrifice them that were sanctified, (^{<4679>}John 17:19 ^{<5814>}Hebrews 10:14,29 13:12).

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, &c.]* Which was appointed for the sin offering, according to the divine direction, (^{<2689>}Ezekiel 43:19), the prophet was to take it out of the herd, and separate it from the rest for this purpose, and deliver it into the hands of one of the priests:

and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house; that is, one of the sons of Zadok should receive it of the prophet, and burn it in its proper place; not within the house, without the court, but within the wall of the house: this burning of it was typical of the dolorous sufferings of Christ; (see Gill on "^{<2689>}Ezekiel 40:39"), or of the zeal and fervency of the ministers of the Gospel, in preaching a crucified Christ in the proper place, in the house and church of God: without the sanctuary; the holy place or temple, properly so called; or without the camp, typical of Christ's suffering without Jerusalem, and of his being preached not only there, but in the Gentile world; (see ^{<5811>}Hebrews 13:11,12), this was the work of the first day of the consecration of the altar.

Ver. 22. *And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering, &c.]* Jarchi observes, that this was not in the tabernacle, but ordered to be in future time by him that speaks; instead of this, another ram was appointed by the law, (^{<1295>}Exodus 29:15,19), this shows the ceremonial law to be changeable, and now abolished: this was typical of Christ, without spot and blemish, and yet figured by the goat, being made sin for his people:

and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock; (see Gill on "^{<2689>}Ezekiel 43:20").

Ver. 23. *When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, &c.]* The altar, by the sacrifices of the bullock and the kid, on the first and second days; then, on the third day,

thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish; all these sacrifices point at the one sacrifice of Christ; which was pure and perfect, and once offered up for the sins of many, and needs no reiteration; only the doctrine of it is to be frequently inculcated in the ministry of the word and ordinances.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt offer them before the Lord, &c.*] Upon the altar of burnt offering, which stood before the house or temple where Jehovah dwelt, (^{<3647>}Ezekiel 40:47):

and the priests shall cast salt upon them; which was to be used in all sacrifices under the law, (^{<3823>}Leviticus 2:13), this may denote the savoury doctrines and lives of the ministers of the Gospel, who thereby recommend the truths they deliver, concerning a crucified Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to others; (see ^{<4153>}Matthew 5:13):

and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the Lord; throughout the whole seven days of the consecration and cleansing of the altar, as follows:

Ver. 25. *Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering, &c.*] By this it appears that the altar was seven days a consecrating and cleansing; and that on each day a goat was prepared and offered, typical of Christ, as before observed. Here Kimchi owns that this was not according to the order of Moses, or was done by those that came out of the captivity of Babylon; and is obliged to confess that there will be a change or an innovation in the order of sacrifices in time to come, or under the Messiah.

They shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock without blemish; which, either one or all of them, should be offered up on each of the seven days; (see Gill on “^{<3623>}Ezekiel 43:23”).

Ver. 26. *Seven days shall they purge the altar, and purify it, &c.*] Which denotes the perfect purity and sanctification of it; which how to be applied to Christ, (see Gill on “^{<2630>}Ezekiel 43:20”);

and they shall consecrate themselves: the priests shall consecrate themselves, or devote themselves to the service of the altar; so Gospel ministers to the ministry of a crucified Christ: or they themselves should consecrate the altar by the above rites: or rather it may be literally rendered,

and they shall fill its hands, or “their own hands”^{f766}; that is, either they shall fill the sides of the altar with sacrifices, as much as it could hold; or the hands of the priests with parts of the sacrifice, or with gifts, as a token of their being inaugurated into, and invested with, the priestly office: so Gospel ministers should have their hands full of, or be filled with, the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and with the knowledge of Christ, his person, offices, grace, righteousness, and sacrifice, that they may minister unto others.

Ver. 27. *And when these days are expired*, &c.] The seven days of consecration, and all these rites and sacrifices observed:

it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward; that is, on the first day of the week, or Lord’s day, the Christian sabbath, the next day after the seventh, and so upon every return of it; in which Christian ministrations are exercised, the word preached, ordinances administered, and works of righteousness and charity done; (see ~~409~~ John 20:19,26 ~~410~~ Acts 20:7 ~~411~~ 1 Corinthians 16:2).

The priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; or “thank offerings”^{f767}; preach Christ and him crucified to the people, and offer up the sacrifices of prayer and praise unto God for them:

and I will accept you, saith the Lord God; through Christ the Mediator, in whom he is well pleased; who is the altar on which such sacrifices are accepted, and become well pleasing to God, (~~280~~ Isaiah 56:7 ~~406~~ 1 Peter 2:5).

CHAPTER 44

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 44

This chapter treats of the eastern gate of the temple being appropriated to the use of the prince, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 44:1-3), of the sin of the Lord's people, in admitting strangers and unholy persons into the sanctuary, either to officiate or communicate there, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 44:4-9) of the degrading of the Levites, that went astray, assigning them inferior posts and service in the house of God, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 44:10-14) and of the establishment of the sons of Zadok in their ministry, who were faithful, (^{<345>}Ezekiel 44:15,16), then follow various laws relating to their garments; shaving of their heads; drinking wine; their marriage; performance of their ministerial work; their regard to the dead, and their food and maintenance, (^{<347>}Ezekiel 44:17-31).

Ver. 1. *Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary, &c.*] The prophet was brought by his divine guide, from the altar of burnt offerings, which stood before the house, where he had given him the dimensions of it, and the ordinances concerning it, to the temple or holy place, called the outward sanctuary, in distinction from the inward sanctuary, or holy of holies; and to one of the gates of it, which was a gate of the inner court:

and which looketh toward the east: the eastern gate, and was the same he had been at before, and therefore is said to be brought back the way of it; (see ^{<340>}Ezekiel 43:1):

and it was shut; when he was there before, it was open; for he saw the glory of the Lord enter into the house by the way of it; but now it was shut, and for that reason, because he had entered into it; signifying, among other things, that he would never return, or remove from thence any more. The Misnic doctors^{f768} interpret this of one of the little doors to the great gate of the temple, that had two little doors, one in the north, the other in the south; that which was in the south no man ever entered in by, and this they say is understood here; but it is not a little door, but a gate here spoken of, and that the eastern one; of which more in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *Then said the Lord unto me, this gate shall be shut, &c.]* In time to come, as Jarchi interprets it, in the latter day; it was shut, and it should continue to be shut:

it shall not be opened; any more; though it has been, yet hereafter no more:

and no man shall enter in by it, into the house of the Lord,

because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it; the same with the glory of the God of Israel, (^{486D}Ezekiel 43:2,4,5):

therefore it shall be shut; no one being to enter after him. Various are the sentiments of expositors concerning this gate. Some of the ancients have interpreted it of the Virgin Mary, by whom Christ came into this world in human nature, being born of her, a virgin, who had never known man, and as is thought never did after the birth of Christ; nor were any afterwards born of her; no man might come into the world by her, by that self-same way the incarnate God did, and for that reason. This sense is approved of, not only by Papists, but by many Protestant writers. Others understand it of the Scriptures, the word of God, which as it is a sealed book to men learned and unlearned, so a gate shut up; it cannot be opened by a mere natural man, or be understood by the light of nature; none can open it but the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who gives the spiritual knowledge of it to whom he pleases, the perfect knowledge of which is reserved to a future state; and there are some things in it which will be always shut, and ever secrets; as the modus of the subsistence of the three Persons in the Godhead; the generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit, and the union of the two natures in Christ; (see ^{489B}Isaiah 29:11,12 ^{489E}Revelation 5:1-5 ^{489B}John 3:13), others think that the gate of heaven, or the way to eternal glory and happiness, is meant; which was shut by the sin of man, and could never be opened again by any mere man; but Christ by his blood has opened the way into it; and has entered into it, not as a private, but public person, representing all his people; and none but those that belong to him, that are members of him, shall enter there; as none but Christ personal, so none but Christ mystical: but I am rather of opinion, since this whole fabric, as we have seen, is an emblem of the church of Christ on earth in the latter day, the way into that is designed here; and its being shut signifies, that, as the church is a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, and is only for the use of Christ, and should be a chaste virgin to him, he should have all her heart, affection, and faith; so it should not be pervious unto others; no natural or unregenerate man should enter into it; and when the

Lord shall have taken up his residence in the church in the latter day, in a more spiritual and glorious manner than ever, there shall no more come into her the uncircumcised and the unclean, (^{<2510>}Isaiah 52:1), and especially in the New Jerusalem state nothing shall enter that defiles, or makes an abomination, or a lie, (^{<627>}Revelation 21:27) none but those that are Christ's, that are true members of his, and one with him; and this sense agrees with what follows in this chapter, and receives light and confirmation thereby; in which the Lord complains of the Israel and church of God in these its present declining times, that unregenerate persons were admitted into the sanctuary of the Lord, to communicate with the saints, and officiate there, (^{<2407>}Ezekiel 44:7-9) and commends such who are faithful ministers and members, who are established therein, (^{<26415>}Ezekiel 44:15,16).

Ver. 3. *It is for the prince: the prince shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord, &c.]* Or, “as for the prince, the prince shall sit in it”^{>f769}; in the gate which is shut to others: not the high priest, as Jarchi, though he might have a particular seat in the temple, as Eli had in the tabernacle, (^{<1009>}1 Samuel 1:9), where he might eat the bread and flesh of holy things: nor the political prince, the king of Israel, though he might have a place in the temple peculiar to himself; (see ^{<1462>}2 Chronicles 6:12,13 ^{>23:13}) (^{<1408>}2 Chronicles 24:31), and the Jews say only the kings of the house of David were allowed to sit in the sanctuary: but the King Messiah, as Kimchi and Ben Melech rightly interpret it, is here meant; who before, in this prophecy, is called David a Prince, (^{<2624>}Ezekiel 34:24 ^{>37:25}), he who is the Prince of peace; Michael the great Prince; the Prince of life, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; the Messiah the Prince. Such who interpret the gate of the gate of heaven understand this of Christ's sitting down there at his Father's right hand, on the same throne with him, having done his work, and being at ease, and in honour; and of his enjoyment of glory there, as the heavenly glory is sometimes signified by a feast, by sitting down at a table, and eating bread in the kingdom of God, (^{<1081>}Matthew 8:11 ^{<2415>}Luke 14:15 ^{>22:30}), and so it may intend his being in the presence of God with the utmost delight and joy; having that glory he had with him before the world was, and all power in heaven and in earth; dispensing gifts and grace to men, and receiving honour and glory from them, and seeing the travail of his soul with satisfaction: but why may it not be understood, more consistent with the scope of the vision, of his sitting in his church, at his table there with his saints, eating with them, and they with him, in his word

and ordinances before the Lord? see (^{201D}Song of Solomon 1:12 4:16 5:1
^{488D}Revelation 3:20),

he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same; which some explain of Christ's ascension to heaven, and descent from thence in the same way; he went up to heaven in the eastern part of the world, from the mount of Olives, to the east of Jerusalem; and in like manner shall he descend, and his feet shall stand on that mount, (^{401E}Acts 1:11,12 ^{384D}Zechariah 14:4), but it may be interpreted of his going in and out of his church at his will and pleasure; and affording his gracious presence and fellowship with himself in his house and ordinances,

Ver. 4. *Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house,* &c.] The north gate of the inward court, whither he was brought from the east gate, which was shut: this, and what follow, may have some respect to the churches in these our northern parts of the world, in their now declining circumstances, which are aptly represented in some following verses; but will hereafter be filled with the glory of the Lord, as follows:

and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; as he had seen at the eastern gate, (^{358D}Ezekiel 43:2,4,5):

and I fell upon my face; as he had done before, under a sense of the greatness and glory of the divine Majesty, and of his own vileness and unworthiness; (see ^{368B}Ezekiel 43:3).

Ver. 5. *And the Lord said unto me, son of man,* &c.] This is still the voice of the Lord speaking out of the house to the prophet, (^{368B}Ezekiel 43:6):

mark well; or, "set thine heart"⁷⁷⁰; be attentive to what is about to be said, as being of great concern and importance:

and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee; heart, eyes, and ears, are all to be employed in the most diligent manner in regarding the things hereafter delivered; the same expressions exciting attention were used at the first of this vision, (^{340E}Ezekiel 40:4): concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof; (see Gill on "^{368B}Ezekiel 43:11"),

mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary; the way of entrance into the Gospel church, and the manner of exclusion from it, and the laws and rules concerning these; the prophet is

bid particularly to observe these well, because it was in these things God's professing people chiefly offended, as appears by what follows; they were not so careful as they should have been in the admission of persons among them, or in the exclusion of delinquents.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel,* &c.] This is a character of literal Israel from the beginning, (~~REB~~ Deuteronomy 9:24), and frequently given it in this prophecy, (~~REB~~ Ezekiel 2:2,3,5-8) (~~REB~~ Ezekiel 3:9,26,27) and well agrees with these declining churches in the latter day, and even in our times; it represents them as rebellious, because of their disregard to the ordinances of God's house, and to the laws and rules of it; and are not only called "rebellious", but "rebellion"^{f771} itself; expressive of the greatness of their sin, and the aggravations of it:

thus saith the Lord God, O ye house of Israel, let it suite you of all your abominations; that is, let the abominations you have committed, will worship and superstition, paying a regard to the doctrines and commandments of men, be sufficient; stop and proceed no further; relinquish those things which are so abominable in my sight; let the time past suffice to have wrought them; cease entirely from them; (see ~~REB~~ 1 Peter 4:3), these abominations are more particularly expressed in the following words.

Ver. 7. *In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers,* &c.] Unregenerate men, who are in a state of alienation and estrangement to divine and spiritual things: strangers to God; to the true knowledge of him in Christ; to the fear and love of God; to the true grace of God in conversion; and to communion with him: strangers to Christ, to his person and offices; to the way of peace, life, and salvation by him; to his righteousness; to faith in him, love of him, and fellowship with him: strangers to the Spirit; to his person, to regeneration and sanctification by him; to the graces of the Spirit, faith, hope, love, humility, self-denial, &c.; to the things of the Spirit, which they neither know nor savour; and to the several offices he performs, as a comforter, the Spirit of adoption, an earnest and sealer: strangers to their own hearts, and the plague of them, and sin that dwells in them: strangers to the nature of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it; to the deceitfulness of sin, and the consequences of it; to true repentance for it, and to the right way of atonement of it, by

the blood of Christ: strangers to the Gospel of Christ, and the truths of it; and to the saints and people of God:

and uncircumcised in heart; who never were pricked in the heart for sin, or felt any pain there on account of it; never had the hardness of their heart removed, or the impurity of it discovered to them; never were filled with shame and loathing because of it; or ever put off the body of sins in a course of conversation; or renounced their own righteousness:

and uncircumcised in flesh; carnal, as they were born; men in the flesh, in a state of nature, mind and savour the things of the flesh, and do the works of it; having never been taught by the grace of God to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to abstain from fleshly ones: or, who put their trust in the flesh, in outward things, in carnal privileges, and external righteousness: these the Lord complains were brought

to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house: either to be members here, and partake of all the ordinances and privileges of the Lord's house; or to officiate here as priests and ministers of the Lord:

when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood; which, under the law, were the Lord's; and here signify the ministry of the word and ordinances, the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house; and especially the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things; in which Christ, the true and living bread of God, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed, is represented to the faith of God's people:

and they have broken my covenant, because of all your abominations: that is, have broken the rule of the divine word and everlasting Gospel by such abominations; by admitting such ministers and members, the one to administer, the other to partake of, Gospel ordinances: this is the true state of the case of most of the reformed churches in our days; it is to be feared that there are multitudes of unregenerate ministers in them; that they are full of carnal professors; and notorious it is that the ordinance of the Lord's supper is prostituted to wicked persons, and to answer ends it never was designed for; which must be an abomination to the Lord.

Ver. 8. *And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things, &c.*] That is, have not kept and retained the holy doctrines of the Gospel; nor observed the holy ordinances of it, as they were first delivered:

but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves; meaning either, that such as were in public office did not attend to it; but were idol shepherds, and left the flock, their care and charge, to others, to surrogates and curates, to do their work for them; while they indulged themselves in sloth and idleness: or that the members and hearers set up preachers for themselves, according to their lusts, agreeable to their own carnal sentiments, without any regard to the will and glory of God.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] This that follows is the law and rule to be observed, and which will be observed by the churches in the latter day, though so little regarded now:

no stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary; of these (see Gill on “²⁶⁴⁷Ezekiel 44:7”) unregenerate men may not be admitted members of a Gospel church; for that is holy, and holiness becomes it; but they are unholy, and as unfit to be received as swine into a king’s palace; saints and they cannot talk together, their language being different, they are barbarians to one another; nor can they walk together, being not agreed in sentiment and practice; besides, such persons disquiet the churches of Christ by their quarrelsome behaviour in it, and immoral conversation out of it; and are dangerous and infectious persons, whether heterodox in principle, or immoral in life: and much less should such be admitted to public service, to preach the word, and administer ordinances; since they should be holy that bear the vessels of the Lord, his name, and Gospel; they are blind and ignorant, and so not apt and fit to teach others; they are dumb, and cannot speak to cases they are strangers to, as those of wounded consciences, tempted and deserted, or backslidden ones; they will bring in strange doctrines, foreign to the Scriptures, and the experience of saints; and it is no wonder they are unsuccessful in their ministry, and churches do not thrive under them; to which, among other things, we must impute the great decline of religion, even among Protestant dissenters, who, it is to be feared, have too many of this character among them: but there should not be here

of any stranger that is among the children of Israel; though they are among them, nay, though they are the children of them, and have had a religious education; yet being strangers to the grace of God, should not be admitted members, and much less ministers, of the churches of Christ.

Ver. 10. *And the Levites that are gone away far from me,* &c.] These Levites were priests, as appears from (²⁶⁴⁸Ezekiel 44:13), who professed

themselves Gospel preachers, ministers of the reformed churches; but departed from the reformation principles; erred from the faith; and either mixed it with the doctrines of men, or wholly dropped, concealed, or dissembled it; departed from the word of God, as the rule of faith and practice; and set up their own reason as their guide in matters of religion; were gone off from the pure worship of God and his ordinances, and entirely neglected the discipline of his house:

when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; though there may be an allusion to some apostasy of literal Israel, under the Old Testament, and from whence language may be borrowed to express this; either to the Israelites joining themselves to Baalpeor in the fields of Moab, in the time of Phinehas, who was zealous and faithful to the Lord, from whom Zadok descended after mentioned: or to the defection in the times of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, when all Israel forsook the word of the Lord: or to the times of Ahaz, when Uriah the priest made an altar like to that at Damascus by the king's order; and which idolatrous practices increased in the times of Manasseh; when, no doubt, many of the priests and Levites, either through fear of kings, or on account of gain, and for the sake of their livelihood, departed from the Lord and his worship: but the reference is to a defection in the times of the New Testament, and in the latter days of those times; not to the falling away of the church of Rome, and its departure from the faith and order of the Gospel, predicted (² Thessalonians 2:3 ¹ Timothy 4:1-3 ² Timothy 3:1-5), though, no doubt, some truly godly ministers have been carried away with the errors of that church, and afterwards restored, as these Levites: but the case here referred to is the declension in the reformed churches; their formality; their great imperfection in the service of God; their departure from the doctrine of faith they once heard and received, which they are called upon to repent of; their defiling themselves with superstition and will worship, and going after the idols of their own hearts, corrupt reason, the doctrines and inventions of men, and carnal rites and ceremonies; (see ⁴ Revelation 3:1-4):

they shall even bear their iniquity; that is, the Levites, priests, or ministers; they shall bear the shame and disgrace, when they come to see their errors, and the punishment and chastisement of their sin, of which hereafter.

Ver. 11. *Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary,* &c.] Though degraded from their office as priests and ministers of the word, yet being

restored from their sins and errors, shall have a place in the house of God, and do their work there in a less honourable and a more servile way; as in former times, when ministers had sinned foully, and were degraded from their office, upon repentance they were not restored to that, but only admitted to lay communion; (see ^{<123B>}2 Kings 23:9):

having charge at the gates of the house; like those sort of Levites who were porters and doorkeepers in the temple, or like our sextons or pew openers now:

and ministering to the house; employed as the Gibeonites were in hewing wood and bringing water for the use of the sanctuary, or in repairing of it; learning and exercising the business of smiths, masons, and carpenters:

they shall slay the burnt offering, and the sacrifice for the people; not bring it to the altar, and offer it there; only slay it, and skin it for the priests; which is not to be understood literally, there being no such sacrifice in Gospel times; but to denote the menial service and inferior post that such shall be employed in; if they have no trade, they shall learn one, in order to get a livelihood for themselves, and be serviceable to the interest of religion in a lower way; but ministers of the word they shall not be:

and they shall stand before them to minister unto them; either before the priests, whose servants they shall be, or before the people; signifying that those that sin publicly shall be rebuked before all.

Ver. 12. *Because they ministered unto them before their idols, &c.*] Had officiated for them in the priest's office, their idols being in the courts of the Lord at the same time; or preached unto them false doctrines, such as are not agreeable to the word of God; and led them into superstition and will worship, and confirmed them therein:

and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; or, "were for a stumbling block of iniquity"^{t772}; unto them the means of their stumbling and falling; by their ministrations, teaching them unsound doctrine; and by their practices and example, leading them into a way of false worship, and dissoluteness of life and conversation; who ought to have been examples to them in word and conversation, in faith and purity:

therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord; to smite and afflict them, and chastise them for the same; or, "upon them", or "concerning them"^{t773}; and so it may be expressive of an oath, of which

lifting up the hand is a sign; wherefore, that what the Lord had said of them might be believed and expected, he swears to it:

and they shall bear their iniquity; which is repeated for the confirmation and certainty of it; (see ³⁴⁴⁰Ezekiel 44:10), what is meant by it follows.

Ver. 13. *And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of priest unto me*, &c.] To bring the sacrifice to the altar, and offer it there; to sprinkle the blood, or burn the fat, or the incense; to intercede for the people, or bless them; (see ³⁰⁰⁶Hosea 4:6):

nor to come near to any of my holy things in the most holy place; to do any business, either in the holy or in the most holy place; to offer holy things, or eat of them. The sense is, that these degraded ministers, who had sinned so greatly, and had fallen so foully, though restored by repentance; yet should not preach the word, nor administer any ordinance:

but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed; that is, the shame of their abominations, of their abominable principles and practices, which they have held and maintained; being publicly disgraced and degraded, and so notoriously distinguished.

Ver. 14. *But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house*, &c.] To be watchmen or porters in it; to open and shut the doors of it; to sweep and keep it clean; to repair and mend it, and to do such like works, as it follows:

for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein; in a servile way; but not as priests or ministers of the word.

Ver. 15. *But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok*; &c.] The priests who were of the tribe of Levi, whom the Lord chose and separated, to minister to him, and so had a lawful call to this office, and were regularly invested with it; and design true and lawful, as well as faithful, ministers of the word; these are called the sons of Zadok, who descended from Eleazar the son of Aaron in the line of Phinehas, to whom the Lord promised the everlasting priesthood, and who was put into this office by Solomon in the room of Abiathar, (¹⁰²⁵1 Kings 2:35), his name signifies “righteous”, and was a type of Christ; who, as a divine Person, is essentially righteous; as man, truly and perfectly so; and, as Mediator, God’s righteous servant; and who, by his obedience and sufferings, is the author of righteousness to his people; who are his spiritual seed and offspring; children given him of his

Father; who have his sonship and adoption through him, and are born of him, his Spirit, and grace; and these are made righteous by him, through his righteousness imputed to them, and may be rightly called sons of Zadok: and this agrees with all the saints; and who, under the Gospel dispensation, are all priests, and offer up themselves, souls and bodies, and their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, unto God by Christ; though all have not a right to preach the word, and administer ordinances, as ministers lawfully called have, and who seem to be more particularly designed here; and such as are regenerated persons, and justified by Christ's righteousness, and preach the doctrine of free justification by it, are the only fit persons for such an office:

that kept the charge of my sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from me; that kept and held fast the pure doctrines of the Gospel, committed as a sacred depositum to them, without mixture, and without wavering, with courage and valour; though a greater number were on the other side, and though they were reproached and persecuted for it; and who taught the people to keep the ordinances of the Gospel as they were first delivered, in faith and love, and without sinister ends, and so administered them themselves; and such faithful ministers and members of churches, especially in a time of great declension and general defection, God takes notice of, and has promised them great and good things; (see ~~(11)~~ Revelation 2:7,10,11,13,17,26-28 3:5,10-12,21,22 ~~(12)~~ Matthew 25:21)

they shall come near to me to minister unto me; in holy things to his people, which is called ministering unto him; as to pray to him for them; to preach to them in his name, and administer ordinances: all the saints indeed are priests, and may draw nigh to God through Christ; men are at a distance from him, through sin; there is no coming near to him but by Christ; and this coming near is not local, but spiritual, and includes all acts of worship, particularly prayer; and is a great favour and blessing:

and they shall stand before me, to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God; which, under the law, were both the Lord's; the one was burnt, and the other sprinkled, on divers things, and in various places: here it may respect the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things, and which may be eminently called the goodness and fatness of the house of God; and in which the blood of Christ is represented as shed for the remission of sins, and as spiritual drink

indeed to believers; and the sacrifice of Christ is commemorated, the feast being kept in remembrance of that.

Ver. 16. *They shall enter into my sanctuary, &c.*] Both to officiate, and to participate, which strangers and uncircumcised persons might not do, (^{<3440>}Ezekiel 44:9):

and they shall come near to my table to minister unto me; which some understand of the altar of burnt offering, which was as a table, and the sacrifice on it was the food of the Lord, (^{<3481>}Leviticus 3:11,16), others, the altar of incense; (see ^{<3442>}Ezekiel 41:22). Kimchi interprets it of the table of shewbread; but, whatever is meant in the letter, the mystical sense is, the ordinance of the Lord's supper, called the Lord's table, (^{<3401>}1 Corinthians 10:21), a table richly spread, and well furnished with spiritual provision: here Christ himself sits, bids his people welcome, eats with them, and they with him; and here all the saints are guests, and ministers in particular officiate:

and they shall keep my charge; continue to do so; for this they did before, (^{<3445>}Ezekiel 44:15), but now should be confirmed in their office, and never be displaced, as others; they that honour God he will honour, (^{<3423>}1 Samuel 2:30).

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass, that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, &c.*] The priests before described; when they enter the right way into a true Gospel church, consisting of such who are internally renewed, and have an inward work of grace upon their hearts, and are inward court worshippers; either as private Christians, to pray together, to praise the Lord, to hear his word, and sit down at his table; or as public ministers, to preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances:

they shall be clothed with linen garments; meaning not the outward conversation garments of the Lord's people; nor their inward garment of sanctification; but the robe of Christ's righteousness, and garments of salvation; that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints; and which, though but one, serves for many; and answers not only all the purposes of a garment, but even of many, of change of raiment: like a garment, it is on, and not in, the saints; it is put upon them by imputation; and, like a garment, it covers them, protects them from all injuries, keeps them warm and comfortable, and beautifies and adorns them; and is compared to linen for its whiteness and purity; (see ^{<3488>}Revelation 3:18

19:8) and in this all the people of God, ministers and private Christians, perform all their services in the house of God; making mention of this, and of this only, whereby they become acceptable unto God, (³⁹⁷¹⁶Psalm 71:16 ⁴⁰⁰⁶Ephesians 1:6):

and no wool shall come upon them, while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within; it is certain that the priests under the law had wool upon them in the time of their ministry; for the purple, blue, and scarlet, as the Jewish writers ^{f774} observe, were all of them dyed wool; of which, with other things, the girdle common to all the priests, and the ephod and breast plate of the high priest, were made, (⁰²⁸⁵Exodus 28:5,6,8,15), and which they wore in their common service: to the Jews in general it was not lawful to wear a garment of linen and woollen, (⁸⁹⁹⁹Leviticus 19:19 ⁶²¹¹Deuteronomy 22:11) and therefore, as Josephus says ^{f775}, to the priests only it was allowed to wear such a garment; and it is common with the Jewish doctors ^{f776} to observe, that

“the priests were not clothed to minister in the temple but with wool and linen;”

indeed, on the day of atonement, the high priest, when he went into the holiest of all, had only linen garments on him; and of the service of this day Jarchi interprets the text; but Kimchi rightly objects, that the holiest of all cannot be called a court; and besides, it is said in the plural number,

they shall be clothed, and minister; whereas only the high priest went into the most holy place; and therefore he truly observes, that this is a new thing to be done in future times: and this is true of the spiritual priesthood of saints and ministers of the Gospel, who are to have no wool upon them in their ministrations, whether in a more private or public way; who are, and should profess to be, justified by the righteousness of Christ only, without any works of their own to be joined with it; which to do is unnecessary, indecent, and dangerous: wool is observed to be the clothing of brute beasts, and therefore not a fit emblem of the clothing of saints; and likewise of such as are most slow, and sluggish, and inactive ^{f777}, and so an emblem of sloth; and which ought not to be in any of the people of God, and especially in ministers, who of all men should not be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. It may be further observed, that clothes made of wool are heavy, and render unfit for business, and cause sweat, which is offensive; and which seems to be a reason, (³⁴⁴⁸Ezekiel 44:18), why wool should not be upon them, only linen garments wore by

them; that they might be more quick and expeditious in the dispatch of business, and avoid everything that gives offence, that the ministry may not be blamed: woollen clothes are also liable to moths, and worms, and to contract filth; and may signify that the priests of the Lord should be clear of carnal and sensual lusts; these should not be upon them, or they under the predominance of them, and particularly avarice; they should feed the flock, and not fleece it and clothe themselves with the wool of it, (^{254D}Ezekiel 34:2,3). The phrase, “and within”, or “in the house”, seems to denote some place distinct from the inner court, even the more inmost place of the temple, the holy of holies; which signifies heaven itself, into which only the high priest entered once a year, typical of Christ’s entering into heaven; and who has opened a way, and given all his people, who are priests unto God, boldness to enter there also by prayer, in the exercise of faith and hope; and which service they perform in the righteousness of Christ, and that only; (see ^{500B}Hebrews 9:8 10:19,20 6:20 ^{209B}Daniel 9:18).

Ver. 18. *And they shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, &c.]*

Denoting gravity and modesty, subjection to God, and authority among men under him; and also purity of doctrine, and clearness of light and knowledge:

and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; expressive of chastity; (see ^{123D}Exodus 28:40,42):

they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat; so not with wool, which is apt to cause sweat; and is thought to be the reason why it is forbidden in the preceding verse; and so this girdle must be different from the priest’s girdle under the law, for that had wool in it: sweat is of an ill smell, and very offensive; and may denote unsound doctrine and immorality in life and conversation, which give offence, and cause the ministry to be blamed, to which is opposed the girdle of truth and holiness, (^{406A}Ephesians 6:14). The Talmudic doctors interpret this of the place of girding, which is liable to sweat; and they say^{f778},

“they used not to gird neither below the loins, nor above the arm holes; but over against, or about the armholes;”

which is observed by Jarchi and Kimchi on the text; and the Targum is,

“they shall not gird upon or about the loins, but about the heart;”

that is, about the breast or paps; hence Christ our great High Priest is described as girt about the paps with a golden girdle, (⁶⁶¹³Revelation 1:13) so these are girt that are made priests by him; denoting their hearty zeal and affection for the truths of his Gospel, and the honour of his name, and their readiness to serve and glorify him: or,

they shall not gird themselves loosely^{f779}; in a negligent manner, which is both indecent, and hinders business.

Ver. 19. *And when they go forth into the utter court, &c.*] Out of the inner court where they minister, when they have done their service:

even into the utter court to the people; out of the church into the world, where the people are, doing their business, whether good men or bad:

they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers; the north and south chambers; (see Gill on "³⁶²³Ezekiel 42:13-14"):

and they shall put on other garments; which are their outward conversation garments, which are proper to appear in before men, for the honour of religion; though not sufficient to appear in before God, and render acceptable unto him:

and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments; the garments of the priesthood were reckoned holy, whatsoever was holy, that which it touched accounted holy also; and therefore, to preserve a difference between the priests and the common people, they were not to wear their holy garments but in the time of service; or lest any superstitious notion should obtain among the people, that they were sanctified by touching their clothes; as the Papists give out, that if a man is buried in a monk's cowl, he shall be saved: or the sense is, that they should not possess the minds of the people with a notion of any real sanctity in their garments; or that their conversation garments, or good works, can be of any service to them: this may be opposed to works of supererogation.

Ver. 20. *Neither shall they shave their heads, &c.*] As the priests and worshippers of Isis and Serapis did, as Jerom on the text observes; and as the Romish priests now do, from whom the Lord's faithful ministers must be distinguished:

nor suffer their locks to grow long; as the Nazarites, that a distinction might be preserved between those who were and were not such; or rather, after the manner of women, their locks hanging down, and flowing about their shoulders, as a token of levity, wantonness, effeminacy, pride, and vanity; (see ^{<4114>}1 Corinthians 11:14,15):

they shall only poll their heads; observe a medium between both; neither shave their heads close, nor let their hair grow long, but keep it in an even moderate length; for which reason godly men of the last age among us were called “round heads”.

Ver. 21. *Neither shall any priest drink wine*, &c.] That is, to excess, immoderately, so as to be inebriated with it, (^{<1010>}Leviticus 10:9-11), should not be given to it, and greedy of it, and drink it so as to disguise themselves: this is reckoned among the qualifications of a Gospel minister, (^{<5113>}1 Timothy 3:3), otherwise it is not forbidden good men, or ministers of the word, to drink wine, for health’s sake, and for the refreshment of nature, provided it is done in moderation, (^{<5123>}1 Timothy 5:23), and particularly care should be taken that they drink it in such a manner,

when they enter into the inner court: to attend divine service, since immoderate drinking affects the memory; and such may forget the law and doctrines of the Lord they are to deliver or hear; and may put them upon saying and doing that which is improper and indecent: drunkenness in any Christian professor is abominable, especially in a minister of the word; and when it appears in his ministration, it is scandalous to the last degree.

Ver. 22. *Neither shall they take for their wives a widow*, &c.] Who has been not only another man’s, but at her own will, and done her own pleasure, and been her own mistress, and so not easily brought into subjection, and to behave as becoming her station:

or her that is put away; or, “thrust forth”^{f780}; out of doors; whose husband has given her a bill of divorce; since she may be suspected of having done some ill thing:

but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel; virgins, and not of the families of unconverted persons, who have been brought up in an irreligious way, but of godly families, and who have had a religious education:

or a widow that had a priest before: and so used to religious exercises, and to the manner of living of such persons. All good men should be careful whom they marry, and especially ministers of the Gospel; who are here supposed and allowed to marry, contrary to the church of Rome, which forbids her priests to marry. It is observed by some, and with great propriety, that in the latter days antichristian churches will be disowned; and that godly faithful ministers will become pastors, and take the care of such churches, who are like a chaste virgin espoused to Christ, and such who have had faithful pastors over them before. This seems to refer to the law concerning the marriage of the high priest, (⁽⁴²¹¹³⁾Leviticus 21:13,14), and what is there enjoined him is here enjoined all the priests of the Lord; and therefore, as Kimchi rightly observes, this is a new rule respecting future times.

Ver. 23. *And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane,* &c.] Persons and things; not in a ceremonial, nor merely in a moral, but in an evangelical sense, between truth and error; between the doctrine which is according to godliness, and that which is corrupt and unsound, and eats as cloth a canker; between holy worship, and superstition; between holy duties, and profane and Heathen rites and ceremonies; and between persons sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, and unconverted ones:

and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean; impure persons, doctrines, and manners, and those which are agreeable to the word of God; the sense is, that they shall take pains to instruct persons in the knowledge of divine things, and shall do it truly, faithfully, and sincerely.

Ver. 24. *And in controversy they shall stand in judgment,* &c.] When any controversy arises among the saints concerning civil things, this shall not be carried into a court of judicature, of the men of the world; but it shall be brought before the church, and there heard, tried, judged, and determined; the ministers of the word there presiding, who shall give the definitive sentence, and stand to it, and abide by it, (⁽⁴⁴⁰⁾1 Corinthians 6:1-7) and when any controversy arises about the doctrines of the Gospel, or modes of worship, or rules of discipline, they shall rise up, discuss the point, determine the question, pass the sentence, and not depart from it:

and they shall judge it according to my judgments; not according to their own judgments, or according to their own fancies, or the reasonings of

their own minds, but according to those directions and rules given in the word of God; which is profitable for the settling and establishing true doctrine, and the reproof and correction of error, and for the instruction of men in the paths of righteousness:

and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; which assemblies are the churches of Christ, gathered according to Gospel order; where the saints assemble together for divine worship, and where the Lord grants his presence; and where his word is preached, and his ordinances administered, and so called his; and of which assemblies Gospel ministers are the masters, and where they preside; and whose business is to observe the laws and statutes the Lord has made, and to interpret them unto the people, and enforce them on them, and see that they are kept by them:

and they shall hallow my sabbaths; such times as are appointed for divine worship; these they shall keep holy themselves, in the exercise both of private and public worship, and shall exhort and stir up all with whom they are concerned to do the same.

Ver. 25. *And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves,* &c.] Shall not come into places where they are, nor touch them, nor attend their funerals, (^{<B201>}Leviticus 21:1,11), that their work might not be interrupted, or they through grief and sorrow be made unfit for it, (^{<A182>}Matthew 8:22), this, in a spiritual sense, may signify, that they should have no conversation or fellowship with men dead in trespasses and sins; and should abstain from all dead works, as all sinful ones are:

but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves; by coming near them, touching them, at least attending their funerals, because of their near relation to them, and that natural sympathy and affection that must be in them: all sorrow and mourning for dead relations is not forbidden saints, nor ministers of the word; provided it is in moderation, and not to excess, and is not for gracious persons, as those without hope; and should as little as possible break in upon the duties of their office, (^{<D413>}1 Thessalonians 4:13 ^{<B113>}John 11:33,35).

Ver. 26. *And after he is cleansed,* &c.] From any sin or iniquity, failing and imperfection, that he has been guilty of at such seasons, in mourning for the dead, by a fresh application of the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; typified by the water of separation, made of the ashes of the

red heifer, by which those who were in this way ceremoniously unclean were cleansed, (⁸⁹¹³Hebrews 9:13,14):

they shall reckon unto him seven days; that is, seven days shall be reckoned from the time of his cleansing, before he enters on public service again: according to the old law, seven days were reckoned from the defilement to the purification; here seven more are numbered after the purification is made; and therefore, as Kimchi truly notes, this is a new law or rule, to be observed in after times.

Ver. 27. *And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary*, &c.] Into the house and church of God, after his cleansing, and when the seven days from thence are up:

unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary; among the inward court worshippers, to minister in things to them; to preach the Gospel, and administer Gospel ordinances:

he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord God; though he has been privately cleansed in the fountain of Christ's blood, in which he has washed for sin and uncleanness; yet when he comes into the house of the Lord, he must acknowledge his sins and imperfections over Christ the sin offering; which he must bring in the arms of his faith, and so enter into the courts of the living God, and do the service of the sanctuary.

Ver. 28. *And it shall be unto them for an inheritance*, &c.] Either the sin offering, or the priesthood, and the perquisites belonging to it: or,

they shall have an inheritance^{f781}; but what shall it be? God himself:

I am their inheritance; the Lord is the portion and inheritance of his people, who are made priests unto him, whether in a private or public capacity; they are heirs of God, he is their portion in the land of the living, and forever: God in all his perfections is theirs; and though incommunicable, they have the use and advantage of them, so far as they are capable and stand in need of them; as his eternity, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, grace, mercy, goodness, truth, and faithfulness: he is theirs in all his persons; God the Father is their covenant God and Father; the Son of God is their Head and Husband, their Saviour and Redeemer, Mediator and Peacemaker, their Prophet, Priest, and King; his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and faithfulness, theirs, and even all that he is and has: the Spirit of God is their convincer and

enlightener, their quickener and sanctifier; their Comforter, and the Spirit of adoption to them, the seal and earnest of their future glory; and God under every character is theirs, as the God of nature and providence, and as the God of all grace; and this is an inheritance rich and large, a soul satisfying portion, an inconceivable and an inexhaustible one.

And ye shall give them no possession in Israel; so the priests and Levites had none under the law, but were provided for in another way, (^{<488D>}Numbers 18:20,21 ^{<580E>}Deuteronomy 18:1,2 ^{<6634>}Joshua 13:14), the Lord's people and priests, under the Gospel dispensation, for the most part are the poor of this world, who have no share in the possessions of it; their good things are not here, but in the world to come, and in God himself: "I am their possession"; the Lord is enjoyed by them now; his love is shed abroad in their hearts; they have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and communion with the Holy Ghost; and which is infinitely better than all the possessions of this world; and besides, provision is made for their outward maintenance, as follows:

Ver. 29. *They shall eat the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering, &c.]* Which were typical of Christ; the meat offering, or rather bread offering, it being made of fine flour, was a type of Christ the bread of life; and the sin and trespass offerings pointed at his being made sin and a sacrifice for it; which the people and priests of the Lord in a spiritual sense eat, feed, and live upon by faith: and besides, as the priests under the law had a part in all these offerings, whereby they and their families were maintained, (^{<88B>}Leviticus 2:3 6:29 7:6), so it is the will and ordination of Christ, that as those that ministered about holy things, and waited at the altar, should live of them, and partake with that, so they that preach the Gospel should live by it, (^{<4013>}1 Corinthians 9:13,14):

and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs; or, "every devoted thing"¹⁷⁸²; that is, to holy uses, what the people willingly offer to support the interest of religion; signifying that the ministers of the word shall live upon the free contributions of the people.

Ver. 30. *And the first of all the first fruits of all things, and every oblation, of all of every sort of your oblations shall be the priests, &c.]* Suggesting, that their offerings or contributions, which should be made out of their substance, should be in proportion to it, and early as well as free; (see ^{<1018>}Proverbs 3:9):

ye shall also give unto the priest of your dough; either of the first they made of the new corn of the year, or a piece or cake of whatsoever at any time they made; signifying, that the ministers of the word, that communicate spiritual things to men, should partake of their carnal ones, and have a part and share with them in all good things, in all the enjoyments of life, (^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 9:11 ^{<4066>}Galatians 6:6):

that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house; that is, that he, the priest or minister of the word, that partakes of the above things, and is comfortably provided for and supported, may pray to the Lord for such who liberally contribute to him; that a blessing may come and abide upon them and their families, and prosperity and success may attend them in their worldly business and employments of life; as well as they and theirs may be blessed with all spiritual blessings, with grace here, and glory hereafter.

Ver. 31. *The priests shall not eat of anything that is dead of itself, or torn, &c.]* They shall have no need to eat of such things, being plentifully provided for with better; nor will it become them so to do through avarice, not allowing themselves to enjoy what is liberally given them. Here the Jewish doctors^{f783} observe that it is said, the priests shall not eat of these things, suggesting that Israelites might; this puzzles them, therefore they say, Elijah will explain this verse; and the gloss says, till Elijah comes, and explains it to us, we know not how to explain it. In the mystic sense it may signify, that the priests of the Lord should have no communication with such as are dead in sin, or are given to rapine and violence, and should abstain from everything of this kind themselves.

Whether it be fowl or beast; whether Pharisees and high flown professors of religion, or earthly and worldly persons, and such that are immersed in carnal pleasures, in sensual and brutish lusts. The allusion is to the law in (^{<4075>}Leviticus 17:15), which was common to all Israelites, priests and people.

CHAPTER 45

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 45

This chapter treats of the division of the land in future time, and the persons and uses for which it is to be made; one part being for the sanctuary, and the priests that serve in it, and for their houses for them to dwell in, (^{<2650>}Ezekiel 45:1-4), another for the Levites and their chambers, (^{<2651>}Ezekiel 45:5), and another for the city, for the Israelites in common, (^{<2652>}Ezekiel 45:6), and the last for the prince; and of the situation and extent of it, (^{<2653>}Ezekiel 45:7,8) and of the righteous administration of civil government in the time of the spiritual reign of Christ, in abstinence from violence and exactions, and doing justice, for which orders and directions are given, (^{<2654>}Ezekiel 45:9-12), then of the oblations of the people of the land, (^{<2655>}Ezekiel 45:13-16), and next of those that are to be prepared by the prince, (^{<2656>}Ezekiel 45:17), and the times of the offering of them, at the beginning of the year, on the feasts of the passover and tabernacles, (^{<2657>}Ezekiel 45:18-25), the rules for which are so different from the Mosaic law, as show the abrogation of that; and that all this is to be understood in a spiritual and evangetic sense.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land, for inheritance, &c.]* This is not to be understood literally of the division of the land of Israel; which agrees not with the division of it begun by Moses, and finished by Joshua, upon his conquest of it, and the introduction of the people of Israel into it; nor was such a division as this made when the Jews returned from Babylon; nor is there any reason to expect the like when they shall be converted in the latter day; nor is it meant typically of the heavenly inheritance, which saints obtain in Christ by lot, (^{<2658>}Ephesians 1:11), of which the earthly Canaan was a type; though some in this way interpret it: but since the whole vision respects the church of Christ on earth, it must be meant mystically and spiritually of the kingdom of Christ, and the settlement and establishment of it throughout the whole world, according to the allotment and determination of God; and they are a distinct and special people that are admitted into this state; it is by the

distinguishing grace of God that they are taken into the Gospel church, and have a part and share in all the privileges and immunities of it.

Ye shall offer an oblation unto the Lord, an holy portion of the land; which should be lifted up as the heave offering was, and dedicated to the Lord: this designs such persons who are separated from the world, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, who shall be brought by the ministers of the word to the Lord, as trophies of his efficacious and victorious grace, ascribing the whole glory of their conversion to him; and these shall present themselves, souls and bodies, a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him; (see ^{2361D}Isaiah 66:20 ⁶⁵¹⁶Romans 15:16 12:1).

The length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand; the kind of measure is not expressed in the original, so that it is a question whether reeds or cubits are meant; some think the latter, and the rather, because mention is made of them, (^{348D}Ezekiel 45:2), and it is added,

and of this measure shall thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand; which, if understood of cubits, will greatly reduce the length and breadth of this holy portion of the land; wherefore it is best to take the largest measure, since that seems better to answer the design of the Holy Ghost in this passage; and the rather, since this measure is more proper to measure land with, and is that which the measurer is said to have in his hand, (^{340B}Ezekiel 40:5), and besides, the measure of the sanctuary, said to be five hundred square, (^{348D}Ezekiel 45:2) was measured with the measuring reed, and not the cubit, (³⁶²¹⁶Ezekiel 42:16-20), and which therefore must be supplied here; and a measuring reed being six cubits, by a cubit and a hand's breath, (^{340B}Ezekiel 40:5), makes this portion of land to be more than six times larger than if it was supposed to be measured by the cubit; and twenty five thousand of this measure, according to Cornelius à Lapide, made five hundred miles, which was three times as large as the land of Canaan; that being, as Jerom^{f784} says, a hundred and sixty miles long, and forty six broad; and is a proof, that the land of Canaan literally taken is not here meant; but the whole is designed to set forth the amplitude and large extent of the church of Christ in the world, in the times the vision refers to.

This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about; that is, this portion of land measured out, and distinguished from the rest: holiness of

heart and life shall appear in all the subjects of Christ's kingdom, and members of his church, which becomes his house for ever.

Ver. 2. *Of this there shall be for the sanctuary, &c.]* Or temple, the house before described in the preceding chapters:

five hundred in length, and five hundred in breadth, square round about: that is, five hundred reeds square, as is manifest from (^{<36216>}Ezekiel 42:16-20), and this denotes the largeness, perfection, and stability of the church of Christ, which the sanctuary was a type of:

and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof; which were a void place of fifty cubits round about the sanctuary, measuring from the wall to that; this was done in reverence to the holy place, and to show that we should not rush hastily into the house of God, and church of Christ, but first pass through the suburbs or open place. Cubits being here mentioned, show that reeds are to be understood where the kind of measure is not expressed.

Ver. 3. *And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand, &c.]* Not that the sense is, that of and according to the cubit measure last mentioned, this length and this breadth should be measured; but "after this measure", as Starckius renders it, and as the particle is rendered, (^{<271123>}Daniel 11:23 ^{<46121>}Nehemiah 13:21) and which Sanctius mentions; and Jerom seems to have understood it in this light: and the sense is, that after he had finished the measure of five hundred reeds square, and fifty cubits round, he should proceed to measure the rest of the twenty five thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth:

and in it shall be the sanctuary, and the most holy place; that is, in the midst portion of land, consisting of the above measures, be the holy place, and the holy of holies; this is, but a further explanation of the two preceding verses.

Ver. 2. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east, &c.]* The God of Israel is Jehovah the Father, the covenant God of literal Israel; and the covenant God and Father of the whole spiritual Israel, or his elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; whom he has taken into covenant, loves, cares, provides for, and protects: Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, whose glory is the glory of the only begotten of the Father, is here meant; and who has the same glorious

attributes, the same glorious names, and the same worship, honour, and glory, his Father has; and in whom, as Mediator, is displayed the glory of all the divine perfections: he is said to “come from the way of the east”; which agrees with him in his character as the rising sun of righteousness; and with his incarnation, when as the day spring from on high, from heaven, he visited us, was born in the east, where his star appeared; from this part of the world his Gospel first came; here it was first preached, and churches planted; and though these parts have been forsaken by him a long time, he will return hither again; when he will dry up the river Euphrates, and make way for the kings and kingdoms of the east to be converted to him, (~~600~~ Revelation 7:2 16:12), to which a “behold” is prefixed, as a note exciting attention, and raising admiration; as it was matter of wonder and joy to the prophet, to see the glory of the Lord returning to his house, the same way he departed, (~~300~~ Ezekiel 10:4,19):

and his voice was like a noise of many waters; this is to be understood of his Gospel, in which he speaks to men, and which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; of peace and reconciliation; of pardon and righteousness; of life, liberty, and salvation: and the metaphor here used is expressive of the swiftness of its motion in the world; of its general spread in it, and all over it; of the noise it will make, as it always does among men, wherever it comes; and of the rapidity and force of it, being attended with almighty power; and is a soul shaking, heart melting, soul quickening, enlightening, alluring, and comforting voice; (see ~~700~~ Daniel 10:6 ~~6015~~ Revelation 1:15). The Targum is,

“and the voice of them that bless his name is as the voice of many waters.”

The Septuagint and Arabic versions, the voice of the camp or army.

And the earth shined with his glory; with the brightness of his glory, as the Targum; with his glorious Gospel, in which the glory of his person, office, and grace, is displayed; this will be spread all over the earth, and that will be enlightened by it: it will remove the darkness and infidelity, error, superstition, idolatry, and all false doctrines from the world, and the darkness of calamity and distress from the church; which will cast a lustre and glory upon it; and with the brightness of which the Lord will destroy antichrist, and by it set up his kingdom in the world, and reign before his ancients gloriously: this will bring on Zion’s light and glory, to which kings

will come, and upon which will be a defence; (~~681B~~ Revelation 18:1 ~~511B~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:8 ~~240B~~ Isaiah 40:1,3 4:5).

Ver. 3. *And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, &c.]* Recorded in the first, ninth, and tenth chapters of this book; the form in which the glory of the God of Israel now appeared was like to what he then saw; in each of which visions was the likeness of a throne, and on it the appearance of the glory of God:

even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; the city of Jerusalem; not that the prophet destroyed it, or came to destroy it himself, which was to be done, and was done, by the Chaldeans; but to foretell the destruction of it; which prediction of his made it as certain as if it was done. So the Targum,

“when I prophesied to destroy the city;”

and this was, when he was bid to cause, in a visionary and prophetic manner, six men, with their destroying weapons, to draw near unto it, and smite it; at which time he saw the glory of the God of Israel go up from the cherub, (~~211B~~ Ezekiel 9:1-3).

And the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; the four living creatures and the wheels; the throne of sapphire stone, and the glorious appearance above it, (~~211B~~ Ezekiel 1:3-28 10:1-20) only with this difference, then he saw the glory of the God of Israel departing, especially in the last vision, but now returning:

and I fell upon my face; in reverence of such glorious majesty: affected with such a display of grace and goodness, and sensible of his own unworthiness to behold it: the clearer and fuller views saints have of the grace and glory of Christ, the more humble they are; (see ~~211B~~ Isaiah 6:1-3,5).

Ver. 4. *And the glory of the Lord came into the house, &c.]* Before described and measured; and being fitted and prepared, the builder and owner of it comes and takes up his residence in it; as Christ will do in his church, more especially and more visibly in the latter day:

by the way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east; which was the direct way into the outward court, and so to the inward court, and into the

holy, and into the most holy place; and was the way by which he departed from hence, (^{<3008>}Ezekiel 10:18,19).

Ver. 5. *So the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court, &c.]*

The prophet was fallen down on his face, upon the sight of the glory of the Lord, and there he lay, until a wind came, as the word signifies; or the Holy Spirit, which is compared to the wind, for its invisible and irresistible power, came and took him up: humble souls are regarded by the Lord; he raises them up, and exalts them, and brings them into nearer and more intimate communion with God; and gives them clearer views still of the glories of Christ's person, grace, and love: and it is the Spirit of God only that does this, and that to priests only, such an one as Ezekiel was; for none but priests went into the inner court:

and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house; the body of it; both the holy and the most holy place, with all its courts and apartments; so the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle when that was set up in the temple of Solomon, when it was built; and the glory of the Lord will fill the church of God, yea, the whole earth, in the latter day, (^{<2308>}Isaiah 6:3), of this Christ's personal appearance in the second temple, which gave it a greater glory than the former, was an emblem and pledge, (^{<3007>}Haggai 2:7,9), here, it may be observed, no mention is made of a cloud, as at the setting up of the tabernacle, and dedication of the temple; denoting the clear light of the Gospel in those times, and how the glory of the Lord will be seen with open face by all the saints.

Ver. 6. *And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house, &c.]* The holy place, the prophet being in the inward court: this is Jehovah the Father, the God of Israel, whose glory entered into it; who utters his voice out of Zion; who speaks in his church by his word, and the ministers of it; and which is to be heard and regarded, not as the word of man, but as the word of God:

and the man stood by me: whom he saw at first with a measuring line in his hand, (^{<2608>}Ezekiel 40:3), and with whom he had been all along, and had seen him measure the house, and all belonging to it: he stood by him as the Mediator between God and him; as the medium of communion with him; as the advocate with the Father: he stood by him to interpret what was said to him; to guide him further into the knowledge of divine things; to assist him, protect and defend him, to continue him in fellowship with God, and to preserve him in grace to glory. Here is an appearance of the three Persons

in the Godhead; the Father speaking to the prophet out of the house; the Son in human form standing by him; and the Spirit of the Lord, who had took him up from the ground, and had brought him into the inner court.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto me, son of man,* &c.] A kind, usual, and singular appellation, given to this prophet: these are the words either of the man that stood by him, so the Arabic version; or of Jehovah, speaking out of the house to him:

the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet: that is, this house, the church of God, is the place where the throne of the Lord is set; where he rules and reigns; where he sets his feet, and is his resting place; even his, whose throne is the heaven, and the earth his footstool; here Christ, as King of saints, dwells, and here he walks and shows the glory of his majesty:

where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever; not Carnal, but spiritual Israel; such as are Israelites indeed, or which the church will be full in the latter day, both Jews and Gentiles; and in the midst of these will Jehovah dwell, and grant his gracious presence, and never more depart from them: this shows that this house or building can not be understood of the second temple; since the Lord did not dwell in that for ever, but has left that house desolate hundreds of years ago: some Jewish writers^{f785} have owned that it belongs to the times of the Messiah:

and my name shall the house of Israel no more defile, or “profane”; or cause to be blasphemed by immoralities, or false doctrines, or superstition and will worship; denoting the holiness of life, purity of doctrine and worship, in the churches of Christ in the latter day; (see ^{<204B>}Isaiah 4:3 ^{<2017>}Joel 3:17 ^{<384D>}Zechariah 14:20,21):

neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom: that is, idolatry, which is spiritual fornication; such as the kings of Israel, and their subjects, were often guilty of, before their captivity in Babylon, though not after; nor will they ever return to it in the latter day, when converted; for they will never espouse the idolatries of Rome; and those kings and people that bear the name of Christians, and yet commit fornication with the whore of Babylon, shall do so no more after these times, (^{<617D>}Revelation 17:2,16):

nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places; or, and “their high places”^{f786}; that is, by both; by the carcasses of their kings being buried in or near the house of God; so the Targum adds, at their death^{f787}; or by

human carcasses being sacrificed to Molech or Milcom, which signifies their king: or else the idols themselves are so called, because lifeless and abominable; (see ^{<2468>}Jeremiah 16:18), and the worship of which the kings of Israel encouraged by precept and practice, order and example, and therefore called theirs; and also by their high places, which they made for idolatrous worship, and which were made where the carcasses of their kings were laid, as Ben Melech observes; and all which were done, especially in the reigns of Manasseh and Ammon: but now nothing of this kind shall be hereafter, or any thing now similar to it, in the antichristian state.

Ver. 8. *In their setting of their threshold by my threshold, &c.*] The threshold is the way of entrance into the house; when men open any other way of entrance into the house of God than he has directed, it is setting up their threshold by his: the Gospel way of entrance into the church of Christ is Christ himself, and faith in him, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism, (^{<3001>}John 10:1,7,9) (^{<4024>}Acts 2:41 9:18,26) but when men make carnal descent, religious education, mere morality and civility, the way of entrance into church communion; this is opposite to God's way, and is resented by him; this shall not be hereafter:

and their post by my post; which is done when the ordinances of men are substituted in the room of the ordinances of God, or set upon a level with them; when the ordinances of God are changed and altered, or that brought into his worship which he has not commanded; and the commandments of men are taught for the doctrines of God: so the Pharisees set up the traditions of the elders as equal to the written word, and, made it of no effect by them; as the Papists do, by setting up their traditions, under the name of the traditions of the apostles, and of the church, upon a level with the Scriptures; and the same is done when men set up their own doctrines, concerning the Persons in the Godhead, concerning the power and purity of human nature, and the way of redemption; and oppose their own works to the grace of God, in justification, pardon, and salvation; the allusion is to the setting up of altars and idols in the house of the Lord, by his altar, (^{<1204>}2 Kings 21:4,7):

and the wall between me and them; that these sins and abominable practices were a wall of separation between God and them, and caused him to hide himself from them, withdraw his presence, and deny them communion with him, (^{<2340>}Isaiah 49:2), some render it, “for” or “so that

there was but a wall between me and them”^{f788}; so near were their thresholds, posts, and altars, to his:

they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: by their false doctrines, idolatrous worship, and immoral lives; such abominations as before mentioned:

wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger; as the Jews are now, and all the antichristian states will be.

Ver. 9. *Now let them put away their whoredom, &c.*] Idolatry, superstition, and will worship, with which the corrupt church of Rome abounds; and whatever appearance thereof is in the reformed churches:

and the carcasses of their kings far from me; their idols; (see Gill on “³⁸⁰⁷Ezekiel 43:7”),

and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever; now though the Jews were never guilty of idolatry after their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor even to this day; yet the Lord has departed from them, and left them to blindness and stupidity, they having rejected the Messiah he sent unto them; which shows that this passage refers not to those times, but to future times; when the whole Israel of God shall be cleared of all corruptions in doctrine and worship, and the Lord will take up his abode with them, and no more depart from them.

Ver. 10. *Thou son of man, show the house, &c.*] That is, the house the prophet had seen measured, its gates, courts, and all belonging to it; which he was at first bid to observe, that he might show it to others; the house that the glory of the Lord was now come into, and had filled; and which is no other than the Gospel church in its perfection and glory in the latter day. This the prophet, who is addressed under his usual character in this book, is bid to show “to the house of Israel”; either to the captives in Babylon, among whom he was, and to whom he often speaks in this book, being sent with a message to them: and this he is ordered to show them, both to comfort them in their present state, with a view of what would be hereafter; and to humble them, and bring them to a sense of their sins, and shame for them, which had brought them into the condition they were, and so greatly short of this happy one: or else to the Jews in the first times of the Gospel; the prophet representing the apostles of Christ, who delivered out the form of a Gospel church state to the believing ones, far superior to that they had been in, and into which they entered: or rather he represented

the ministers of the word in the latter day, showing to the Christians of those times the order, worship, and discipline of a pure Gospel church, who have been greatly deficient in their observance of them; and which is the work and business of Gospel ministers to do, as well as to preach the doctrine of the Gospel:

that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; how far short they have come of the model of true Gospel churches, and of observing the order, and maintaining the ordinances, and keeping up the discipline of such churches; and when persons are brought to blush and be ashamed, it looks as if they had a true sight and sense of their mistakes, and of repentance for them:

and let them measure the pattern; that is, of the house, and what belongs to it; by which they will see their defects, and correct them; (see ~~and~~ Revelation 11:1,2).

Ver. 11. *And if they be ashamed of all that they have done*, &c.] As sinful and, criminal, at least as very imperfect and defective, and not answerable to the pattern shown them, from which they have sadly deviated; if made sensible of this, and they acknowledge it with shame, not only the house in general, but the particulars of it, are to be shown with them; for, to sensible and penitent persons, more grace, light, knowledge, and judgment in divine things, are given:

shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof; the form and order of a Gospel church; which is not national, provincial, or parochial, nor Presbyterian, but congregational; consisting of persons called out of the world by the grace of God, and who are incorporated and knit together in Gospel bonds; among whom the word of God is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered, and furnished with proper officers, pastors, and deacons; the one to take care of the spiritual, the other of the temporal affairs of the church; and to see a church in such form and order, and thus organized, is a very beautiful sight.

And the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof; the gates and way of entrance into it, which is only by Christ, and a profession of faith in him; and care should be taken that none be admitted but such who appear to be regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God; to be righteous through the righteousness of Christ; and that keep the truth, and hold the doctrines of the Gospel: and also the way and manner of excluding unworthy persons, such who are immoral in their lives, and erroneous in their principles,

should be observed. And all the forms thereof; the decorations of it, signified by the cherubim and palm trees; so Jarchi and Kimchi; and these expressive of ministers of the word, and faithful men: this is often repeated, that it might be the more observed; for to have ministers to answer such characters is of great consequence.

And all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof; the ordinances are those of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are to continue until the second coming of Christ: the laws are, besides the moral law, in the hands of Christ the lawgiver, the law of loving one another, called the law of Christ, and his new commandment; and all the laws relating to worship and discipline, concerning the reproof of members, in case of private or public offences; and concerning the exclusion of disorderly or heretical persons:

and write it in their sight; the plan and model of this house, and all things belonging to it, that they may have it before them, as the rule of their conduct and behaviour:

that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them; for all this is shown, not for mere speculation, and to gratify curiosity, but in order to be put in practice; all these rules, laws, and ordinances, are to be kept in faith, from a principle of love, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God.

Ver. 12. *This is the law of the house*, &c.] Which follows, the more general one, which comprehends the rest:

upon the top of the mountain; denoting the exaltation and visibility of the church of Christ in the latter day, as well as its firmness and stability; (see ^{<311>}Isaiah 2:2,3):

the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy; all belonging to it shall be as the most holy place in the temple, sacred to the Lord; laws, ordinances, doctrines, worship, members, ministers, all holy; nothing said or done, or have a place here, but what is holy; (see ^{<311>}Zechariah 14:20,21):

this is the law of the house; the principal one, according to which are directed and governed.

Ver. 13. *And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits, &c.]* Of the altar of burnt offering, which though measured before, the dimensions were not given till now; (see ^{<3647>}Ezekiel 40:47), this altar was a type of Christ, (^{<5830>}Hebrews 13:10) with respect to his deity, which is greater than the sacrifice of his human nature, the support of it, which sanctified it, and gave virtue and efficacy to it, and rendered it acceptable to God, (^{<4239>}Matthew 23:19) and the measures of it are said to be after the cubits used in the measuring of places and things belonging to this house, described; and what these were appears by what follows:

the cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; not the common cubit, but what was larger than that by a hand breadth, or three inches:

even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit; or, “the bosom”^{f789}; that is, the foundation of the altar, as the Targum and Jarchi; the basis, foot, or settle of it; this was a cubit high, and a cubit broad:

and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span; the edge or “lip”^{f790}, of this bottom or settle, was a cubit broad, for the priests to stand and go round the altar, and to this there was a border of a span, or half a cubit, to prevent their slipping; or else to keep the blood, poured at the foot of the altar, from running upon the pavement:

and this shall be the higher place of the altar; or the projection or jetting of it out beyond others, which was further than any other part; otherwise it was the lower part of the altar.

Ver. 14. *And from the bottom upon the ground, even to the lower settle, &c.]* From the basis or foundation of the altar, as it stood upon the ground, to the lower settle or “court”^{f791}, as it is called, where the priests stood; and in which they could walk round the altar, to do their business:

shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; that is, two cubits high, and one broad:

and from the lesser settle or court, to the greater settle or court, shall be four cubits, and, the breadth one cubit; the lowermost settle is called the lesser, not in quantity, but in height, it being but two cubits high from the ground; but the upper settle was four cubits from that, and one broad, for the priests to walk on round about; in all six cubits from the bottom.

Ver. 15. *So the altar shall be four cubits, &c.*] That is, from the greater settle; so that in the whole it was ten cubits high, the same with Solomon's, (~~400~~2 Chronicles 4:1) some make this to be eleven cubits high, one higher than Solomon's; it is here called "Harel", the mountain of God, because it looked like a mountain in the court, for its size: it was on a mountain our Lord was offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people; and which was far superior to all other sacrifices, and for more persons than those sacrifices offered up on the altar of burnt offerings.

And from the altar and upward shall be four horns; or, "from Ariel"^{f792}; which was the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the fire kindled, called "Ariel"; which some render the lion of God, because, as the Jewish Rabbins^{f793} say, the fire of the altar lay upon it in the form of a lion; or rather, because like a lion it devoured the sacrifices: this name of the altar agrees well with Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who was strong to bear the sins of men, and the wrath of God for them, whereby they are no more; though it rather signifies the fire of God, which consumed the sacrifice, and denoted the wrath of God on Christ, and also the divine acceptance of his sacrifice: now from hence and upwards were four horns at the four corners of the altar; which denote the strength of Christ, to save all that come unto God by him, and his being a refuge to them that by faith lay hold upon him; and that he is accessible to persons that come from all parts, from the four corners of the earth.

Ver. 16. *And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, &c.*] The length of it, from east to west, was twelve cubits; and the breadth, from north to south, was the same; so that it was a proper foursquare, as follows: Christ the altar, or the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of men, is the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ, and embraced by the twelve times twelve, the 144,000 that belong unto him:

square in the four squares thereof; as the altar in the tabernacle, and Solomon's temple, were, (~~220~~Exodus 27:1 ~~400~~2 Chronicles 4:1), denoting the largeness of Christ's sacrifice, the perfection of it, and its stability and permanency, to take away the sin, of his people.

Ver. 17. *And the settle shall be fourteen cubits long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof, &c.*] Here Kimchi confesses his ignorance. Jarchi interprets it, the top of the altar, with the place of the horns, and of the feet of the priests, and was twenty eight cubits by twenty eight, the fourteen mentioned being to be measured from the middle^{f794}; and he seems to be

right in making it to be the upper part of the altar, and not the lower settle, as some; the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the sacrifice burnt; and which had a projection of a cubit on each side, and so made the twelve cubits, the length and breadth of the altar, fourteen:

and the border about it shall be half a cubit; or the enclosure, as the Targum; the ledge about it, which went round the altar, to keep the fire or sacrifice from falling, or that the feet of the priests might not slip: the Jews expound it of the horns:

and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; or the foundation, as the Targum; which was between the altar, and the border on which the priests walked, when they went round it, to do the business of it: here Kimchi owns his ignorance again;

and his stairs shall look towards the east; steps to the altar were forbidden by the law of Moses, (⁴⁰²⁶Exodus 20:26) wherefore, as the height of the altar of Solomon, and so of the second temple, required some way and method of ascent to the top of it, to do the business upon it; the Jews had what they call “kibbesh”, a way made of earth thrown up, which rose gradually, and led to the top of it, and was about two and thirty cubits long, and sixteen broad⁴⁷⁹⁵; but here steps or stairs are expressly mentioned, which show that this refers to times when the Mosaic and ceremonial laws should be abolished. These stairs were placed eastward, so that those that went up them looked toward the west, toward the temple and house of God, where he dwelt; and turned their backs to the east, or rising sun, in direct opposition to the worshippers of the sun, whose faces were to the east. How many steps or stairs there were to the altar is not said; Starckius conjectures there might be twelve or fourteen of them, and allows for each step half a cubit; but as the altar was ten, or, as others, eleven cubits high, there should be twenty steps or more, of such a measure. These may signify the several ways and means of coming to, and increasing in, the knowledge of the doctrine of the altar, or of Christ’s satisfaction for sin; as hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto me, son of man, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* This is the voice of the Lord continued, speaking out of the house to the prophet; (see ²⁵⁸⁶Ezekiel 43:6):

these are the ordinances of the altar: not what go before, concerning the measures of it, but what follow, concerning the sacrifices to be offered on it:

in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and sprinkle blood thereon; this plainly shows that this altar is the altar of burnt offerings; such were to be offered on it, and the blood of them to be sprinkled thereon, as follows; that is, upon the horns, corners, and border of it, (³⁶⁶¹Ezekiel 43:20).

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites, that be of the seed of Zadok, &c.*] Who, in Solomon's time, was put in the room of Abiathar; (see ³⁶⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:46), his name signifies a "righteous" one, a type he was of Jesus Christ the righteous; and here his seed signify the seed of Christ, such whom he makes priests unto the Lord; to these, in a visionary way, the prophet was to give this altar, for them to serve at, and eat of; and all the rites and ordinances to observe and keep; and the sacrifices to offer on it, after mentioned:

which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God; (See Gill on "³⁶⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:46"):

a young bullock for a sin offering: typical of Christ, strong and laborious, able to bear the sins of his people; to become a sin offering, and to be made sin itself for them.

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, &c.*] Ezekiel being a priest. This must be understood in a visionary way; for, as Kimchi observes, Ezekiel did not live to come up out of the captivity, but died, and was buried in the land of Babylon, and so did not actually do this: though it is a mere dream of the same writer, that this is to be understood of the resurrection of the dead, when he supposes Ezekiel will be high priest, though Aaron be present; or however be the second, or deputy to him.

And put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about; that is, on the four horns of the altar, and on the four corners of the settle which went round it, for the priests to walk on, and do their business; either the uppermost, or as others the lowermost, and as some both; and also on the border or ledge that enclosed the settle. The prophet's doing this, putting the blood on these several things, represents the nature of the Gospel ministry, and the

business of it; which is to hold forth the blood of Christ, and the blessings of grace through it, as redemption, peace, pardon, righteousness, and life.

Thus shall thou cleanse and purge it; the altar; thus Christ, though without sin, and needed no cleansing and purging for himself, yet was sanctified by his own blood; that he might sanctify his people, and perfect by his sacrifice them that were sanctified, (^{<6179>}John 17:19 ^{<5814>}Hebrews 10:14,29 13:12).

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, &c.]* Which was appointed for the sin offering, according to the divine direction, (^{<2689>}Ezekiel 43:19), the prophet was to take it out of the herd, and separate it from the rest for this purpose, and deliver it into the hands of one of the priests:

and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house; that is, one of the sons of Zadok should receive it of the prophet, and burn it in its proper place; not within the house, without the court, but within the wall of the house: this burning of it was typical of the dolorous sufferings of Christ; (see Gill on "^{<2619>}Ezekiel 40:39"), or of the zeal and fervency of the ministers of the Gospel, in preaching a crucified Christ in the proper place, in the house and church of God: without the sanctuary; the holy place or temple, properly so called; or without the camp, typical of Christ's suffering without Jerusalem, and of his being preached not only there, but in the Gentile world; (see ^{<5811>}Hebrews 13:11,12), this was the work of the first day of the consecration of the altar.

Ver. 22. *And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering, &c.]* Jarchi observes, that this was not in the tabernacle, but ordered to be in future time by him that speaks; instead of this, another ram was appointed by the law, (^{<1295>}Exodus 29:15,19), this shows the ceremonial law to be changeable, and now abolished: this was typical of Christ, without spot and blemish, and yet figured by the goat, being made sin for his people:

and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock; (see Gill on "^{<2681>}Ezekiel 43:20").

Ver. 23. *When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, &c.]* The altar, by the sacrifices of the bullock and the kid, on the first and second days; then, on the third day,

thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish; all these sacrifices point at the one sacrifice of Christ; which was pure and perfect, and once offered up for the sins of many, and needs no reiteration; only the doctrine of it is to be frequently inculcated in the ministry of the word and ordinances.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt offer them before the Lord, &c.*] Upon the altar of burnt offering, which stood before the house or temple where Jehovah dwelt, (^{<2647>}Ezekiel 40:47):

and the priests shall cast salt upon them; which was to be used in all sacrifices under the law, (^{<4023>}Leviticus 2:13), this may denote the savoury doctrines and lives of the ministers of the Gospel, who thereby recommend the truths they deliver, concerning a crucified Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to others; (see ^{<4153>}Matthew 5:13):

and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the Lord; throughout the whole seven days of the consecration and cleansing of the altar, as follows:

Ver. 25. *Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering, &c.*] By this it appears that the altar was seven days a consecrating and cleansing; and that on each day a goat was prepared and offered, typical of Christ, as before observed. Here Kimchi owns that this was not according to the order of Moses, or was done by those that came out of the captivity of Babylon; and is obliged to confess that there will be a change or an innovation in the order of sacrifices in time to come, or under the Messiah.

They shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock without blemish; which, either one or all of them, should be offered up on each of the seven days; (see Gill on “^{<2623>}Ezekiel 43:23”).

Ver. 26. *Seven days shall they purge the altar, and purify it, &c.*] Which denotes the perfect purity and sanctification of it; which how to be applied to Christ, (see Gill on “^{<2630>}Ezekiel 43:20”);

and they shall consecrate themselves: the priests shall consecrate themselves, or devote themselves to the service of the altar; so Gospel ministers to the ministry of a crucified Christ: or they themselves should consecrate the altar by the above rites: or rather it may be literally rendered,

and they shall fill its hands, or “their own hands”^{f796}; that is, either they shall fill the sides of the altar with sacrifices, as much as it could hold; or the hands of the priests with parts of the sacrifice, or with gifts, as a token of their being inaugurated into, and invested with, the priestly office: so Gospel ministers should have their hands full of, or be filled with, the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and with the knowledge of Christ, his person, offices, grace, righteousness, and sacrifice, that they may minister unto others.

Ver. 27. *And when these days are expired*, &c.] The seven days of consecration, and all these rites and sacrifices observed:

it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward; that is, on the first day of the week, or Lord’s day, the Christian sabbath, the next day after the seventh, and so upon every return of it; in which Christian ministrations are exercised, the word preached, ordinances administered, and works of righteousness and charity done; (see ~~4309~~ John 20:19,26 ~~4400~~ Acts 20:7 ~~4542~~ 1 Corinthians 16:2).

The priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; or “thank offerings”^{f797}; preach Christ and him crucified to the people, and offer up the sacrifices of prayer and praise unto God for them:

and I will accept you, saith the Lord God; through Christ the Mediator, in whom he is well pleased; who is the altar on which such sacrifices are accepted, and become well pleasing to God, (~~2800~~ Isaiah 56:7 ~~4086~~ 1 Peter 2:5).

CHAPTER 44

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 44

This chapter treats of the eastern gate of the temple being appropriated to the use of the prince, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 44:1-3), of the sin of the Lord's people, in admitting strangers and unholy persons into the sanctuary, either to officiate or communicate there, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 44:4-9) of the degrading of the Levites, that went astray, assigning them inferior posts and service in the house of God, (^{<340>}Ezekiel 44:10-14) and of the establishment of the sons of Zadok in their ministry, who were faithful, (^{<345>}Ezekiel 44:15,16), then follow various laws relating to their garments; shaving of their heads; drinking wine; their marriage; performance of their ministerial work; their regard to the dead, and their food and maintenance, (^{<347>}Ezekiel 44:17-31).

Ver. 1. *Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary, &c.*] The prophet was brought by his divine guide, from the altar of burnt offerings, which stood before the house, where he had given him the dimensions of it, and the ordinances concerning it, to the temple or holy place, called the outward sanctuary, in distinction from the inward sanctuary, or holy of holies; and to one of the gates of it, which was a gate of the inner court:

and which looketh toward the east: the eastern gate, and was the same he had been at before, and therefore is said to be brought back the way of it; (see ^{<340>}Ezekiel 43:1):

and it was shut; when he was there before, it was open; for he saw the glory of the Lord enter into the house by the way of it; but now it was shut, and for that reason, because he had entered into it; signifying, among other things, that he would never return, or remove from thence any more. The Misnic doctors^{f798} interpret this of one of the little doors to the great gate of the temple, that had two little doors, one in the north, the other in the south; that which was in the south no man ever entered in by, and this they say is understood here; but it is not a little door, but a gate here spoken of, and that the eastern one; of which more in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *Then said the Lord unto me, this gate shall be shut, &c.]* In time to come, as Jarchi interprets it, in the latter day; it was shut, and it should continue to be shut:

it shall not be opened; any more; though it has been, yet hereafter no more:

and no man shall enter in by it, into the house of the Lord,

because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it; the same with the glory of the God of Israel, (^{<36D>}Ezekiel 43:2,4,5):

therefore it shall be shut; no one being to enter after him. Various are the sentiments of expositors concerning this gate. Some of the ancients have interpreted it of the Virgin Mary, by whom Christ came into this world in human nature, being born of her, a virgin, who had never known man, and as is thought never did after the birth of Christ; nor were any afterwards born of her; no man might come into the world by her, by that self-same way the incarnate God did, and for that reason. This sense is approved of, not only by Papists, but by many Protestant writers. Others understand it of the Scriptures, the word of God, which as it is a sealed book to men learned and unlearned, so a gate shut up; it cannot be opened by a mere natural man, or be understood by the light of nature; none can open it but the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who gives the spiritual knowledge of it to whom he pleases, the perfect knowledge of which is reserved to a future state; and there are some things in it which will be always shut, and ever secrets; as the modus of the subsistence of the three Persons in the Godhead; the generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit, and the union of the two natures in Christ; (see ^{<23D>}Isaiah 29:11,12 ^{<46D>}Revelation 5:1-5 ^{<49D>}John 3:13), others think that the gate of heaven, or the way to eternal glory and happiness, is meant; which was shut by the sin of man, and could never be opened again by any mere man; but Christ by his blood has opened the way into it; and has entered into it, not as a private, but public person, representing all his people; and none but those that belong to him, that are members of him, shall enter there; as none but Christ personal, so none but Christ mystical: but I am rather of opinion, since this whole fabric, as we have seen, is an emblem of the church of Christ on earth in the latter day, the way into that is designed here; and its being shut signifies, that, as the church is a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, and is only for the use of Christ, and should be a chaste virgin to him, he should have all her heart, affection, and faith; so it should not be pervious unto others; no natural or unregenerate man should enter into it; and when the

Lord shall have taken up his residence in the church in the latter day, in a more spiritual and glorious manner than ever, there shall no more come into her the uncircumcised and the unclean, (^{<2510>}Isaiah 52:1), and especially in the New Jerusalem state nothing shall enter that defiles, or makes an abomination, or a lie, (^{<627>}Revelation 21:27) none but those that are Christ's, that are true members of his, and one with him; and this sense agrees with what follows in this chapter, and receives light and confirmation thereby; in which the Lord complains of the Israel and church of God in these its present declining times, that unregenerate persons were admitted into the sanctuary of the Lord, to communicate with the saints, and officiate there, (^{<2407>}Ezekiel 44:7-9) and commends such who are faithful ministers and members, who are established therein, (^{<26415>}Ezekiel 44:15,16).

Ver. 3. *It is for the prince: the prince shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord, &c.]* Or, “as for the prince, the prince shall sit in it”^{<1799>}; in the gate which is shut to others: not the high priest, as Jarchi, though he might have a particular seat in the temple, as Eli had in the tabernacle, (^{<1009>}1 Samuel 1:9), where he might eat the bread and flesh of holy things: nor the political prince, the king of Israel, though he might have a place in the temple peculiar to himself; (see ^{<1462>}2 Chronicles 6:12,13 23:13) (^{<1408>}2 Chronicles 24:31), and the Jews say only the kings of the house of David were allowed to sit in the sanctuary: but the King Messiah, as Kimchi and Ben Melech rightly interpret it, is here meant; who before, in this prophecy, is called David a Prince, (^{<2624>}Ezekiel 34:24 37:25), he who is the Prince of peace; Michael the great Prince; the Prince of life, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; the Messiah the Prince. Such who interpret the gate of the gate of heaven understand this of Christ's sitting down there at his Father's right hand, on the same throne with him, having done his work, and being at ease, and in honour; and of his enjoyment of glory there, as the heavenly glory is sometimes signified by a feast, by sitting down at a table, and eating bread in the kingdom of God, (^{<1081>}Matthew 8:11 ^{<2415>}Luke 14:15 22:30), and so it may intend his being in the presence of God with the utmost delight and joy; having that glory he had with him before the world was, and all power in heaven and in earth; dispensing gifts and grace to men, and receiving honour and glory from them, and seeing the travail of his soul with satisfaction: but why may it not be understood, more consistent with the scope of the vision, of his sitting in his church, at his table there with his saints, eating with them, and they with him, in his word

and ordinances before the Lord? see (^{211D}Song of Solomon 1:12 4:16 5:1
^{488D}Revelation 3:20),

he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same; which some explain of Christ's ascension to heaven, and descent from thence in the same way; he went up to heaven in the eastern part of the world, from the mount of Olives, to the east of Jerusalem; and in like manner shall he descend, and his feet shall stand on that mount, (^{401E}Acts 1:11,12 ^{384D}Zechariah 14:4), but it may be interpreted of his going in and out of his church at his will and pleasure; and affording his gracious presence and fellowship with himself in his house and ordinances,

Ver. 4. *Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house,* &c.] The north gate of the inward court, whither he was brought from the east gate, which was shut: this, and what follow, may have some respect to the churches in these our northern parts of the world, in their now declining circumstances, which are aptly represented in some following verses; but will hereafter be filled with the glory of the Lord, as follows:

and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; as he had seen at the eastern gate, (^{368D}Ezekiel 43:2,4,5):

and I fell upon my face; as he had done before, under a sense of the greatness and glory of the divine Majesty, and of his own vileness and unworthiness; (see ^{368B}Ezekiel 43:3).

Ver. 5. *And the Lord said unto me, son of man, &c.]* This is still the voice of the Lord speaking out of the house to the prophet, (^{368B}Ezekiel 43:6):

mark well; or, "set thine heart"^{f800}; be attentive to what is about to be said, as being of great concern and importance:

and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee; heart, eyes, and ears, are all to be employed in the most diligent manner in regarding the things hereafter delivered; the same expressions exciting attention were used at the first of this vision, (^{340E}Ezekiel 40:4): concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof; (see Gill on "^{368B}Ezekiel 43:11"),

mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary; the way of entrance into the Gospel church, and the manner of exclusion from it, and the laws and rules concerning these; the prophet is

bid particularly to observe these well, because it was in these things God's professing people chiefly offended, as appears by what follows; they were not so careful as they should have been in the admission of persons among them, or in the exclusion of delinquents.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel,* &c.] This is a character of literal Israel from the beginning, (~~REB~~ Deuteronomy 9:24), and frequently given it in this prophecy, (~~REB~~ Ezekiel 2:2,3,5-8) (~~REB~~ Ezekiel 3:9,26,27) and well agrees with these declining churches in the latter day, and even in our times; it represents them as rebellious, because of their disregard to the ordinances of God's house, and to the laws and rules of it; and are not only called "rebellious", but "rebellion"^{f801} itself; expressive of the greatness of their sin, and the aggravations of it:

thus saith the Lord God, O ye house of Israel, let it suite you of all your abominations; that is, let the abominations you have committed, will worship and superstition, paying a regard to the doctrines and commandments of men, be sufficient; stop and proceed no further; relinquish those things which are so abominable in my sight; let the time past suffice to have wrought them; cease entirely from them; (see ~~REB~~ 1 Peter 4:3), these abominations are more particularly expressed in the following words.

Ver. 7. *In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers,* &c.] Unregenerate men, who are in a state of alienation and estrangement to divine and spiritual things: strangers to God; to the true knowledge of him in Christ; to the fear and love of God; to the true grace of God in conversion; and to communion with him: strangers to Christ, to his person and offices; to the way of peace, life, and salvation by him; to his righteousness; to faith in him, love of him, and fellowship with him: strangers to the Spirit; to his person, to regeneration and sanctification by him; to the graces of the Spirit, faith, hope, love, humility, self-denial, &c.; to the things of the Spirit, which they neither know nor savour; and to the several offices he performs, as a comforter, the Spirit of adoption, an earnest and sealer: strangers to their own hearts, and the plague of them, and sin that dwells in them: strangers to the nature of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it; to the deceitfulness of sin, and the consequences of it; to true repentance for it, and to the right way of atonement of it, by

the blood of Christ: strangers to the Gospel of Christ, and the truths of it; and to the saints and people of God:

and uncircumcised in heart; who never were pricked in the heart for sin, or felt any pain there on account of it; never had the hardness of their heart removed, or the impurity of it discovered to them; never were filled with shame and loathing because of it; or ever put off the body of sins in a course of conversation; or renounced their own righteousness:

and uncircumcised in flesh; carnal, as they were born; men in the flesh, in a state of nature, mind and savour the things of the flesh, and do the works of it; having never been taught by the grace of God to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to abstain from fleshly ones: or, who put their trust in the flesh, in outward things, in carnal privileges, and external righteousness: these the Lord complains were brought

to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house: either to be members here, and partake of all the ordinances and privileges of the Lord's house; or to officiate here as priests and ministers of the Lord:

when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood; which, under the law, were the Lord's; and here signify the ministry of the word and ordinances, the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house; and especially the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things; in which Christ, the true and living bread of God, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed, is represented to the faith of God's people:

and they have broken my covenant, because of all your abominations: that is, have broken the rule of the divine word and everlasting Gospel by such abominations; by admitting such ministers and members, the one to administer, the other to partake of, Gospel ordinances: this is the true state of the case of most of the reformed churches in our days; it is to be feared that there are multitudes of unregenerate ministers in them; that they are full of carnal professors; and notorious it is that the ordinance of the Lord's supper is prostituted to wicked persons, and to answer ends it never was designed for; which must be an abomination to the Lord.

Ver. 8. *And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things, &c.*] That is, have not kept and retained the holy doctrines of the Gospel; nor observed the holy ordinances of it, as they were first delivered:

but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves; meaning either, that such as were in public office did not attend to it; but were idol shepherds, and left the flock, their care and charge, to others, to surrogates and curates, to do their work for them; while they indulged themselves in sloth and idleness: or that the members and hearers set up preachers for themselves, according to their lusts, agreeable to their own carnal sentiments, without any regard to the will and glory of God.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* This that follows is the law and rule to be observed, and which will be observed by the churches in the latter day, though so little regarded now:

no stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary; of these (see Gill on “²⁶⁴⁷Ezekiel 44:7”) unregenerate men may not be admitted members of a Gospel church; for that is holy, and holiness becomes it; but they are unholy, and as unfit to be received as swine into a king’s palace; saints and they cannot talk together, their language being different, they are barbarians to one another; nor can they walk together, being not agreed in sentiment and practice; besides, such persons disquiet the churches of Christ by their quarrelsome behaviour in it, and immoral conversation out of it; and are dangerous and infectious persons, whether heterodox in principle, or immoral in life: and much less should such be admitted to public service, to preach the word, and administer ordinances; since they should be holy that bear the vessels of the Lord, his name, and Gospel; they are blind and ignorant, and so not apt and fit to teach others; they are dumb, and cannot speak to cases they are strangers to, as those of wounded consciences, tempted and deserted, or backslidden ones; they will bring in strange doctrines, foreign to the Scriptures, and the experience of saints; and it is no wonder they are unsuccessful in their ministry, and churches do not thrive under them; to which, among other things, we must impute the great decline of religion, even among Protestant dissenters, who, it is to be feared, have too many of this character among them: but there should not be here

of any stranger that is among the children of Israel; though they are among them, nay, though they are the children of them, and have had a religious education; yet being strangers to the grace of God, should not be admitted members, and much less ministers, of the churches of Christ.

Ver. 10. *And the Levites that are gone away far from me, &c.]* These Levites were priests, as appears from (²⁶⁴¹³Ezekiel 44:13), who professed

themselves Gospel preachers, ministers of the reformed churches; but departed from the reformation principles; erred from the faith; and either mixed it with the doctrines of men, or wholly dropped, concealed, or dissembled it; departed from the word of God, as the rule of faith and practice; and set up their own reason as their guide in matters of religion; were gone off from the pure worship of God and his ordinances, and entirely neglected the discipline of his house:

when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; though there may be an allusion to some apostasy of literal Israel, under the Old Testament, and from whence language may be borrowed to express this; either to the Israelites joining themselves to Baalpeor in the fields of Moab, in the time of Phinehas, who was zealous and faithful to the Lord, from whom Zadok descended after mentioned: or to the defection in the times of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, when all Israel forsook the word of the Lord: or to the times of Ahaz, when Uriah the priest made an altar like to that at Damascus by the king's order; and which idolatrous practices increased in the times of Manasseh; when, no doubt, many of the priests and Levites, either through fear of kings, or on account of gain, and for the sake of their livelihood, departed from the Lord and his worship: but the reference is to a defection in the times of the New Testament, and in the latter days of those times; not to the falling away of the church of Rome, and its departure from the faith and order of the Gospel, predicted (² Thessalonians 2:3 ¹ Timothy 4:1-3 ² Timothy 3:1-5), though, no doubt, some truly godly ministers have been carried away with the errors of that church, and afterwards restored, as these Levites: but the case here referred to is the declension in the reformed churches; their formality; their great imperfection in the service of God; their departure from the doctrine of faith they once heard and received, which they are called upon to repent of; their defiling themselves with superstition and will worship, and going after the idols of their own hearts, corrupt reason, the doctrines and inventions of men, and carnal rites and ceremonies; (see ⁴ Revelation 3:1-4):

they shall even bear their iniquity; that is, the Levites, priests, or ministers; they shall bear the shame and disgrace, when they come to see their errors, and the punishment and chastisement of their sin, of which hereafter.

Ver. 11. *Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary,* &c.] Though degraded from their office as priests and ministers of the word, yet being

restored from their sins and errors, shall have a place in the house of God, and do their work there in a less honourable and a more servile way; as in former times, when ministers had sinned foully, and were degraded from their office, upon repentance they were not restored to that, but only admitted to lay communion; (see ^{f823b}2 Kings 23:9):

having charge at the gates of the house; like those sort of Levites who were porters and doorkeepers in the temple, or like our sextons or pew openers now:

and ministering to the house; employed as the Gibeonites were in hewing wood and bringing water for the use of the sanctuary, or in repairing of it; learning and exercising the business of smiths, masons, and carpenters:

they shall slay the burnt offering, and the sacrifice for the people; not bring it to the altar, and offer it there; only slay it, and skin it for the priests; which is not to be understood literally, there being no such sacrifice in Gospel times; but to denote the menial service and inferior post that such shall be employed in; if they have no trade, they shall learn one, in order to get a livelihood for themselves, and be serviceable to the interest of religion in a lower way; but ministers of the word they shall not be:

and they shall stand before them to minister unto them; either before the priests, whose servants they shall be, or before the people; signifying that those that sin publicly shall be rebuked before all.

Ver. 12. *Because they ministered unto them before their idols, &c.*] Had officiated for them in the priest's office, their idols being in the courts of the Lord at the same time; or preached unto them false doctrines, such as are not agreeable to the word of God; and led them into superstition and will worship, and confirmed them therein:

and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; or, "were for a stumbling block of iniquity"^{f802}; unto them the means of their stumbling and falling; by their ministrations, teaching them unsound doctrine; and by their practices and example, leading them into a way of false worship, and dissoluteness of life and conversation; who ought to have been examples to them in word and conversation, in faith and purity:

therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord; to smite and afflict them, and chastise them for the same; or, "upon them", or "concerning them"^{f803}; and so it may be expressive of an oath, of which

lifting up the hand is a sign; wherefore, that what the Lord had said of them might be believed and expected, he swears to it:

and they shall bear their iniquity; which is repeated for the confirmation and certainty of it; (see ³⁴⁴⁰Ezekiel 44:10), what is meant by it follows.

Ver. 13. *And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of priest unto me*, &c.] To bring the sacrifice to the altar, and offer it there; to sprinkle the blood, or burn the fat, or the incense; to intercede for the people, or bless them; (see ³⁰⁰⁶Hosea 4:6):

nor to come near to any of my holy things in the most holy place; to do any business, either in the holy or in the most holy place; to offer holy things, or eat of them. The sense is, that these degraded ministers, who had sinned so greatly, and had fallen so foully, though restored by repentance; yet should not preach the word, nor administer any ordinance:

but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed; that is, the shame of their abominations, of their abominable principles and practices, which they have held and maintained; being publicly disgraced and degraded, and so notoriously distinguished.

Ver. 14. *But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house*, &c.] To be watchmen or porters in it; to open and shut the doors of it; to sweep and keep it clean; to repair and mend it, and to do such like works, as it follows:

for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein; in a servile way; but not as priests or ministers of the word.

Ver. 15. *But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok*; &c.] The priests who were of the tribe of Levi, whom the Lord chose and separated, to minister to him, and so had a lawful call to this office, and were regularly invested with it; and design true and lawful, as well as faithful, ministers of the word; these are called the sons of Zadok, who descended from Eleazar the son of Aaron in the line of Phinehas, to whom the Lord promised the everlasting priesthood, and who was put into this office by Solomon in the room of Abiathar, (¹⁰²⁵1 Kings 2:35), his name signifies “righteous”, and was a type of Christ; who, as a divine Person, is essentially righteous; as man, truly and perfectly so; and, as Mediator, God’s righteous servant; and who, by his obedience and sufferings, is the author of righteousness to his people; who are his spiritual seed and offspring; children given him of his

Father; who have his sonship and adoption through him, and are born of him, his Spirit, and grace; and these are made righteous by him, through his righteousness imputed to them, and may be rightly called sons of Zadok: and this agrees with all the saints; and who, under the Gospel dispensation, are all priests, and offer up themselves, souls and bodies, and their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, unto God by Christ; though all have not a right to preach the word, and administer ordinances, as ministers lawfully called have, and who seem to be more particularly designed here; and such as are regenerated persons, and justified by Christ's righteousness, and preach the doctrine of free justification by it, are the only fit persons for such an office:

that kept the charge of my sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from me; that kept and held fast the pure doctrines of the Gospel, committed as a sacred depositum to them, without mixture, and without wavering, with courage and valour; though a greater number were on the other side, and though they were reproached and persecuted for it; and who taught the people to keep the ordinances of the Gospel as they were first delivered, in faith and love, and without sinister ends, and so administered them themselves; and such faithful ministers and members of churches, especially in a time of great declension and general defection, God takes notice of, and has promised them great and good things; (see ~~(11)~~ Revelation 2:7,10,11,13,17,26-28 3:5,10-12,21,22 ~~(12)~~ Matthew 25:21)

they shall come near to me to minister unto me; in holy things to his people, which is called ministering unto him; as to pray to him for them; to preach to them in his name, and administer ordinances: all the saints indeed are priests, and may draw nigh to God through Christ; men are at a distance from him, through sin; there is no coming near to him but by Christ; and this coming near is not local, but spiritual, and includes all acts of worship, particularly prayer; and is a great favour and blessing:

and they shall stand before me, to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God; which, under the law, were both the Lord's; the one was burnt, and the other sprinkled, on divers things, and in various places: here it may respect the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things, and which may be eminently called the goodness and fatness of the house of God; and in which the blood of Christ is represented as shed for the remission of sins, and as spiritual drink

indeed to believers; and the sacrifice of Christ is commemorated, the feast being kept in remembrance of that.

Ver. 16. *They shall enter into my sanctuary, &c.*] Both to officiate, and to participate, which strangers and uncircumcised persons might not do, (^{<3440>}Ezekiel 44:9):

and they shall come near to my table to minister unto me; which some understand of the altar of burnt offering, which was as a table, and the sacrifice on it was the food of the Lord, (^{<3481>}Leviticus 3:11,16), others, the altar of incense; (see ^{<3442>}Ezekiel 41:22). Kimchi interprets it of the table of shewbread; but, whatever is meant in the letter, the mystical sense is, the ordinance of the Lord's supper, called the Lord's table, (^{<3401>}1 Corinthians 10:21), a table richly spread, and well furnished with spiritual provision: here Christ himself sits, bids his people welcome, eats with them, and they with him; and here all the saints are guests, and ministers in particular officiate:

and they shall keep my charge; continue to do so; for this they did before, (^{<3445>}Ezekiel 44:15), but now should be confirmed in their office, and never be displaced, as others; they that honour God he will honour, (^{<3423>}1 Samuel 2:30).

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass, that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, &c.*] The priests before described; when they enter the right way into a true Gospel church, consisting of such who are internally renewed, and have an inward work of grace upon their hearts, and are inward court worshippers; either as private Christians, to pray together, to praise the Lord, to hear his word, and sit down at his table; or as public ministers, to preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances:

they shall be clothed with linen garments; meaning not the outward conversation garments of the Lord's people; nor their inward garment of sanctification; but the robe of Christ's righteousness, and garments of salvation; that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints; and which, though but one, serves for many; and answers not only all the purposes of a garment, but even of many, of change of raiment: like a garment, it is on, and not in, the saints; it is put upon them by imputation; and, like a garment, it covers them, protects them from all injuries, keeps them warm and comfortable, and beautifies and adorns them; and is compared to linen for its whiteness and purity; (see ^{<3488>}Revelation 3:18

19:8) and in this all the people of God, ministers and private Christians, perform all their services in the house of God; making mention of this, and of this only, whereby they become acceptable unto God, (^{<39716>}Psalm 71:16 ^{<4006>}Ephesians 1:6):

and no wool shall come upon them, while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within; it is certain that the priests under the law had wool upon them in the time of their ministry; for the purple, blue, and scarlet, as the Jewish writers ^{f804} observe, were all of them dyed wool; of which, with other things, the girdle common to all the priests, and the ephod and breast plate of the high priest, were made, (^{<0285>}Exodus 28:5,6,8,15), and which they wore in their common service: to the Jews in general it was not lawful to wear a garment of linen and woollen, (^{<0899>}Leviticus 19:19 ^{<0521>}Deuteronomy 22:11) and therefore, as Josephus says ^{f805}, to the priests only it was allowed to wear such a garment; and it is common with the Jewish doctors ^{f806} to observe, that

“the priests were not clothed to minister in the temple but with wool and linen;”

indeed, on the day of atonement, the high priest, when he went into the holiest of all, had only linen garments on him; and of the service of this day Jarchi interprets the text; but Kimchi rightly objects, that the holiest of all cannot be called a court; and besides, it is said in the plural number,

they shall be clothed, and minister; whereas only the high priest went into the most holy place; and therefore he truly observes, that this is a new thing to be done in future times: and this is true of the spiritual priesthood of saints and ministers of the Gospel, who are to have no wool upon them in their ministrations, whether in a more private or public way; who are, and should profess to be, justified by the righteousness of Christ only, without any works of their own to be joined with it; which to do is unnecessary, indecent, and dangerous: wool is observed to be the clothing of brute beasts, and therefore not a fit emblem of the clothing of saints; and likewise of such as are most slow, and sluggish, and inactive ^{f807}, and so an emblem of sloth; and which ought not to be in any of the people of God, and especially in ministers, who of all men should not be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. It may be further observed, that clothes made of wool are heavy, and render unfit for business, and cause sweat, which is offensive; and which seems to be a reason, (^{<2448>}Ezekiel 44:18), why wool should not be upon them, only linen garments wore by

them; that they might be more quick and expeditious in the dispatch of business, and avoid everything that gives offence, that the ministry may not be blamed: woollen clothes are also liable to moths, and worms, and to contract filth; and may signify that the priests of the Lord should be clear of carnal and sensual lusts; these should not be upon them, or they under the predominance of them, and particularly avarice; they should feed the flock, and not fleece it and clothe themselves with the wool of it, (^{254D}Ezekiel 34:2,3). The phrase, “and within”, or “in the house”, seems to denote some place distinct from the inner court, even the more inmost place of the temple, the holy of holies; which signifies heaven itself, into which only the high priest entered once a year, typical of Christ’s entering into heaven; and who has opened a way, and given all his people, who are priests unto God, boldness to enter there also by prayer, in the exercise of faith and hope; and which service they perform in the righteousness of Christ, and that only; (see ^{500B}Hebrews 9:8 10:19,20 6:20 ^{209B}Daniel 9:18).

Ver. 18. *And they shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, &c.]*

Denoting gravity and modesty, subjection to God, and authority among men under him; and also purity of doctrine, and clearness of light and knowledge:

and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; expressive of chastity; (see ^{123D}Exodus 28:40,42):

they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat; so not with wool, which is apt to cause sweat; and is thought to be the reason why it is forbidden in the preceding verse; and so this girdle must be different from the priest’s girdle under the law, for that had wool in it: sweat is of an ill smell, and very offensive; and may denote unsound doctrine and immorality in life and conversation, which give offence, and cause the ministry to be blamed, to which is opposed the girdle of truth and holiness, (^{406A}Ephesians 6:14). The Talmudic doctors interpret this of the place of girding, which is liable to sweat; and they say^{f808},

“they used not to gird neither below the loins, nor above the arm holes; but over against, or about the armholes;”

which is observed by Jarchi and Kimchi on the text; and the Targum is,

“they shall not gird upon or about the loins, but about the heart;”

that is, about the breast or paps; hence Christ our great High Priest is described as girt about the paps with a golden girdle, (⁶⁰¹³Revelation 1:13) so these are girt that are made priests by him; denoting their hearty zeal and affection for the truths of his Gospel, and the honour of his name, and their readiness to serve and glorify him: or,

they shall not gird themselves loosely^{f809}; in a negligent manner, which is both indecent, and hinders business.

Ver. 19. *And when they go forth into the utter court, &c.*] Out of the inner court where they minister, when they have done their service:

even into the utter court to the people; out of the church into the world, where the people are, doing their business, whether good men or bad:

they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers; the north and south chambers; (see Gill on "²⁶²³Ezekiel 42:13"), (see Gill on "²⁶²⁴Ezekiel 42:14"):

and they shall put on other garments; which are their outward conversation garments, which are proper to appear in before men, for the honour of religion; though not sufficient to appear in before God, and render acceptable unto him:

and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments; the garments of the priesthood were reckoned holy, whatsoever was holy, that which it touched accounted holy also; and therefore, to preserve a difference between the priests and the common people, they were not to wear their holy garments but in the time of service; or lest any superstitious notion should obtain among the people, that they were sanctified by touching their clothes; as the Papists give out, that if a man is buried in a monk's cowl, he shall be saved: or the sense is, that they should not possess the minds of the people with a notion of any real sanctity in their garments; or that their conversation garments, or good works, can be of any service to them: this may be opposed to works of supererogation.

Ver. 20. *Neither shall they shave their heads, &c.*] As the priests and worshippers of Isis and Serapis did, as Jerom on the text observes; and as the Romish priests now do, from whom the Lord's faithful ministers must be distinguished:

nor suffer their locks to grow long; as the Nazarites, that a distinction might be preserved between those who were and were not such; or rather, after the manner of women, their locks hanging down, and flowing about their shoulders, as a token of levity, wantonness, effeminacy, pride, and vanity; (see ~~46114~~ 1 Corinthians 11:14,15):

they shall only poll their heads; observe a medium between both; neither shave their heads close, nor let their hair grow long, but keep it in an even moderate length; for which reason godly men of the last age among us were called “round heads”.

Ver. 21. *Neither shall any priest drink wine*, &c.] That is, to excess, immoderately, so as to be inebriated with it, (~~46100~~ Leviticus 10:9-11), should not be given to it, and greedy of it, and drink it so as to disguise themselves: this is reckoned among the qualifications of a Gospel minister, (~~54113~~ 1 Timothy 3:3), otherwise it is not forbidden good men, or ministers of the word, to drink wine, for health’s sake, and for the refreshment of nature, provided it is done in moderation, (~~54123~~ 1 Timothy 5:23), and particularly care should be taken that they drink it in such a manner,

when they enter into the inner court: to attend divine service, since immoderate drinking affects the memory; and such may forget the law and doctrines of the Lord they are to deliver or hear; and may put them upon saying and doing that which is improper and indecent: drunkenness in any Christian professor is abominable, especially in a minister of the word; and when it appears in his ministration, it is scandalous to the last degree.

Ver. 22. *Neither shall they take for their wives a widow*, &c.] Who has been not only another man’s, but at her own will, and done her own pleasure, and been her own mistress, and so not easily brought into subjection, and to behave as becoming her station:

or her that is put away; or, “thrust forth”^{f810}; out of doors; whose husband has given her a bill of divorce; since she may be suspected of having done some ill thing:

but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel; virgins, and not of the families of unconverted persons, who have been brought up in an irreligious way, but of godly families, and who have had a religious education:

or a widow that had a priest before: and so used to religious exercises, and to the manner of living of such persons. All good men should be careful whom they marry, and especially ministers of the Gospel; who are here supposed and allowed to marry, contrary to the church of Rome, which forbids her priests to marry. It is observed by some, and with great propriety, that in the latter days antichristian churches will be disowned; and that godly faithful ministers will become pastors, and take the care of such churches, who are like a chaste virgin espoused to Christ, and such who have had faithful pastors over them before. This seems to refer to the law concerning the marriage of the high priest, (⁽⁴²¹¹³⁾Leviticus 21:13,14), and what is there enjoined him is here enjoined all the priests of the Lord; and therefore, as Kimchi rightly observes, this is a new rule respecting future times.

Ver. 23. *And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane,* &c.] Persons and things; not in a ceremonial, nor merely in a moral, but in an evangelical sense, between truth and error; between the doctrine which is according to godliness, and that which is corrupt and unsound, and eats as cloth a canker; between holy worship, and superstition; between holy duties, and profane and Heathen rites and ceremonies; and between persons sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, and unconverted ones:

and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean; impure persons, doctrines, and manners, and those which are agreeable to the word of God; the sense is, that they shall take pains to instruct persons in the knowledge of divine things, and shall do it truly, faithfully, and sincerely.

Ver. 24. *And in controversy they shall stand in judgment,* &c.] When any controversy arises among the saints concerning civil things, this shall not be carried into a court of judicature, of the men of the world; but it shall be brought before the church, and there heard, tried, judged, and determined; the ministers of the word there presiding, who shall give the definitive sentence, and stand to it, and abide by it, (⁽⁴⁴⁰⁾1 Corinthians 6:1-7) and when any controversy arises about the doctrines of the Gospel, or modes of worship, or rules of discipline, they shall rise up, discuss the point, determine the question, pass the sentence, and not depart from it:

and they shall judge it according to my judgments; not according to their own judgments, or according to their own fancies, or the reasonings of

their own minds, but according to those directions and rules given in the word of God; which is profitable for the settling and establishing true doctrine, and the reproof and correction of error, and for the instruction of men in the paths of righteousness:

and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; which assemblies are the churches of Christ, gathered according to Gospel order; where the saints assemble together for divine worship, and where the Lord grants his presence; and where his word is preached, and his ordinances administered, and so called his; and of which assemblies Gospel ministers are the masters, and where they preside; and whose business is to observe the laws and statutes the Lord has made, and to interpret them unto the people, and enforce them on them, and see that they are kept by them:

and they shall hallow my sabbaths; such times as are appointed for divine worship; these they shall keep holy themselves, in the exercise both of private and public worship, and shall exhort and stir up all with whom they are concerned to do the same.

Ver. 25. *And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves,* &c.] Shall not come into places where they are, nor touch them, nor attend their funerals, (^{<B201>}Leviticus 21:1,11), that their work might not be interrupted, or they through grief and sorrow be made unfit for it, (^{<A182>}Matthew 8:22), this, in a spiritual sense, may signify, that they should have no conversation or fellowship with men dead in trespasses and sins; and should abstain from all dead works, as all sinful ones are:

but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves; by coming near them, touching them, at least attending their funerals, because of their near relation to them, and that natural sympathy and affection that must be in them: all sorrow and mourning for dead relations is not forbidden saints, nor ministers of the word; provided it is in moderation, and not to excess, and is not for gracious persons, as those without hope; and should as little as possible break in upon the duties of their office, (^{<D413>}1 Thessalonians 4:13 ^{<B113>}John 11:33,35).

Ver. 26. *And after he is cleansed,* &c.] From any sin or iniquity, failing and imperfection, that he has been guilty of at such seasons, in mourning for the dead, by a fresh application of the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; typified by the water of separation, made of the ashes of the

red heifer, by which those who were in this way ceremoniously unclean were cleansed, (⁸⁰¹³Hebrews 9:13,14):

they shall reckon unto him seven days; that is, seven days shall be reckoned from the time of his cleansing, before he enters on public service again: according to the old law, seven days were reckoned from the defilement to the purification; here seven more are numbered after the purification is made; and therefore, as Kimchi truly notes, this is a new law or rule, to be observed in after times.

Ver. 27. *And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary*, &c.] Into the house and church of God, after his cleansing, and when the seven days from thence are up:

unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary; among the inward court worshippers, to minister in things to them; to preach the Gospel, and administer Gospel ordinances:

he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord God; though he has been privately cleansed in the fountain of Christ's blood, in which he has washed for sin and uncleanness; yet when he comes into the house of the Lord, he must acknowledge his sins and imperfections over Christ the sin offering; which he must bring in the arms of his faith, and so enter into the courts of the living God, and do the service of the sanctuary.

Ver. 28. *And it shall be unto them for an inheritance*, &c.] Either the sin offering, or the priesthood, and the perquisites belonging to it: or,

they shall have an inheritance^{f811}; but what shall it be? God himself:

I am their inheritance; the Lord is the portion and inheritance of his people, who are made priests unto him, whether in a private or public capacity; they are heirs of God, he is their portion in the land of the living, and forever: God in all his perfections is theirs; and though incommunicable, they have the use and advantage of them, so far as they are capable and stand in need of them; as his eternity, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, grace, mercy, goodness, truth, and faithfulness: he is theirs in all his persons; God the Father is their covenant God and Father; the Son of God is their Head and Husband, their Saviour and Redeemer, Mediator and Peacemaker, their Prophet, Priest, and King; his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and faithfulness, theirs, and even all that he is and has: the Spirit of God is their convincer and

enlightener, their quickener and sanctifier; their Comforter, and the Spirit of adoption to them, the seal and earnest of their future glory; and God under every character is theirs, as the God of nature and providence, and as the God of all grace; and this is an inheritance rich and large, a soul satisfying portion, an inconceivable and an inexhaustible one.

And ye shall give them no possession in Israel; so the priests and Levites had none under the law, but were provided for in another way, (^{<408D>}Numbers 18:20,21 ^{<4580E>}Deuteronomy 18:1,2 ^{<66314>}Joshua 13:14), the Lord's people and priests, under the Gospel dispensation, for the most part are the poor of this world, who have no share in the possessions of it; their good things are not here, but in the world to come, and in God himself: "I am their possession"; the Lord is enjoyed by them now; his love is shed abroad in their hearts; they have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and communion with the Holy Ghost; and which is infinitely better than all the possessions of this world; and besides, provision is made for their outward maintenance, as follows:

Ver. 29. *They shall eat the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering, &c.]* Which were typical of Christ; the meat offering, or rather bread offering, it being made of fine flour, was a type of Christ the bread of life; and the sin and trespass offerings pointed at his being made sin and a sacrifice for it; which the people and priests of the Lord in a spiritual sense eat, feed, and live upon by faith: and besides, as the priests under the law had a part in all these offerings, whereby they and their families were maintained, (^{<408B>}Leviticus 2:3 6:29 7:6), so it is the will and ordination of Christ, that as those that ministered about holy things, and waited at the altar, should live of them, and partake with that, so they that preach the Gospel should live by it, (^{<4083>}1 Corinthians 9:13,14):

and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs; or, "every devoted thing"^{<4812>}; that is, to holy uses, what the people willingly offer to support the interest of religion; signifying that the ministers of the word shall live upon the free contributions of the people.

Ver. 30. *And the first of all the first fruits of all things, and every oblation, of all of every sort of your oblations shall be the priests, &c.]* Suggesting, that their offerings or contributions, which should be made out of their substance, should be in proportion to it, and early as well as free; (see ^{<408B>}Proverbs 3:9):

ye shall also give unto the priest of your dough; either of the first they made of the new corn of the year, or a piece or cake of whatsoever at any time they made; signifying, that the ministers of the word, that communicate spiritual things to men, should partake of their carnal ones, and have a part and share with them in all good things, in all the enjoyments of life, (^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 9:11 ^{<4066>}Galatians 6:6):

that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house; that is, that he, the priest or minister of the word, that partakes of the above things, and is comfortably provided for and supported, may pray to the Lord for such who liberally contribute to him; that a blessing may come and abide upon them and their families, and prosperity and success may attend them in their worldly business and employments of life; as well as they and theirs may be blessed with all spiritual blessings, with grace here, and glory hereafter.

Ver. 31. *The priests shall not eat of anything that is dead of itself, or torn, &c.]* They shall have no need to eat of such things, being plentifully provided for with better; nor will it become them so to do through avarice, not allowing themselves to enjoy what is liberally given them. Here the Jewish doctors^{f813} observe that it is said, the priests shall not eat of these things, suggesting that Israelites might; this puzzles them, therefore they say, Elijah will explain this verse; and the gloss says, till Elijah comes, and explains it to us, we know not how to explain it. In the mystic sense it may signify, that the priests of the Lord should have no communication with such as are dead in sin, or are given to rapine and violence, and should abstain from everything of this kind themselves.

Whether it be fowl or beast; whether Pharisees and high flown professors of religion, or earthly and worldly persons, and such that are immersed in carnal pleasures, in sensual and brutish lusts. The allusion is to the law in (^{<4075>}Leviticus 17:15), which was common to all Israelites, priests and people.

CHAPTER 45

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 45

This chapter treats of the division of the land in future time, and the persons and uses for which it is to be made; one part being for the sanctuary, and the priests that serve in it, and for their houses for them to dwell in, (^{<2650>}Ezekiel 45:1-4), another for the Levites and their chambers, (^{<2651>}Ezekiel 45:5), and another for the city, for the Israelites in common, (^{<2652>}Ezekiel 45:6), and the last for the prince; and of the situation and extent of it, (^{<2653>}Ezekiel 45:7,8) and of the righteous administration of civil government in the time of the spiritual reign of Christ, in abstinence from violence and exactions, and doing justice, for which orders and directions are given, (^{<2654>}Ezekiel 45:9-12), then of the oblations of the people of the land, (^{<2655>}Ezekiel 45:13-16), and next of those that are to be prepared by the prince, (^{<2656>}Ezekiel 45:17), and the times of the offering of them, at the beginning of the year, on the feasts of the passover and tabernacles, (^{<2657>}Ezekiel 45:18-25), the rules for which are so different from the Mosaic law, as show the abrogation of that; and that all this is to be understood in a spiritual and evangetic sense.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land, for inheritance, &c.]* This is not to be understood literally of the division of the land of Israel; which agrees not with the division of it begun by Moses, and finished by Joshua, upon his conquest of it, and the introduction of the people of Israel into it; nor was such a division as this made when the Jews returned from Babylon; nor is there any reason to expect the like when they shall be converted in the latter day; nor is it meant typically of the heavenly inheritance, which saints obtain in Christ by lot, (^{<2658>}Ephesians 1:11), of which the earthly Canaan was a type; though some in this way interpret it: but since the whole vision respects the church of Christ on earth, it must be meant mystically and spiritually of the kingdom of Christ, and the settlement and establishment of it throughout the whole world, according to the allotment and determination of God; and they are a distinct and special people that are admitted into this state; it is by the

distinguishing grace of God that they are taken into the Gospel church, and have a part and share in all the privileges and immunities of it.

Ye shall offer an oblation unto the Lord, an holy portion of the land; which should be lifted up as the heave offering was, and dedicated to the Lord: this designs such persons who are separated from the world, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, who shall be brought by the ministers of the word to the Lord, as trophies of his efficacious and victorious grace, ascribing the whole glory of their conversion to him; and these shall present themselves, souls and bodies, a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him; (see ^{2361D}Isaiah 66:20 ⁶⁵¹⁶Romans 15:16 12:1).

The length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand; the kind of measure is not expressed in the original, so that it is a question whether reeds or cubits are meant; some think the latter, and the rather, because mention is made of them, (^{348D}Ezekiel 45:2), and it is added,

and of this measure shall thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand; which, if understood of cubits, will greatly reduce the length and breadth of this holy portion of the land; wherefore it is best to take the largest measure, since that seems better to answer the design of the Holy Ghost in this passage; and the rather, since this measure is more proper to measure land with, and is that which the measurer is said to have in his hand, (^{240B}Ezekiel 40:5), and besides, the measure of the sanctuary, said to be five hundred square, (^{348D}Ezekiel 45:2) was measured with the measuring reed, and not the cubit, (³⁶²¹⁶Ezekiel 42:16-20), and which therefore must be supplied here; and a measuring reed being six cubits, by a cubit and a hand's breath, (^{240B}Ezekiel 40:5), makes this portion of land to be more than six times larger than if it was supposed to be measured by the cubit; and twenty five thousand of this measure, according to Cornelius à Lapide, made five hundred miles, which was three times as large as the land of Canaan; that being, as Jerom^{f814} says, a hundred and sixty miles long, and forty six broad; and is a proof, that the land of Canaan literally taken is not here meant; but the whole is designed to set forth the amplitude and large extent of the church of Christ in the world, in the times the vision refers to.

This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about; that is, this portion of land measured out, and distinguished from the rest: holiness of

heart and life shall appear in all the subjects of Christ's kingdom, and members of his church, which becomes his house for ever.

Ver. 2. *Of this there shall be for the sanctuary, &c.]* Or temple, the house before described in the preceding chapters:

five hundred in length, and five hundred in breadth, square round about: that is, five hundred reeds square, as is manifest from (^{<36216>}Ezekiel 42:16-20), and this denotes the largeness, perfection, and stability of the church of Christ, which the sanctuary was a type of:

and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof; which were a void place of fifty cubits round about the sanctuary, measuring from the wall to that; this was done in reverence to the holy place, and to show that we should not rush hastily into the house of God, and church of Christ, but first pass through the suburbs or open place. Cubits being here mentioned, show that reeds are to be understood where the kind of measure is not expressed.

Ver. 3. *And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand, &c.]* Not that the sense is, that of and according to the cubit measure last mentioned, this length and this breadth should be measured; but "after this measure", as Starckius renders it, and as the particle is rendered, (^{<271123>}Daniel 11:23 ^{<46121>}Nehemiah 13:21) and which Sanctius mentions; and Jerom seems to have understood it in this light: and the sense is, that after he had finished the measure of five hundred reeds square, and fifty cubits round, he should proceed to measure the rest of the twenty five thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth:

and in it shall be the sanctuary, and the most holy place; that is, in the midst portion of land, consisting of the above measures, be the holy place, and the holy of holies; this is, but a further explanation of the two preceding verses.

Ver. 4. *The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, &c.]* That is, the rest of it, which is not for the sanctuary, shall be for the use of the priests that minister in holy things in the sanctuary; either the ministers of the Gospel, who shall have a sufficient maintenance from the churches of Christ, as the priests had under the law: or it may be meant of all the saints, who are priests unto God, and serve and worship him in his sanctuary; who shall all be satisfied with the

goodness and fatness of his house, the word and ordinances, and the blessings of grace conveyed by them:

which shall come near to minister unto the Lord; these sons of Zadok, these faithful ones, in the worst of times; (see ^{<3615>}Ezekiel 44:15,16 48:10,11):

and it shall be a place for their houses; in this large spot shall be many congregated churches, houses of the living God, where his priests and people dwell, and will be serving and praising him:

and an holy place for the sanctuary; which may denote the church of God in general, as houses may do particular churches.

Ver. 5. *And the five and twenty thousand, of length, and ten thousand of breadth, &c.*] This seems to be another portion of the land, distinct from the former, though of the same measure; (see ^{<3613>}Ezekiel 48:13):

shall also the Levites, the ministers of the house, have for themselves; separate from the priests, to whom they ministered, and were as numerous; or more numerous, than they; this is still designed to set forth the largeness of the church, and the great numbers of its members, who will all be accommodated and supplied with good things:

for a possession for twenty chambers; which some understand of twenty rows of chambers; by which may be meant particular congregated churches, as we have seen all along in this vision, erected for the better use and convenience of the saints in all places and parts of the world, where they are called.

Ver. 6. *And ye shall appoint the possession of the city, &c.*] Which is something distinct from the house or temple, which was as the frame of a city, being so large, and consisting of so many parts, (^{<3612>}Ezekiel 40:2) and seems also different from the city in (^{<3630>}Ezekiel 48:30,35), the measures of the one and of the other not agreeing. Starckius thinks that this city prefigures the academies that should be among Christians, in which the priests or ministers of the word should teach those that came out of all parts unto them; but I am rather of opinion that the civil state of the people of God is here meant, as it will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; when all civil power and authority will not as yet be put down, only it will come into the hands of the saints, and be administered by Christian kings and princes.

Five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, over against the oblation of the holy portion; five thousand reeds in breadth are allowed less for the civil than the church state; and though they are contiguous, and there is a connection between them, yet are separate from each other; the material temple was in the city of Jerusalem; but the holy portion, in which the sanctuary shall be, is without the city, and the city over against that; hence John seems, to have borrowed his idea and language, “I saw no temple therein”, (^{<612>}Revelation 21:22), though speaking of another city: the church and the world shall be no more mixed together; Christ’s kingdom is not of this world, nor to be fixed on a civil establishment:

it shall be for the whole house of Israel; they shall all be under one and the same form of government; I do not say they shall be all under one temporal king or prince; but all Christian kings and princes shall exercise the same kind of rule and government; so that, as their church state will be uniform, their civil state or polity will be alike.

Ver. 7. *And a portion shall be for the prince, &c.*] Meaning not the civil magistrate; though he ought to be supported in his dignity and authority, and in such manner that he may be under no temptation to oppress his subjects; and who ought to be, and at this time will be, the protector of the Lord’s people, both in their civil and church state; but the Prince Messiah, of whom (see ^{<348>}Ezekiel 44:3), to whom God will divide a portion with the great; Jacob shall be his portion, the Heathen his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession, (^{<252>}Isaiah 53:12 ^{<633>}Deuteronomy 32:9 ^{<918>}Psalms 2:8,9):

on the one side and on the other side of the oblation of the holy portion, and of the possession of the city; on each side, both of the holy portion, in which are the sanctuary, the houses of the priests, and the chambers of the Levites, and also of the city for the house of Israel; so that his portion will lie, or he be placed, on each side both of the church state and civil state of the Lord’s people, and so be the protector of both; he will be a wall of fire round about them, a covert and a hiding place for them; he will be near them, and they to him; he will be on every side of them, and preserve them from persecuting enemies, and false teachers; they shall enjoy his word, his ordinances, and Gospel ministers, and be kept in the utmost peace and prosperity of all kinds; he will protect and defend them, both in their civil and religious liberties, and none shall make them afraid.

Before the oblation of the holy portion, and before the possession of the city; or rather, “over against” them^{f815}, as it is rendered, (~~36115~~Ezekiel 41:15) so, as the possession of the city was over against the holy portion, the portion of the prince was to be over against them both:

from the west side westward, and from the east side eastward; which explains on which sides of them it lay:

and the length shall be over against one of the portions; that is, against everyone of the portions:

from the west border unto the east border; now as there is no measure given to the portion of the prince, but the whole space eastward and westward is left for it, it shows the large extent of Christ’s kingdom; that his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; his Gospel shall be preached everywhere; the Spirit shall be poured down upon all flesh to make it successful; multitudes shall be everywhere converted, and churches set up in all places; the kingdoms of the world will become Christ’s, even all the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan nations; Christ will be King over all the earth, and his name shall be one; there will be but one religion everywhere, (~~19718~~Psalm 72:8 ~~3848~~Zechariah 14:8,9 ~~61115~~Revelation 11:15). Some of the Jewish writers interpret this of the King Messiah, to whom they suppose is here allotted the thirteenth part of the land: so Kimchi says,

“to Israel belong twelve parts or portions, and to the prince the thirteenth part; the portion of the prince is as the portion of one of the tribes in length and in breadth, excepting that within the inheritance of the prince should be an oblation,”

as in (~~26513~~Ezekiel 45:13), and Maimonides^{f816} says,

“the King Messiah takes out of all lands, subdued by the Israelites, one part out of thirteen; and this thing is a statute for him and his sons for ever;”

which seems plainly to refer to this passage in Ezekiel; though there are some who understand him of any anointed king of Israel, as being his right: but the learned Selden^{f817} is of opinion that he is speaking of the King Messiah, and has respect to this distribution; and rightly observes, from the same author^{f818}, that all that was subdued by him was his own, and he could dispose of it at his pleasure to his servants and soldiers.

Ver. 8. *In the land shall be his possession in Israel, &c.]* Or, “as for the land, it shall be his for a possession in Israel”^{f819}; the people of the land shall be a people for possession, as in (~~1~~1 Peter 2:9) or a peculiar people of his throughout all Israel; all the spiritual Israel, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be Christ’s possession and inheritance:

and my princes shall no more oppress my people; neither ecclesiastical princes, as the Scribes and Pharisees formerly, nor civil magistrates; not the one with false doctrines, carnal rites and ceremonies; nor the other with heavy taxes, and rigorous exactions:

and the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes; the spiritual and mystical Israel, Jews and Gentiles, who shall now inherit the earth, and possess all temporal good things, as well as spiritual ones.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord, let it suffice you, O princes of Israel, &c.]* Christian kings and princes, for such there shall be in those times; and who will have large and ample salaries provided for them, as they should have to support their dignity; and with which they should be content, as they will be, and not encroach upon the properties of their subjects:

remove violence and spoil; from your administration; the sense is, do not use violence, and exercise rapine and spoil, let these be far from you; seize not on the goods of your subjects, or spoil them of them by heavy taxes and impositions, or by vexatious lawsuits, and unjust sentences:

and execute judgment and justice; between men; let everyone enjoy his own property; and when any matter of controversy arises about it, fairly hear and examine the case, and do justice:

take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord; such as had been exacted of them in former times by tyrannical and unjust princes: or, “your expulsions”^{f820}; driving them from their houses, estates, fields, and vineyards; either by taking them away from them, and annexing them to their own, as Ahab did; or by levying such taxes upon them they could not pay, and so were obliged to leave their inheritances and possessions. This, and some following verses, contain rules for regulating the civil state of the people of God in the latter day; which did not take place upon the Jews’ return from Babylon, as appears from (~~1~~1 Nehemiah 5:15) but will be strictly observed by Christian princes in the latter day glory; (see ~~23~~23 Isaiah 40:17,18).

Ver. 10. *Ye shall have just balances, &c.*] That is, take care that true weights and just measures be used in trade and commerce, that so one man may not impose upon and cheat another; which is the business of the civil magistrate to look after:

and a just ephah, and a just bath; and not make the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit, as some did, (^{<3085>}Amos 8:5) the “ephah” was a measure for dry things, as wheat, barley, &c. and the “bath” for liquid things, as wine oil, &c. as Jarchi and Kimchi observe; (see ^{<3085>}Leviticus 19:35,36).

Ver. 11. *The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, &c.*] The one held as much of dry things as the other of liquor; which, according to Bishop Cumberland, were seven wine gallons, four pints, and a little more:

that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer; this “homer” must be carefully distinguished from another measure, called “omer”, written without an “h”, which was but the tenth part of an “ephah”, (^{<3065>}Exodus 16:36):

the measure thereof shall be after the homer: “as the homer was”, so should the ephah and bath be, just the tenth part of it.

Ver. 12. *And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs, &c.*] This is a rule for money or coin; the shekel was a silver coin, and is generally reckoned about the value of two shillings and six pence of our money, so a gerah about three half pennies: Bishop Cumberland reckons the shekel more exactly at two shillings and four pence farthing, and a little more, and the gerah at eleven grains of silver; (see ^{<3025>}Leviticus 27:25):

twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh; these were several pieces of money; one was a twenty shekel piece, which according to the common account was fifty shillings of our money; another was a five and twenty shekel piece, which was three pounds, two shillings, and sixpence; and a third was a fifteen shekel piece, which was one pound thirteen and sixpence; and together made a maneh or pound, which consisted of sixty shekels, or seven pounds, ten shillings; by which the other pieces should be tried, whether they were of just weight: the sense of the whole is, that no adulteration of coin should be made, which is very prejudicial in civil affairs.

Ver. 13. *This is the oblation that ye shall offer, &c.*] Not at the dedication of the temple, to be built in time to come, as Kimchi thinks; nor for the daily sacrifices, as others; but for the maintenance of the priests, that is, the ministers of the Gospel; for here begin the rules for the right ordering of ecclesiastical affairs of those times:

the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley: this confirms that an “ephah” was for dry measure, of wheat and barley; and as it was the tenth part of an homer, a sixtieth part of an homer of wheat and barley was to be given for this service; that is, if a man had an homer of wheat or of barley, he was to give a sixtieth part of it for the use of the ministers of the Lord: the meaning is, that the people should give freely and liberally, according to their substance, for their support and maintenance,

Ver. 14. *Concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, &c.*] This shows that the bath was for liquid measure; and as oil was a part of food with the Jews, as well as used in their offerings, a rule is given for the distribution of that to the Lord’s ministers, that they may have everything convenient for them:

ye shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of a cor; which was the same measure with the “homer”, only another name for it, as follows:

which is an homer of ten baths, for ten baths are an homer; so that if a man had an homer or ten baths of oil, he was to give a hundredth part of it for the use of the priests and Levites, or ministers of the word; a greater portion of wheat or barley is given than of oil, because there is a greater expense in families of the one than of the other.

Ver. 15. *And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, &c.*] As provision is before made for bread and oil, so here for meat for the servants of the Lord: if a man had two hundred lambs in his flock, one of them was to be given to them; it may be observed, that this plainly refers to times when the Mosaic dispensation should be abrogated; not tithes of all things are to be given to the priests, as heretofore; only the sixtieth part of wheat and barley, the hundredth part of oil, and but one lamb of two hundred; and which denotes the moderate maintenance of Gospel ministers, with which they should be contented, and the people should not grudge to give; nothing extraordinary or extravagant being required of them: this lamb was to be taken

out of the fat pastures of Israel; or, out of the watery places^{f821}; out of those fields which were well watered, and produced good pasture, which fattened the sheep and lambs that were fed in them; and denotes that the best of the kind is to be given to the Lord, and to his servants, or for the support of his interest; not the lean and the lame, the halt and the blind, (~~3008~~Malachi 1:8,14):

for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings; not that the lamb was given for all these; but the wheat and the oil for the meat offering, and the lamb for the burnt offering and peace offerings. The sense may be, that this provision of wheat and barley, oil and lambs, or the sufficient maintenance signified by them, was in the room of the meat offering, burnt offerings, and peace offerings, which fell to the share of the priests under the legal dispensation:

to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord God; either to this end, that the ministers of the Gospel, who have the word of reconciliation committed to them, might cheerfully and faithfully dispense it to the people; or that they, by these liberal and generous contributions of theirs to the maintenance of them, might testify that they have truly by faith received the atonement by the sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 16. *All the people of the land shall give this oblation*, &c.] None shall be exempted from it; all according to their capacity and ability shall contribute to the support of the ministry, and the service of religion:

for the prince in Israel; not the high priest, nor the civil magistrate, but the Prince Messiah: or rather “to the prince in Israel”^{f822}; what the people shall do in this way, they shall do it as to the Lord, freely and cordially, and for his honour and glory; and he will take it as done to himself; (see ~~4004~~Matthew 10:41,42).

Ver. 17. *And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings*, &c.] Or, “upon the prince shall be the burnt offerings”^{f823}; it shall lie upon him to provide them; who is not the high priest, as Jarchi; nor the civil magistrate or king, as Menachem; but Christ, who is both Prince and Priest; and whose sacrifice of himself is designed by these, and the other sacrifices after mentioned, of which the sacrifices were all typical; though he is but one, they many, his answers to them all, and is one for all; and though his is but once offered up, they often, because of the fulness of efficacy in the one, and the want of it in the other; and though in itself infinitely superior

to these. Of the burnt offerings, and of their being typical of Christ, (see Gill on “^{261B}Ezekiel 40:39”),

and meat offerings, and drink offerings; the meat offerings, which were rather bread offerings, were made of fine flour, with oil poured, and frankincense put thereon, (^{811D}Leviticus 2:1) and were typical of Christ, compared to a corn of wheat dying in the earth, and bringing forth fruit, (^{812B}John 12:24) and to wheat as bruised and ground into fine flour, kneaded and baked, which may denote his various sufferings, and so made bread of; he being the true and living bread, which gives life to men. The “oil” poured upon this offering may signify the grace of the Spirit without measure on Christ; and the “frankincense” how savoury and acceptable he is to his people. The “drink offering” was of wine, which went along with other sacrifices, and was very acceptable to God; and may denote the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed; and his love expressed in shedding it, which is better than the choicest wine; both these are held forth, Christ’s flesh, which is meat, and his blood, which is drink, in the ordinance of the supper, administered by his priests, whom he furnishes with such offerings to set before his saints:

in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, and in all solemnities of the house of Israel; in the feasts of the passover, tabernacle, and pentecost, which were all figures of Christ; of his being the passover sacrificed for us, of his tabernacling in our nature, and of the effusion of his Spirit; and the “new moons”, and “sabbaths”, and “solemn days”, are only Old Testament phrases to express the times of New Testament worship; (see ^{262B}Isaiah 66:23), as monthly days for the administration of the ordinance of the supper, and the Lord’s day for the preaching of the word, and other parts of public worship; in all which the sacrifice of Christ, his blood, righteousness, and satisfaction, make a principal part:

he shall prepare the sin offering; which also was a type of Christ; of which (see Gill on “^{261B}Ezekiel 40:39”), and this, with the

meat offering; and the burnt offering, of which before, were to be prepared by the prince himself, or our Lord Jesus Christ: and also the “peace offerings”, or thank offerings^{f824}; his own thank offerings for himself and his people; (see ⁸¹¹⁴John 11:41 ⁸¹¹²⁵Matthew 11:25,26) and the thank offerings of them, or their sacrifices of praise, which become acceptable through him, (⁸⁸³⁵Hebrews 13:15 ⁸¹¹¹⁵1 Peter 2:5), and even

himself, for whom the saints offer thanks to God, (~~2~~2 Corinthians 9:15 ~~1~~Ephesians 1:3 5:20), and as the end of all the legal sacrifices was

to make reconciliation for the house of Israel; so this is the end and use of the sacrifice of Christ, typified by them, to make peace for the Israel of God; which could not be made by them, by their obedience, repentance, or faith; and yet was necessary to their happiness, to their communion with God, and enjoyment of him; this Christ has made by his obedience, sufferings, and death, whereby he has fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, and made atonement for sin: this is all at his expense, and is meant by his “preparing” these offerings; which denotes his ready and cheerful engagement to become a sacrifice; his voluntary offering up himself unto God, or giving himself an offering and a sacrifice unto him; and also his furnishing his ministers with proper matter for their ministrations in all the solemn times and seasons thereof, which is the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction, or salvation by a crucified Christ; and so as the people are to offer to their maintenance, Christ the Prince takes care to furnish them for their ministry.

Ver. 18. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Here begins the account of the times and seasons in which the above sacrifices should be prepared and offered; or that which was signified by them be held forth in the ministry of the word to the faith of God’s people:

in the first month, in the first day of the month; the month Nisan, as Kimchi observes, who adds,

“which is the month of redemption, in which Israel were redeemed out of Egypt, and in which they shall be redeemed in time to come:”

this month answers to part of our March and part of April; it was the first month in the year with the Jews for their ecclesiastical affairs; so that the first day of this month was New Year’s Day:

thou shall take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary; or, “make a sin offering for it”^{f825}; here the Jews are puzzled; since, according to the law of Moses, in the beginnings of their months, they were to offer a burnt offering of two young bullocks and a ram, &c. (~~1~~Numbers 28:11), whereas here only one bullock, and that a sin offering; wherefore R. Jochanan and R. Judah say, this must be left till Elijah comes to explain it; and as much at a loss are they how to account

for it that Ezekiel should do this, whom they suppose to be the person spoken to; and therefore imagine this will be done by him after the resurrection, not being able to see that this shows the abrogation of the law of Moses; and that not the Prophet Ezekiel, but Christ the Prince and Priest, is here addressed; and whose sacrifice is designed by the young bullock without blemish; a type of him both in his strength and purity; and by which his sanctuary, his church and people, have all their sins expiated; and particularly the sins of the year past, this being represented as done on New Year's Day, which the annual atonement prefigured.

Ver. 19. *And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, &c.*] An emblem of the blood of Christ, who was made sin for his people, and an offering for their sin; and which blood cleanses from all sin:

and put it upon the posts of the house; of the house of God, the sanctuary or temple; upon everyone of the posts of it, which stood at the entrance into it. The Targum is

“upon the threshold of the house:”

and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar; or four horns of it; (see ~~4614~~ Ezekiel 43:14,15):

and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court; that is, of the temple: this is also a new rule or law about putting the blood of the sacrifice into these various places, of which nothing is said in the law of Moses; and shows that admission into the church of God, and the right participation of Christ, the altar, and the blessings of his grace, as well as entrance into heaven itself, are all through the blood of Christ.

Ver. 20. *And so thou shall do the seventh day of the month, &c.*] Of the first month Nisan; here is another new rule or law, as Kimchi owns, of which no mention is made in the law of Moses:

for everyone that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house; or, “expiate” it^{f826}; make atonement for it; that is, for the house of God, the whole church, all his people; particularly for fallen believers, who have gone astray, either in principle or practice; through ignorance and simplicity, through the prevalence of corruption, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world; but are recovered again, and brought to repentance; to whom the doctrines of peace and reconciliation, of free and full pardon by the blood of Christ, and of atonement of all their sins by his

sacrifice, are to be preached for the comfort and refreshment of their souls; and they are to be received into the church, having their consciences sprinkled by the blood of Christ; the same things being done on this day as on the first. Jarchi thinks these words are to be transposed thus,

and ye shall reconcile, or “expiate the house from the man that erreth, and the simple one”: quite contrary to the design of the text, which directs to the reception, and not the exclusion, of such persons.

Ver. 21. *In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month*, &c.] Of the month Nisan, that day fortnight from the cleansing of the sanctuary; and that day week from the expiation of the house, and the recovery and reception of backsliders:

ye shall have the passover; Christ the passover sacrificed for us; held forth in the ministry of the word, and in the ordinance of the Lord’s supper; for the passover was a type of Christ: his purity and strength were signified by the lamb without blemish, a male of the first year; his separation to his office, his death, and the time of it, by the taking of this lamb from the flock some time before, and by slaying it between the two evenings; the manner of feeding on him, with fervent faith, and as a whole Saviour, attended with true repentance, and being willing also to suffer for him, by the lamb being eaten not raw, nor sodden, but roasted, and all of it, and with bitter herbs; and the security of his people by his blood from wrath and ruin, through the sprinkling it upon their consciences, by the sprinkling the blood of the passover on the lintel and door posts of the Israelites, which the Lord seeing passed by, and destroyed them not; and the new rules of keeping this passover, after observed, show that this respects not the type, but the antitype:

a feast of seven days; kept a whole week; and indeed Christ the passover is by faith to be lived upon throughout the week, as well as on Lord’s days, and indeed in every week:

unleavened bread shall be eaten; and not leavened; with reference to which the Gospel feast is to be kept, not with old leaven, with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, (~~1~~1 Corinthians 5:7,8).

Ver. 22. *And upon that day*, &c.] The fourteenth day of the month Nisan; the first day of the passover, as Kimchi observes:

shall the prince prepare for himself, and for all the people of the land, a bullock for a sin offering; here everything again is new, as the above Jewish writer observes; no one circumstance according to the law of Moses; which shows that this respects Gospel times; when the law would be null and void, the types and shadows gone, and the antitype take place, Christ the sum of all; under the law, every family was to prepare a lamb for themselves; but here the prince is to prepare for himself, and all the people of the land; by that it was to be a lamb, here a bullock, and that for a sin offering; whereas not a bullock, but a goat, was used for a sin offering. Christ himself is this Prince, and who has prepared himself a sacrifice, even for himself, his church, which is mystically himself; and to make atonement for all those sins which he took upon himself by imputation, and made his own; even for all his chosen people, and for all their sins: of his preparing this sacrifice, both to be offered up, and to be held forth in the ministry of the word, (see Gill on “⁻²⁶⁵⁷⁻Ezekiel 45:17”), and who is very fitly represented by a bullock for his labouriousness and strength, in bearing the sins of his people, when he became an offering for them.

Ver. 23. *And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the Lord, &c.]* Which is as follows:

seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; that is, a bullock and a ram for each day:

and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering; all which were typical of Christ, signified by the “bullock”, for his labour and patience; by the “ram”, for his strength; and by the kid of the goats, for his likeness of sinful flesh, and having the sins of his people reckoned to him; which made him of ill savour to the justice and holiness of God, and for which he fell a sacrifice. This is also different from the law of Moses, which required two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs, (⁻⁰⁴³⁹⁻Numbers 28:19) and therefore Jarchi confesses he knew not how to make this Scripture stand, or establish the sense of it.

Ver. 24. *And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, &c.]* Of the meat offering, (see Gill on “⁻²⁶⁵⁷⁻Ezekiel 45:17”), this was to consist of an ephah of fine flour; and for every bullock on each of the seven days of the passover was a meat offering of such a quantity to be made:

and an ephah for a ram; a like quantity of fine flour was to be made into a meat offering for every ram on the same days:

and an hin of oil for an ephah; to every ephah of fine flour was, to be allowed an hin of oil, which, according to Bishop Cumberland, was a gallon and two pints, being the sixth part of an ephah or bath: here also, as Kimchi observes, will be an innovation in the offerings in future times, whether we will or not, he says; and Jarchi confesses his ignorance of these things; since, according to the law, three tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour were only allowed to make a meat offering for one bullock, and two tenth parts for a ram, (⁴⁰⁸²Numbers 28:12), this may denote the more abundance of grace, and of the knowledge of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, and especially in the latter day glory.

Ver. 25. *In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, &c.*] The month Tisri, which answers to part of our September and October:

shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days; the feast of tabernacles, which began the fifteenth of Tisri, and was kept seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, which is not here taken notice of: this feast was in commemoration of the Jews dwelling in tabernacles in the wilderness; and was typical of Christ's tabernacling in our nature, or of his incarnation; and which feast is to be kept in Gospel times, and particularly in the latter day, by believing in the incarnate Saviour, and in all the blessings flowing from his incarnation; and by attending the Gospel feast, his word and ordinances, which hold him forth as the only Saviour; (see Gill on ³⁸⁴⁶Zechariah 14:16"), now, the same things are to be done at this feast as at the feast of the passover:

according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil: that is, so many bullocks and rams for the burnt offering, and a kid of the goats for the sin offering, as before; and the same quantity of fine flour and oil for the meat offering: this also is a new thing, as Kimchi observes; for, according to the law, the sacrifices at the feast of passover, and at the feast of tabernacles, were very different; and it might be further observed, that no notice is taken of the feast of pentecost, or first fruits; and the whole confirms what has been already observed, that this shows the abrogation of the Mosaic economy; and that these things are to be understood in a spiritual and evangelic sense.

CHAPTER 46

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 46

This chapter treats of the shutting of the eastern gate of the inner court on working days, and opening it on sabbaths and new moons, for the prince and people to worship in, (²³⁴⁰Ezekiel 46:1-3), gives a further account of the sacrifices of both at these seasons, and of their different ways of going in and out, (²³⁴⁰Ezekiel 46:4-15), delivers some rules about the prince's disposing of his gifts to his sons and servants, (²³⁴⁶Ezekiel 46:16-18) and describes the places for the priest's baking and boiling the sacrifices, (²³⁴⁹Ezekiel 46:19-24).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Which is premised, to raise the greater attention to what is about to be said: the gate of the inner court that looketh towards the east; the eastern gate of the inner court; the court of the priests, where stood the altar of burnt offerings, and where they offered the sacrifices for atonement; and seems, in the mystical sense, to design the ministry of the Gospel, which is a ministry of reconciliation; which holds forth Christ as the altar saints have a right to eat of; and who is the sacrifice for sin, and has made reconciliation for it; and, where this is preached, he, the angel descending from the east, comes; here appears the rising sun, the sun of righteousness, who arises on those that fear his name, and love his Gospel, with healing in his wings: this gate

shall be shut the six working days; which seems to be the same with the gate of the outward sanctuary, (²³⁴⁰Ezekiel 44:1,2) said to be always shut, and never opened; but by what follows here it appears that that must be understood with some exception and limitation: the six working days are the six days of the week in which men should labour, and do all the work and business of their callings, that they may thereby provide for themselves and families, and have wherewith to give to the poor; during which time the public ministry of the word is intermitted, that men may not be taken off of their necessary and lawful employments; and that the ministers of the word may have sufficient time to prepare in their studies for their ministerial service:

but on the sabbath it shall be opened; by which is meant, not the Jewish sabbath now abrogated in the times this vision refers to; but the Lord's day, called by this Jewish name: and this being opposed to the six working days, shows that it ought to be kept by abstinence from all civil, corporeal, and servile works, as well as from dead works or sins, and in the exercise of all religious duties, private and public; and particularly in attendance on the ministry of the word, the gate now opened; and which is sometimes expressed by opening the door of faith, and is called an open door; and may be said to be so when ministers have an opportunity without, and great freedom within themselves, to preach it; and when the doors of men's hearts are opened to attend to it, and many souls are gathered to Christ, and into his churches, by it; (see ~~Acts~~ Acts 14:27 ~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 16:9 ~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 2:12):

and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened; on stated monthly days, in which the churches of Christ meet together for religious service: the new moon, which is an emblem of new light, and an increase of it, is very suitable to express the Gospel dispensation; in which, as Cocceius observes, there are some particular seasons that may be called so; as the coming of Christ into the world; his resurrection from the dead; the pouring forth of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost; the destruction of the temple, and temple service; the peace and prosperity of the Christian churches in the times of Constantine; the morning star of the reformation; and the call of God's people out of Babylon at the destruction of it; at all which times there has been, or will be, an opening of this eastern gate, or a free, and glorious ministration of the Gospel. Some think these six working days design this life, which is the time of working, after which there will be none but an eternal sabbath or rest; and that, for the present, saints live and walk by faith, and not by sight; divine and heavenly things are greatly shut up, and out of sight; but then it will be new moon, as well as sabbath, and all things will be seen clearly; but the former sense I think is best, which yet I leave to the judgment of others. This Kimchi says is a new thing, that will be in time to come.

Ver. 2. *And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without*, &c.] That is, by the way of the porch of the eastern gate, even the outermost gate of the porch; for, as every gate had a porch, so every porch had two gates, one at one end, and the other at the other; now this was the outermost gate of the porch, which looked to the outward court, and not that which led into the inner:

and shall stand by the post of the gate; this denotes the presence of Christ, the Prince with his people waiting at Wisdom's gate, and watching at the posts of her door. The allusion seems to be to the king's pillar in the temple, where he used to stand, (^{<4233>}2 Chronicles 23:13). Some understand this of Christ's incarnation, of his entrance into the world, and his standing before his Father, and praying for his people, as he did in the garden, and a little before his death, as recorded (^{<4170>}John 17:1-26).

and the priests shall prepare his burnt offerings, and his peace offerings; that is, shall offer them. The meaning is, that the ministers shall preach Christ and him crucified, who, by his sacrifice, has made atonement for sin, and peace for his people; though some interpret this of the concern the priests had in the crucifixion and death of Christ:

and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate; of the other gate that led into the inner court, and where he could see all that was done in it: or bow^{f827}; which it is observed he did, when he fell prostrate in the garden, and when he expired on the cross, and was at the threshold of the gate of heaven launching into eternity: worship and adoration, or bowing, be ascribed to Christ as man; (see ^{<4022>}John 4:22):

then shall he go forth; out of this world to his Father, and be seen no more, until the restitution of all things; though this and the preceding may be understood of Christ's mystical worshipping; or of his people, who are one with him; and of their departure from public worship, when it is over:

but the gate shall not be shut until the evening; of the sabbath, or new moon; or the evening of the world, the second coming of Christ; the Gospel ministry and ordinances will continue till then, and no longer; and this is owing to his powerful and prevalent intercession in heaven, whither he is gone then the door will be shut, and not before, (^{<4250>}Matthew 25:10).

Ver. 3. *Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord, &c.*] Publicly, and in a spiritual manner; attending the ministration of the word and ordinances with constancy and fervency; praying to God, praising his name, and hearing his word with attention; and performing all the duties of religious worship. The allusion is to the people of Israel meeting at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, (^{<4290>}Exodus 29:42): "in the sabbaths, and in the new moons"; at their stated weekly and monthly meetings; (see ^{<2923>}Isaiah 66:23).

Ver. 4. *And the burnt offering the prince shall offer unto the Lord in the sabbath day, &c.*] In (³⁵¹⁷Ezekiel 45:17), it is said to be the prince's part to give and prepare sacrifices in the feasts, new moons, sabbaths, and all solemnities; and there follows an account of them, for New Year's Day, and for the feasts of passover and tabernacles; and here an account is given of those for the sabbaths and new moons; which is very properly reserved for this place, to follow the account of the opening of the eastern gate at those seasons: and the burnt offering for the sabbath shall be

six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish; according to the law of Moses, only two lambs were the burnt offering for this day, besides the continual one, (⁴⁸⁰Numbers 28:9,10), here Jarchi confesses his ignorance; and Kimchi says it is a new thing; and indeed it is, and is a proof of the ceremonial law being now abolished. These seven denote the perfect sacrifice of Christ, by which he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified; and being without blemish, the purity and holiness of it; and as the people of God on the six working days commit much sin, and contract much guilt, the sacrifice of Christ is signified by six lambs, which it is necessary they should hear of, and it should be set before them in the ministry of the word on Lord's days, which is meant by the offering of it; that they may by faith apply it to themselves, to the removal of sin from their consciences, and take the comfort of it; as the one ram may denote the one sacrifice of Christ, though typified by many; and who, like the ram, is the leader and guide of the flock: now, more creatures being offered for this burnt offering than under the law, denotes the clearer knowledge of the sacrifice of Christ under the Gospel, and the more extensive efficacy of it, to the removal of the guilt of sin from the Lord's people.

Ver. 5. *And the meat offering shall be an ephah for a ram, &c.*] (See Gill on "³⁵²⁴Ezekiel 45:24"):

and the meat offering for the lambs as he shall be able to give; or, and "the gift of his hand"¹⁸²⁸; it was fixed and stinted under the law, (⁴⁸⁰Numbers 28:9), but now should be free and voluntary, and according to the ability of the giver; that is, the preacher of the word, who officiates for the prince, and in his name, and sets before the people the meat, or rather bread offering, Christ the bread of life, freely, and according to the ability and measure of the gift of grace bestowed upon him:

and an hin of oil to an ephah; which was also a larger quantity than under the law, denoting the larger measure of the gifts and graces of the Spirit,

signified by oil, given unto the ministers of the word, and the people also; (see Gill on “²⁶⁵²Ezekiel 45:24”).

Ver. 6. *And in the day of the new moon it shall be a young bullock without blemish, &c.]* This is also different from the law of Moses, which required two young bullocks and a ram, and seven lambs, (⁴⁰⁸¹Numbers 28:11), whereas here only one bullock:

and six lambs, and a ram; they shall be without blemish; and here Kimchi acknowledges again that this is a new thing to be done in future time. Some have observed, that the seven lambs under the law showed that perfection might be hoped for and expected; but, there being but six now, that this is not yet attained, nor will be till the saints get to heaven; though perfection is come by the priesthood of Christ, whose sacrifice is a perfect and complete one, and by which his people are perfected, and they are complete in him, yet they have no perfection in themselves.

Ver. 7. *And he shall prepare a meat offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, &c.]* (See Gill on “²⁶⁵²Ezekiel 45:24”):

and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah; (See Gill on “²⁶⁴⁵Ezekiel 46:5”).

Ver. 8. *And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate, &c.]* (See Gill on “²⁶⁴⁰Ezekiel 46:2”);

and he shall go forth by the way thereof; the same way he came in, he shall go out; not so the people; and, to introduce the manner of their going in and out, this is repeated concerning the prince.

Ver. 9. *But when the people of the land shall come before the Lord in the solemn feasts, &c.]* To worship the Lord, to pray and praise; to honour the Lord, and keep the solemn feast of love, the Lord’s supper:

he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth in by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate; that so such as were coming in, and going out, might not meet, and stop and hinder one another in going out and coming in: no mention is made of entering in by the east gate, which was only for the prince, (²⁶⁴⁰Ezekiel 44:1,2), and there was no entering in, or going out, on the west:

he shall not return by the way of the gate he came in, but shall go forth over against it; signifying, that those that come to the house of God to worship, and join in communion with the saints, should not return to their former ways and practices; to their former rites, customs, and ceremonies in religion, used by them; and to their former principles and errors in doctrines; and to their former sinful courses of life; but go straight on and thorough stitch with it in their profession of Christ and his Gospel, and in the practice of spiritual and evangelic worship; (see ~~HEB~~ Luke 9:62 ~~HEB~~ Hebrews 10:38,39).

Ver. 10. *And the prince in the midst of them,* &c.] Christ in the midst of his people while worshipping; this situation of him agrees with all the descriptions of him; as the Angel in the midst of the bush on fire, and not consumed; as among the myrtle trees in the bottom; as walking in the midst of his golden candlesticks; as the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God; and as King, Priest, and Prophet, in his house; and with all the declarations and promises of his grace; and which is true in fact: and the phrase is expressive of his presence, not merely of his essential, powerful, and providential presence, common to all, but of his gracious presence with his people; he is in the midst of them, to assist them in every service; to protect them from every enemy; to sympathize with them in all their troubles; to deliver out of them; to supply them with all needful grace; and to rule over them, and defend them: and his being here shows that he is to be seen of all, to be come at and enjoyed by them; than which nothing is more desirable, and nothing more encouraging in the worship of God:

when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth; when they go to the throne of grace, for grace and mercy to help in time of need, he goes with them; their access is through him; he introduces their persons, presents their petitions, is their advocate and intercessor for them, and for his sake they are heard and accepted: when they go into the house of God, and to the ordinances of it; when they go in and out to find pasture, he goes in with them, and before them, as the shepherd of the flock, and leads them into green pastures; he teaches them how to go in and out, and to behave themselves in the church of God; he is their guide, by way of instruction, both by his word and by his Spirit: when they go out from public service to their own houses, he goes with them, and by his Spirit brings to their remembrance what they have heard; and when they go forth into the world again, and the business of it, he goes forth with them, to preserve them from the evil of the world, and to keep them from falling;

and when they go forth out of the world at death, he is with them through the dark valley; he sees them safe over Jordan's river, and introduces them into the heavenly Canaan, into his kingdom and glory, where they are for ever with him.

Ver. 11. *And in the feasts, and in the solemnities, &c.]* Or, "appointed times"^{f829}; for public worship, for the ministration of the word and ordinances, which are feasts and solemn seasons; (See Gill on "²⁵⁶⁵Ezekiel 45:15"). Kimchi observes a difference between these two; and that though all feasts are called solemnities, or fixed seasons, (⁰²³⁴Leviticus 23:4), yet there are some solemnities that are not feasts, (⁰⁰¹⁴Genesis 1:14 18:14):

the meat offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah; the same to be done on all feasts and solemnities as on the sabbath day; (See Gill on "²⁵⁶⁵Ezekiel 46:5").

Ver. 12. *Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering, or peace offerings voluntarily unto the Lord, &c.]* That is, on week days, distinct from sabbath days, new moons, feasts, and solemnities, of which before; and seems to have respect to week day lectures, in distinction from the weekly and monthly stated times, for the ministry of the word and administration of the Lord's supper; in which lectures the principal thing insisted on must be the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and peace and reconciliation made by his blood; for the Gospel, which is to be preached in season and out of season, is the ministry of reconciliation, or the word preaching peace by Jesus Christ; and which should at all times be held forth, to the faith of God's people; which is meant by the preparation of these offerings: and being voluntary ones show not only that Christ's sacrifice was a willing one, and offered without any reluctance, with all readiness and cheerfulness; but also that week day lectures are voluntary things, which men are not under necessary obligation to attend unto, either ministers or people, but is a matter of free choice, as their circumstances will admit; and yet are acceptable to God, and agreeable to the will of Christ, the Prince, said to prepare these free will offerings:

one shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east: the place where he stood and worshipped on the sabbath day; on the evening of which it was shut, and remained so the six days of the week, (²⁵⁶¹Ezekiel 46:1,2) only when it was the prince's pleasure to offer a sacrifice, or to have the word preached, it was opened by one of the porters of the gates;

or there was an open exercise of the ministry of the word, by one of the preachers of it:

and he shall prepare his burnt offerings, and his peace offerings, as he did on the sabbath day; the same doctrine, respecting the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, must be delivered at such times, as on Lord's days:

then he shall go forth; and after his going forth one shall shut the gate; on the sabbath day, or the Lord's day, it was not to be shut till the evening, because that day is wholly to be devoted to the service of God; men are not to find their own ways, nor do their own work, nor seek their own pleasure; but on week days, when the lecture is over, the gate is shut immediately, and persons may return to their worldly business directly.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the Lord, &c.]*

Called the daily sacrifice, (^{<281>}Daniel 8:11,12,13) typical of Christ's sacrifice, which has a continual daily virtue in it, to take away the sins of his people; and which ought to be looked unto faith, and pleaded by them for that purpose every day (^{<302>}John 1:29):

of a lamb of the first year without a blemish; a type of Christ the Lamb of God, without spot and blemish, strong and able, and so fit and proper to be a sacrifice for the sins of others:

thou shalt prepare it every morning; or, "morning by morning"^{f830}; this seems to be said not to the prince, but rather to the prophet, and indeed to every believer; who should, every morning he rises, look to Christ as the atoning sacrifice for sin, whose blood continually cleanses from it, and who is always in the midst of the throne as a lamb that had been slain, and ever lives to make intercession; and as the mercies of the Lord's people are renewed every morning, they should renew their thankfulness to God as often, and bring this lamb with them, through whose sacrifice their sacrifices of praise become acceptable. No mention is made of the evening sacrifice; (see ^{<0238>}Exodus 29:38,39), which some think is included in the morning burnt offering. Kimchi thinks that in future time this was not to be offered, only the morning sacrifice; but the true reason is, Christ has appeared once in the evening of the world, and offered up himself; yea, it was literally in the evening, or decline of the day, when he suffered, or between the two evenings, whereby he answered the type of the passover lamb; hence no evening sacrifice is mentioned, Christ's being offered up.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for morning, &c.*] That is, for the daily burnt offering to go along with it; prayer and thanksgiving for our temporal and spiritual food, which should be done every morning:

the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; to mix with it, and moisten it: under the law, only a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, and a fourth part of a hin of oil, were ordered to make this meat offering of, (⁽¹²⁹⁰⁾Exodus 29:40), wherefore Kimchi observes, this is a new thing in time to come: the reason of it is this; to show us, that as the blessings of grace abound under the Gospel dispensation, we should abound in our thanksgiving to God:

a meat offering, continually, by a perpetual ordinance unto the Lord; these sorts of sacrifices are never to cease; and so the Jews^{f831} themselves say,

“in future time, or in the days of the Messiah, all sacrifices shall cease; but the sacrifice of praise shall not cease.”

Ver. 15. *Thus shall they prepare, &c.*] This shows that not a single person is meant in the preceding verses, but all the Lord's people; who are all priests unto God, and who are to offer up daily spiritual sacrifices unto him:

the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil every morning, for a continual burnt offering; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and to excite a careful and constant attention to it.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Having finished the account of the sacrifices of the prince and people, the monthly, weekly, and daily ones; here his gifts are treated of, which are two fold; some given to his sons, others to his servants:

if the prince give a gift to any of his sons; Christ, the Prince, has sons; he that is the Prince, of peace is the everlasting Father; he has children given unto him, whom he preserves; a seed promised him in covenant, which shall always endure; a family he is master of, and cares for; for whose sake he became incarnate, suffered, and died: they are sons by adopting grace, and in their adoption he has a great concern; they are predestinated to it by him; they receive it through him; he gives them power to become the sons of God, and they are manifestatively so through faith in him; they appear to be his sons, or are evidenced as such by their regeneration, which also is of

him: it is by his Spirit they are regenerated; it is his grace that is implanted in them; it is he himself that is formed in them, and his image that is stamped upon them; it is owing to his word and Gospel as the means and to his resurrection as the virtual cause of it; it is in his church they are born, yea, of her, to whom he stands in the relation of a husband, and so they are sons brought forth to him by her; and these are princes by birth, have a free and princely spirit, and are brought up and provided for as such: now to these Christ gives gifts; gifts of special grace, all sorts of grace; sanctifying grace, faith, hope, love, repentance, &c.; justifying grace, the gift of righteousness; pardoning grace; adopting grace; all supplies of grace; spiritual strength, peace, joy and comfort; and persevering grace, to hold out to the end: and he also gives glory or eternal life; this is with him, in his hands; he has a power to give and he does give it, to all his sons; all which, being once given, ever continue.

The inheritance thereof shall be his sons', it shall be their possession by inheritance; that is, it shall ever remain with them, shall never be taken away from them; these are gifts and calling without repentance, irreversible blessings, which are for ever: sanctifying grace is a well of living water, springing up unto eternal life; faith, hope, and love, always abide; Christ's justifying righteousness is an everlasting one; pardon of sin is of all sin, past, present, and to come, and is never made void or called in; once children of God, and always such; and the inheritance of heaven is incorruptible, never fading, and eternal; and all this flows from the unchangeable love of God and Christ to these sons of the prince.

Ver. 17. *But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, &c.]* Who are not his sons, but his hired servants, and who serve him in a mercenary way; such are unregenerate ministers of the word, who preach Christ in pretence, and not in reality, for by ends, to serve themselves, and not him, or to advance his glory; and all carnal professors, who have only an outside of religion, a form of godliness without the power of it: to these Christ gives gifts, the gifts of nature, wealth, and riches, to some, to whom he gives not grace; these are his left hand blessings, which are given to the men of the world, who have their portion in this life: to others external means, the word and ordinances, but not internal special grace; yea, to some, gifts for the ministry, so as to be able to prophesy or preach in his name, which are meant by the talents, and pounds in the parable; some of which were given to slothful and unprofitable servants; (see ^{<4123>} Matthew 7:20,23 25:14,15,30).

Then it shall be his to the year of liberty; the servant's to whom it is given, as long as the prince pleases; who when they make no use, or an ill use of them, takes them away in lifetime, and gives them to those that have more, and employ them to better purpose, (³⁸¹¹⁷Zechariah 11:17 ⁴¹²³⁸Matthew 25:28,29), or however at death, which is a time of liberty from civil bondage, the servant is free from his master; and when good men are freed from the oppression of others, and from sin, Satan, and the world, and are delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; this is a year of liberty indeed to them; and then all external gifts to others, as riches, are held no longer; the word and ordinances no more enjoyed; prophesying, speaking with tongues, and all mere natural knowledge, cease, and vanish away, (⁴¹³¹⁸1 Corinthians 13:8), the allusion is to the year of jubilee, when liberty was proclaimed throughout the land, and every man returned to his possession, and to his family, (⁴²⁵¹⁰Leviticus 25:10), and so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it of the year of jubilee; a type of the heavenly glory, and of the joy of the Lord, which Christ's faithful servants enter into; and when there will be a manifest difference between them and slothful servants, and the gifts of the one and of the other, and of their use of them, as well as between sons and servants:

after it shall return to the prince; signifying that such gifts are not durable; they are revertible to the donor of them; who will call these servants to an account for them at death or judgment, if not in time of life:

but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them; the prince's inheritance shall be theirs; for being sons they are heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: or that which is given them for an inheritance shall always continue; it shall never be taken from them or returned; but it shall be their own, for themselves, and enjoy it for ever; which is a confirmation of what is said in the preceding verse.

Ver. 18. *Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession, &c.*] Christ, the Prince, will never do this; he will never take any part of his people's inheritance from them, or thrust them out of the possession of any benefit or blessing of grace; they have chosen that good part which shall never be taken from them, (⁴¹⁰⁴²Luke 10:42), this is said, not as a direction to the prince, as a law enjoined him, or a caution to him against oppression; but as expressing his clemency, grace, and goodness to his subjects, and their safety and security under him:

but he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession; whatever Christ gives his sons, whether present grace, or future glory, it is out of his own possession; for all that the Father has are his; all the blessings of goodness are with him; all the fulness of grace is in him; the eternal inheritance is reserved with him in heaven; and it is all his own he gives, and not another's:

that my people be not scattered every man from his possession; or, "that therefore my people may not be scattered every" "men from his possession"^{f832}; because what is given them, and they are in possession of, was Christ's own, and not another's; and which he had a right to dispose of, and therefore they need not fear being dispossessed by another claimant.

Ver. 19. *After he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, &c.*] The north gate of the inner court, where the prophet was last, (^{3640E}Ezekiel 44:4), through an entry, by the side of that, he was brought by the man his guide:

into the holy chambers of the priests; (see ^{3623E}Ezekiel 42:13):

and, behold, there was a place in the two sides westward; or, "on their sides westward"^{f833}; on the west side of the chambers; the Targum is at the west end of them: the use of this place follows,

Ver. 20. *Then said he unto me, &c.*] Declaring what this place was, and what it was for:

this is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass offering, and the sin offering; this was the priests' kitchen, in which they prepared the sacrifices that were to be eaten; and which were typical of Christ, who was made sin, and became a sacrifice for the sins of his people, whether presumptuous ones, or sins of ignorance; the doctrine of whose sacrifice and satisfaction is a principal part of the Gospel ministry; and which should be delivered, not in a raw, crude, and indigested manner; but the Scriptures should be diligently searched into, to get a clear and distinct understanding of it; and these should be constantly meditated on, and thoroughly studied: ministers should examine their doctrine by the word of God before they deliver it; and take heed unto it that it is right, according to the oracles of God, and the proportion of faith; and take care to deliver it in the best manner, not in a cold lukewarm way, but with fervency of spirit; all which may be meant by the boiling of these sacrifices; it seems to design the

laborious and diligent employ of Gospel ministers in their studies, preparatory to their public work in the house of God; and suggests that they should not come thither unprepared, and deliver out unpremeditated matter; or set before the Lord's people undigested food; or offer that in the sanctuary of the Lord which cost them no pains or trouble: this place, and so the boiling places in (^{<3424>}Ezekiel 46:24), are to be understood of the closets, studies, and places of retirement, where the ministers of the word employ their time and thoughts in preparing for their public ministry; for these were without the sanctuary, on the side of the priests' chambers, and in the corners of the outward court:

where they shall bake the meat offering; or "bread offering"^{f834}; made of fine flour and oil; typical of Christ the bread of God, the food of believers, who is set forth as such to them in the ministry of the Gospel: the baking of this signifies the same as the boiling of the other before; (see ^{<3012>}Leviticus 2:1,4,5,7):

that they bear them not out in the utter court, to sanctify the people; that they might not be carried through the outer court, where the common people were; lest they should think it was lawful for them to eat of them as Kimchi observes, when they belonged to the priests only; or lest they should touch them, and become holy thereby, and so for the future be employed in sacred service, and obliged to quit the duties of their calling, which would, introduce confusion in the commonwealth; (see ^{<3012>}Haggai 2:12), the Targum is,

"lest they be mixed with the people."

The design seems to be to show, that the doctrine of peace, pardon, atonement, and satisfaction for sin, is only to be preached as belonging to such that truly repent of sin, and believe in Christ; and particularly that the ordinance of the Lord's supper, in which the sacrifice of Christ is held forth and commemorated, is to be administered, not to men in common, but to holy and regenerate persons; to do otherwise would be to cast pearls before swine, and give that which is holy to dogs.

Ver. 21. *Then he brought me forth into the utter court, &c.]* From the holy chambers of the priests, and from viewing the place where they boiled the sacrifices, and baked the meat offering:

and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; in each of the four corners of the outward court there was another court; signifying that there will be courts or churches in the several parts of the world in the latter day.

Ver. 22. *In the four corners of the court there were courts joined, &c.]* To the side walls of the outward court, which met in right angles: or, “were made with chimneys”^{f835}, as some render it; that the smoke of the fire of the kitchens in them, and the steam of the boiled flesh, might ascend through them. So the Jewish writers, as Jarchi and Kimchi, from the Misnah^{f836}, generally interpret the word, that these courts were made so as to let out the smoke, and were not roofed or floored over^{f837}; and in which treatise and also by Maimonides^{f838}; the uses of them in the second temple are observed: for in answer to the question, what do they serve for? it is said, at the southeast was the chamber of the Nazarites, where they boiled their peace offerings, and shaved their hair, and put them under the pot; at the northeast was the wood chamber, where the priests that had blemishes wormed the wood; and any wood, in which a worm was found, was rejected from the altar: at the northwest was the chamber of the lepers: of that which was at the southwest, saith R. Eliezer Ben Jacob, I have forgot (some render it found) of what use it is; but Abba Saul says, there they put the wine and oil, wherefore it was called the oil chamber. These four chambers, according to the same treatise, were in the four corners of the court of the women, and consisted of forty cubits long, but were not roofed; and so, they say, they will be in future time, according to this passage of Scripture. These places, as Dr. Lightfoot^{f839} observes, are called by the prophet “courts”, and in everyone of them places to boil the sacrifices in; and yet they are allotted to other uses in the Misnah, and which seem to require that they should be roofed; all which may consist together, he says: for, grant everyone of these spaces to be built within, with chambers round about, there might be very fair chambers, and yet a good handsome open court in the middle; at either end chambers of ten cubits broad, and yet an open space of twenty cubits between; and on either side chambers of seven or eight cubits broad, and yet an open space of fourteen or sixteen cubits between: thus therefore, adds he, it seems to be, that there were fair chambers round about, which were roofed over as other buildings; and in the middle was an open court, round about which were boiling ranges, whose chimneys went up in the inner walls of the chambers, or the walls to the open place: thus the inner court served for

boiling places, and the rooms round about for other uses; see the two following verses. The measure of the courts were,

of forty cubits long, and thirty broad; an oblong quadrangle:

these four corners were of one measure; the courts that were in these four corners were, of the same measure, as to length and breadth; denoting the equality of Gospel churches, being of the same faith, order and discipline, power and authority.

Ver. 23. *And there was a row of building round about in them, &c.]*

Within the courts, not on the outside of them: these were either chambers to eat the sacrifices in when boiled; or they were sheds which covered the cooks, and the meat they were boiling, from the rain, &c.: the Targum renders it,

“and walls were made to them round about;”

to the court: and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret this row of building of a stone wall:

round about them four; the four courts at the four corners:

and it was made with boiling places under the rows round about; under these rows of building, chambers or sheds; or under these stone walls were furnaces, and coppers, and caldrons, set on them, for the boiling of the sacrifices.

Ver. 24. *Then said he unto me, these are the places of them that boil, &c.]*

The kitchens, in which those whose business it was to boil the sacrifices did it; and who they were are next declared:

where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people;

these seem to be the Levites, as distinct from the priests before mentioned; though in this prophecy they are both used of the same persons; (see ³⁴¹⁵Ezekiel 44:15), the sacrifice of the people were the peace offerings, which the people might eat of, but were first to be boiled; typical of peace and reconciliation made by Christ, held forth in the ministry of the word, called from thence the word of reconciliation: of the boiling of sacrifices, (see Gill on “³⁴¹⁵Ezekiel 44:15”). The Targum is,

“the holy sacrifices of the people;”

(see ⁵¹¹Romans 12:1 ³⁸¹⁶Hebrews 13:16 ⁴¹⁸⁵1 Peter 2:5).

CHAPTER 47

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 47

This chapter gives an account of the vision of the holy waters, and of the borders of the holy land, and the division of it to Israelites and strangers. The waters are described by the original and spring of them, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:1,2), by the progress and increase of them, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:3-5), by the healing and quickening nature of them, and the places where they were so, and were not, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:8-11), and by the trees which grew upon the banks of them, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:6,7,12). The borders of the holy land are fixed, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:13,14), the northern border, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:15-17), the eastern border, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:18), the southern, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:19), and the western, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:20), which is to be divided by lot to the tribes of Israel, and the strangers that sojourn among them, (^{<3670>}Ezekiel 47:21-23).

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house, &c.]* The door of the temple, even of the holy of holies; hither the prophet is said to be brought again, or “brought back”^{f840}; for he was last in the corners of the outward court, viewing the kitchens or boiling places of the ministers; but now he was brought back into the inner court, and to the door that led into the holiest of all:

and, behold! for it was matter of admiration, as well as of observation and attention:

waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; this is a new thing, to which there was nothing like it, either in the first or second temple. Ariateas^{f841} indeed relates what he himself saw,

“a never failing conflux of water, as of a large fountain, naturally flowing underneath, and wonderful receptacles under ground; to each of which were leaden pipes, through which the waters came in on every side, for about half a mile about the temple, and washed away the blood of the sacrifices;”

and so the Talmudists^{f842} say, there was an aqueduct from the fountain of Etam, and pipes laid from thence to supply the temple with water, for the washing and boiling of the sacrifices, and keeping the temple clean: but these waters are quite different; they are such as came out of the temple, and not what were carried by pipes into it; nor were they a common sewer to carry off the filth of it, but formed a delightful and useful river. The fountain of them is not declared, only where they were first seen to issue out,

under the threshold of the house eastward; the threshold of the door of the most holy place; so that they seem to take their rise from the holy of holies, the seat of the divine Majesty, and throne of God, with which agrees (~~421~~ Revelation 22:1), and so the Talmudists^{f843} say, that this fountain came first from the house of the holy of holies, under the threshold of the door of it, which looked to the east:

for the fore front of the house stood toward the east; the holy of holies was at the west end of the temple; but the front of it, and so the door into it, was to the east, and from hence these waters flowed:

and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house; they are said to “come down”, because the temple was high built upon the top of a mountain; and “from under”, that is, the threshold of the door of it; or rather in subterraneous passages, till they appeared from under that; and this was “on the right side of the house”; that is, on the south side: for, suppose a man standing with his face to the east, as the prophet did, when he turned himself to see which way the waters flowed, having his face to the west when he first saw them come out; the south then must be on his right hand, and so it follows:

at the south side of the altar; of the altar of burnt offerings, which stood before the house.

Ver. 2. *Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, &c.]* Out of the inward court where he was, by the way of the north gate, the eastern gate being shut:

and led me about the way without unto the utter gate, by the way that looketh eastward; and from thence he had him round to the outward eastern gate, where he was at first, (~~310~~ Ezekiel 40:6), to meet the flow of waters that came through the inward and outward courts eastward:

and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side; that is, on the south side of the gate, in a small quantity, and in a very still and easy way, like water out of the mouth of a vial, as the word^{f844} signifies. So Bartenora^{f845}, who understands this gate of the water gate, interprets the right side of the south; and observes, that the prophet first saw the waters come out very small, like the horns of a locust; but when they came to this gate, they became like water as it flows out of the mouth of a small pitcher: and from this whole account of the waters, it is plain they cannot be understood literally, but figuratively; and which confirm this to be the sense of the whole vision. They may be applied unto, and serve to illustrate, the love of God; the secret spring of which is in the heart and will of God; ran underground from all eternity; channelled in Christ; broke up and issued forth in the mission of him into the world, under the threshold of him, the door of the church; and in and by him, the altar, sacrifice, and propitiation; wherein the love of God in an especial manner is manifested; and which has its heights and depths, immeasurable and unfathomable, (~~4018~~ Ephesians 3:18,19 ~~3940~~ Psalm 46:4 ~~6211~~ Revelation 22:1), these waters also may be applied to the grace of the Spirit of God in regeneration and conversion; which is compared to water, for its cleansing, fructifying, and refreshing nature; to “waters”, for the abundance of it; and this flows from the God of all grace through Christ, and out of his fulness is gradually increased, and becomes a well, yea, rivers of living water, (~~4075~~ John 7:37-39), but it seems best to understand them of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; which, like water, cools those who are inflamed with the heat of the fiery law; extinguishes the thirst of sensible sinners, and refreshes them; cleanses and purifies their souls, which is instrumentally done with the washing of water by the word; and makes them fruitful and flourishing: this is not of men, but God; comes from heaven, the holy of holies; and out of the house and church of God; from Zion and Jerusalem, by Christ the door, and points to him the way; and is chiefly concerning him, the altar, his sacrifice and satisfaction, peace, atonement, and propitiation by him; (see ~~2118~~ Isaiah 2:3 ~~2918~~ Joel 3:18 ~~3848~~ Zechariah 14:8).

Ver. 3. *And when the man that had the line in his hand, &c.]* The same as in (~~2308~~ Ezekiel 40:3) and is no other than Christ, who appeared in a human form to the prophet; and who hitherto had only made use of the measuring reed in taking the dimensions of the house, and what appertained to it; but now he uses the line of flax he had in his hand, in measuring the waters as they ran; by which line is meant the Scriptures, the word of God, by which

all doctrines are to be measured: this is the rule that both preachers and hearers are to go by; and, as by the direction of this person the waters flowed where he would have them, so the doctrines of the Gospel are preached by the order of Christ where he pleases; (see ^{<1247>}Luke 24:47 ^{<4136>}Acts 13:46,46 16:6,7,10), and these move in a direct line, as those waters did; error is crooked, and has its windings and turnings; but truth is straight and even; all the words of Wisdom are right, and there is nothing froward, perverse, or crooked in them, (^{<2108>}Proverbs 8:8,9):

went forth eastward; which was the course the waters took by his direction; the Gospel was first spread in the eastern part of the world, in Asia, where many churches were planted by it; it has been since in the south, in Africa, particularly in the times of Austin, when these waters, the doctrines of grace, flowed largely; and they have been since in the north and west, in Europe, in our northern climes; all which perhaps may be signified by the right side, or south side, by which these waters flowed, and by the prophet's going to the north gate, and about, to see them; but in the latter day they will move eastward again, when the kings of the east and their kingdoms shall become Christ's; (see ^{<6162>}Revelation 16:12 ^{<3448>}Zechariah 14:8):

he measured a thousand cubits; or, “a thousand by the cubit^{f846}”; the Targum is,

“a thousand cubits by the cubit;”

with his line from the eastern gate of the house, at the right side of which the waters ran out; this was about half a mile:

and he brought me through the waters: not the thousand cubits he had measured; but when he came to the end of them, he made the prophet to cross the waters, to go through them across, that he might observe the depth of them:

and the waters were to the ankles; were ankle deep, a few inches: or, “to the soles”; for, as R. Jonah thinks, **a** may be additional; and **sp**, in the Syriac language, signifies a part of the hand, (^{<2115>}Daniel 5:5), and, applied to the feet, designs the soles of them; and then the sense is, the waters were so shallow, that they only covered the soles of the feet: this may signify the ministry of John the Baptist, who, though greater than the prophets, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he; and of the disciples of

Christ, before the effusion of the Spirit: or may design the more easy doctrines of the Gospel; those waters which Christ's lambs may wade in; that milk which new born babes desire, and are fed with; those plain truths of the word, which those of the weakest capacity are able to take in, receive, and embrace; in the knowledge of which, though fools, they err not; such as salvation by Christ alone; justification by his righteousness; peace and pardon by his blood; which are so plain, as to be understood by every truly gracious soul, though of ever so mean a capacity: or it may intimate the small spread of the Gospel at first in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.

Ver. 4. *And again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees, &c.*] The man with his line measured another thousand cubits straight on from the first; and then bid the prophet cross and ford them again, and then they were knee deep:

again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins; a third time he measured a thousand cubits still onward, and ordered the prophet to wade through them, when they were risen so high as to reach his loins. The waters to the knees and loins may signify the greater knowledge of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, the apostles had after the Spirit was poured forth; and the greater spread of it in the world, among Jews and Gentiles: or else may design those doctrines of the Gospel, and mysteries of grace, which are more sublime, and more difficult to understand; which require some pains to search into, and get the knowledge of; as concerning predestination, election, the covenant of grace, and the eternal transactions between the Father and the Son, &c. which are meat for strong men, who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil.

Ver. 5. *Afterward he measured a thousand, &c.*] A fourth time a thousand cubits. Some think these four measurings respect the preaching of the Gospel in the four parts of the world; but rather they refer to four remarkable seasons of the ministry of it; as in the times of John the Baptist, and the disciples of Christ before his death; in the primitive churches of the three first centuries; at the time of the Reformation; and in the latter day glory, which is the fourth and last measuring:

and it was a river that I could not pass over; the prophet could not set his foot on the bottom, and wade through it, and cross over it, as he had done before:

for the waters were risen, waters to swim in; not to walk in:

a river that could not be passed over; by any man, on his feet; only by swimming, and perhaps not by that, at least not without difficulty: this may signify the large spread of the Gospel in the latter day, when the earth shall be filled with it, as the waters cover the sea; and the great light into it, and knowledge of it, that men shall then have, (²³¹⁰Isaiah 11:9 30:26), and yet that there are some doctrines exceeding deep, out of the reach and penetration of men, called the deep things of God, which human reason cannot attain, and where it cannot fix its foot, (⁴⁰¹⁰1 Corinthians 2:9,10,14), and which are only to be reached and embraced in the swimming arms of faith; and, though believed, cannot be accounted for, as to the modus of them, and are not to be dived into; such as the trinity of Persons in the Godhead, and the distinct manner of their subsisting in it; the generation of the Son; the procession of the Spirit; the incarnation of Christ; the union of the two natures in his person; the resurrection of the dead, &c.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, son of man, hast thou seen this?* &c]. That is, the man that measured the waters said to the prophet, hast thou carefully observed all this from whence the waters flowed? from what small beginnings they rose, and gradually increased? how they first issued forth, as out of a vial; and now, in the space of about two or three miles, are become a deep river, and impassable? it is right and profitable to observe the rise and progress of the Gospel; what a spread it has had in the world, and what it will have:

then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river; there to stand and observe the nature of the waters, and the course of them; the multitude of fish in them; and the trees which grew upon the banks of them; of all which some account is given in the following verses.

Ver. 7. *Now when I had returned,* &c.] To the brink of the river:

behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side, and on the other; here was a new wonder observed, which had not been before; and therefore this note of admiration, “behold!” is prefixed; on a sudden sprung up trees on each side of the river, of a perfect stature, and full of fruit; which the prophet had not seen when he went along with the man on the bank of it, as he measured the waters; but now being returned, sees this wonderful sight; an emblem of true Christians, believers, and regenerate

persons, who are trees of righteousness, planted by the river of divine love; watered with the grace of God, and doctrines of the Gospel; whereby they become fruitful in good works, and are to be seen wherever the Gospel comes with power and efficacy; (see ^{<300B>}Psalm 1:3 ^{<260B>}Isaiah 61:8), or, “an exceeding large tree”^{f847}; so John saw but one tree, which was on each side of the river, which he calls the tree of life, (^{<620D>}Revelation 22:2), but here it seems to be put for many, as appears from (^{<367D>}Ezekiel 47:12).

Ver. 8. *Then said he unto me, &c.*] The man that measured the waters spoke to the prophet again, and showed him the course of the waters; the quickening and healing virtue of them, and the multitude of fish in them:

these waters issue out toward the east country; the Gospel was first preached in the eastern parts of the world; (see Gill on “^{<267B>}Ezekiel 47:3”), or “towards the first, or east Galilee”^{f848}; in Galilee Christ began to preach, and wrought his first miracle; here he called his disciples, and chiefly conversed; and here he had the greatest followers, and some of the first Christian churches were formed here after his ascension, (^{<404D>}Matthew 4:12,18,23 ^{<408B>}Acts 9:31):

and go down into the desert; or wilderness, the wilderness of the people, the Gentiles; to whom the Gospel was carried when rejected by the Jews, and who before were like a desert, but now became as a fruitful field, (^{<238B>}Isaiah 35:1,2 42:1,11). The Jews^{f849} interpret this of the plain, or the sea of Galilee or Tiberius, at which Christ called his disciples; near to this he delivered his discourses concerning himself, the bread of life, and eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; here he met with his disciples after his resurrection, and enjoined Peter to feed his sheep and lambs; (see ^{<408B>}Matthew 4:18 ^{<408B>}John 6:1 21:1,15):

and go into the sea; the Dead sea, or sea of Sodom, the lake Asphaltites, where nothing is said to live; an emblem of dead sinners; and may represent the worst of sinners, as the Sodomites were; and to such the Gospel was sent, and became effectual to salvation: or it may rather design the great ocean, and may signify the whole world, and all the nations of it, to which the Gospel, by the commission of Christ, was to be preached; (see ^{<270D>}Daniel 7:2 ^{<416B>}Mark 16:15). The Targum is,

“and go through the sea into the great sea;”

it may be rendered, “and go toward the west”^{f850}; the Mediterranean sea being to the west of Judea, it is often put for the west; and so the sense

may be, that these waters should flow east and west, as the living waters in (^{<394B>}Zechariah 14:8), the same with those, are said to do; and all the Jewish writers think there is such a division of the waters intended, and that they had two streams or rivers; which may receive some confirmation from the next verse, where the word for rivers is of the dual number, and signifies two rivers. The sense of the whole is, that the Gospel should be first preached in Judea and Galilee; then among the Gentiles throughout the Roman empire; and in the latter day especially throughout the world, when it shall be covered with it as the waters cover the sea, (^{<2310>}Isaiah 11:9):

which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed; that is, which waters of the river being directed and brought into, either the Dead sea, or the great ocean, the waters of the one, or of the other, were healed; and of bituminous and bitter waters were made clear, sweet, and wholesome; and signify the change made in sinful men by means of the Gospel, who are thereby quickened, made partakers of the grace of God, and have their sins pardoned, which is often meant by healing in Scripture, (^{<194D>}Psalms 103:2 ^{<304D>}Malachi 4:2), pardon of sin flows from the love and grace of God; is the great doctrine of the Gospel, and by which the Lord speaks peace and pardon, and communicates healing of all spiritual diseases to sinners sensible of them; (see ^{<1947D>}Psalms 107:20).

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, &c.]* That is, every living man; everyone that lives naturally or corporeally, that lives, moves, and has his being in God, as all men have, (^{<417B>}Acts 17:28),

whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; or, “the two rivers”^{f851}; the waters divided as before, east and west; not the two Testaments, Old and New; nor the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper; but the Gospel, which, wherever it shall come with power, and to whomsoever it so comes, they shall live spiritually; not to whomsoever it is preached, for to some it is not profitable; (see ^{<2671B>}Ezekiel 47:11), but is the savour of death unto death; but to all to whom it is accompanied by the Spirit of God it is the savour of life unto life; the Spirit that gives life, and is the means of it: indeed, the love of God is the river of water of life, (^{<620B>}Revelation 21:1), it is the spring of spiritual life to dead sinners, and what revives drooping saints, quickens their graces, faith, hope, and love; enlivens and cheers their spirits, and greatly influences true religion and godliness, and very much promotes the life and power of it: and so the grace of the Spirit

is living water, by which dead sinners are quickened; the work of grace in saints is revived, and which always continues and issues in eternal life, (^{<4040>}John 4:10,14), but the Gospel, and its doctrines, are rather intended; which are the means of quickening those who are dead in trespasses and sins; serve greatly to invigorate the graces of the Spirit in the hearts of God's people; to influence their lives and conversations; to support them under afflictions, and to nourish them up to everlasting life; and point out the way to eternal life, and give a true account of it.

And there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither; that is, a multitude of fish in the Dead sea, where none lived before, and owing to those waters coming thither: it signifies the great number of living Christians, true believers, who shall appear wherever the Gospel is truly, purely, and powerfully preached; of these see more in the next verse:

for they shall be healed; (See Gill on "^{<26708>}Ezekiel 47:8"):

and everything shall live whither the river cometh; not only shall live as before, but continue to live, shall never die; their graces shall not die, nor shall they themselves die the second death, but shall have eternal life; because of the purpose of God, who has ordained them to it; and the promise of God, who is faithful to it; and because of the security of their life in Christ, to whom they are united; and because of the indwelling of the Spirit of life in them. So the Targum,

“they shall remain in every place where the waters of the river come.”

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass*, &c.] In Gospel times: what follows had a fulfilment in the first times of the Gospel, and will have a greater in the latter times of it:

that the fishers shall stand upon it; upon the brink of the river, or the shore of the sea, whose waters will be healed by this river running into them. These “fishers” are the apostles of Christ, who, of fishermen, were made fishers of men by him; to whom he gave a call, and a commission, and gifts qualifying them to preach the Gospel; whereby they caught men, and brought them to Christ; and so were the instruments of saving them, even of great numbers, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world; of which some instances of their fishing, after their call to the ministry, were emblematical; (^{<4048>}Matthew 4:18,19 ^{<41704>}Luke 5:4-10 ^{<43208>}John 21:3-11), likewise all other

ministers of the Gospel are here meant, especially those that will be in the latter day; compared to fishers for the meanness and contemptibleness of their employment in the eyes of the world; for their labouriousness in it, and for their patient waiting for success therein; and for the bad weather, storms, and tempests, they are exposed unto, the reproach and persecution of men; and their being the happy means of drawing souls out of the abyss of sin and misery unto Christ, for life and salvation: and their “standing” upon the brink of the waters to catch fish may denote their constancy their work; their strict attachment to the doctrines of the Gospel, and their waiting for success in it.

From Engedi even unto Eneglaim; two places, which, according to Jerom, lay, the latter one at the entrance of the Dead sea, and the former at the end of it; but Reland^{f852} observes that this could not be, if Josephus is to be credited, who makes Engedi to be about forty miles from Jerusalem^{f853}; therefore could not be far from the beginning of the Dead sea, and not where it ended; since the Dead sea, or the lake of Asphaltites, was in length seventy three miles, and, consequently, Engedi must be more than seventy five or ninety miles from Jerusalem; but that it was at the beginning of it is still further manifest from the same writer making the lake to be just such a number of miles from Jerusalem^{f854} as he does Engedi; and whereas Engedi was on the western shore of the lake, as appears from Pliny^{f855}, it is probable there was another city on the eastern shore, opposite to it, called Eneglaim; and there was a city on that side, the name of which was Agallim, which, according to Eusebius, was eight miles from Areopolis: and so it may signify the extent of the Gospel ministry, which, in the latter day, will be from one end of the earth to the other; and which took a large circuit in the times of the apostles, and particularly by the Apostle Paul, (~~f859~~ Romans 15:19).

They shall be a place to spread forth nets; that is, the above said places shall be made use of for that purpose; which design the Gospel, and the ministry of it, compared to a net, for its meanness in the esteem of the world; and yet is a piece of curious artifice and wisdom, even the manifold wisdom of God, and is contrived for the gathering in of sinners to Christ; and, though it may be like a net “per accidens”, the means of troubling the world, and drawing out the corruptions of the men of it; yet its principal design, and the use that is made of it, is to draw souls out of the depths of sin unto the grace of Christ; (see ~~4034~~ Matthew 13:47,48), the spreading and casting of nets design the preaching of the Gospel, and the opening and

explaining the doctrines of it, which are shut up and hidden to men; and to do which requires wisdom and skill, strength, diligence, and patience, and is done at a venture; and sometimes is cast where fish are, and sometimes not; but here, and at this time, with great success.

For their fish shall be according to their kind, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many: that is, there shall be fish of all sorts, small and great, and in large numbers, as in the great ocean, or as in the Mediterranean sea. These signify regenerated persons, who are born of water and the Spirit by the word of God, which is their element; they cannot live but in these waters of the sanctuary, and where the doctrines of grace are preached. Now many of all nations, and men of all ranks, will be called; kings, princes, nobles, as well as peasants; men high and low, rich and poor, and multitudes of them, like the fishes of the sea; which will be the case when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in.

Ver. 11. *But the miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof, &c.]* That is, of the sea; the waters of which were healed, by the waters of the sanctuary coming into them: but the ditches and lakes, the miry and marsh ground, separate from the sea, which lay near it, and upon the borders of it,

shall not be healed; these design the reprobate part of the world, obstinate and perverse sinners, that abandon themselves to their filthy lusts, and sensual pleasures; that wallow like swine in the mire and dirt of sin; are wholly immersed in the things of this world, mind nothing but earth and earthly things, and load themselves with thick clay; whose god is their belly, and who glory in their shame: also hypocrites and apostates may be here meant, who, despising the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, put it away from them, and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, and so receive no benefit by it; but, on the contrary, it is the savour of death unto death unto them; (see ^{<2069>} Isaiah 6:9,10):

they shall be given to salt; left to the hardness of their hearts; given up to the lusts of them; devoted to ruin and destruction and remain barren and unfruitful, as places demolished and sown with salt are; (see ^{<1623>} Deuteronomy 29:23 ^{<1095>} Judges 9:45), or made an example of, as Lot's wife was; that others may learn wisdom, and shun those things that have been the cause of their ruin. The Targum is,

“its pools and lakes shall not be healed; they shall be for salt pits.”

Ver. 12. *And by the river on the banks thereof, on this side and on that side, &c.]* On each side of the river, on the banks of it:

shall grow all trees for meat; such as bear fruit, that may be eaten, and is good for food: by these “trees” are meant truly gracious souls, converted persons, real Christians, true believers in Christ; who like trees have a root, are rooted in the love of God, in the person and grace of Christ, and have the root of the matter in them, the grace of the blessed Spirit; and who also is their sap, of which they are full, and so grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ; grow up in him, and grow upwards and heavenwards in their affections and desires, and in the exercise of faith and hope: they are the trees of the Lord, trees of righteousness, good trees, that bring forth good fruit; and are often in Scripture compared to trees the most excellent, as palm trees, cedars, olives, myrtles, &c. and wherever the Gospel comes, these trees arise, and are watered and made fruitful by it; sometimes in lesser, and sometimes in greater numbers, as in the first times of the Gospel, and as they will in the latter day; (see ^{<39212>}Psalm 92:12 ^{<23608>}Isaiah 61:3):

whose leaf shall not fade; as the leaves of trees in autumn do, and drop off and fall; to which some professors of religion are compared, who bear no fruit, only have the leaves of a profession, and this they drop when any trouble or difficulty arises, (^{<6012>}Jude 1:12 ^{<40321>}Matthew 13:21), but true believers, as they take up a profession on principles of grace, they hold it fast without wavering; their root, seed, and sap, remain, and so never wither and die in their profession; (see ^{<49003>}Psalm 1:3 ^{<24708>}Jeremiah 17:8):

neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; which are the graces of the Spirit, and good works flowing from them: the graces of the Spirit are abiding ones, as faith, hope, and love; these never die, are an incorruptible seed, a well of water springing up unto everlasting life; and good works, which are fruits meet for repentance, and evidences of faith, and by which trees are known to be good, always continue to be wrought by believers, in the strength and grace of Christ, from whom they have all their fruits of every kind, (^{<28408>}Hosea 14:8 ^{<30011>}Philippians 1:11):

it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months; or, “first fruits”,^{f856}; that is, everyone of these trees, or every true believer, shall be continually in the exercise of grace, and the performance of duty; they shall be constant and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; they shall never

cease from yielding fruit, or doing good; they shall still bring it even in old age; (see ^{<4924>}Psalm 92:14 ^{<2478>}Jeremiah 17:8):

because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; because the waters, which issued out of the sanctuary, ran by these trees, and watered them, and made them fruitful, and therefore called their waters: the fruitfulness of these trees, true believers, is not owing to themselves, to their free will and power; to their own industry, diligence, and cultivation; but to the supplies of grace they receive by means of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; which bring forth, or cause to bring forth fruit, wherever they come with power, (^{<5006>}Colossians 1:6):

and the fruit thereof shall be for meat; not for saints themselves, who live not, neither on their graces, nor their works; though indeed they do eat the fruits of their doings, (^{<2180>}Isaiah 3:10), that is, enjoy good things, consequent on their works, through the free favour and good will of God; but for meat for others; for their fruit, which appears in their words and actions, are very beneficent to others; their fruit is a tree of life, (^{<2113>}Proverbs 11:30) and their lips feed many, (^{<2021>}Proverbs 10:21), with knowledge and understanding; with the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; and with the comfortable experience they have of its truths and promises: yea, their fruit are meat and food for Christ himself; who comes into his garden, and eats his pleasant fruits, feeds and feasts, and delights himself with his own grace in his people, and the exercise of it, (^{<2009>}Song of Solomon 4:9,10,16 5:1):

and the leaf thereof for medicine; or, “for bruises”^{f857}; for the healing of them, which is only done by the blood of Christ; who is the only physician, the sun of righteousness, that rises with healing or pardon in his wings; and the whole language of this passage is borrowed from hence by John, and applied to Christ the tree of life, (^{<6212>}Revelation 22:2) and the Gospel professed by true believers directs to him for healing, or for the remission of sin, and is the means of applying it, (^{<4972>}Psalm 107:20) and a cheerful constant profession of Christ and his Gospel, which is the Christian’s leaf, does good like a medicine, both to the Christian himself, and to others; who are animated and encouraged thereby to go on with pleasure in the ways of God.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord God, this shall be the border,* &c.] Of the land of Israel, as described in the following verses; which being different from, and much larger, and more extensive, than it was in the times of

Moses or Joshua, or than it was either before or after the captivity in Babylon, shows that this must be understood either of the land of Canaan, as it will be when possessed and inhabited by the Jews, upon their conversion in the latter day; or rather of the church of Christ, which is far greater than it was under the former dispensation; and especially it will be still more extensive hereafter, when Christ's kingdom will be from sea to sea, and his dominion from the river to the ends of the earth; and from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same, his name shall be great among the Gentiles. This subject is reassumed from (^{<3561>}Ezekiel 45:1-8) after the insertion of various things of moment and importance there, a reserve upon the division of the land is made of a holy portion of it, for the sanctuary; for the priests, the ministers of it; for the Levites, the ministers of the house; and for a possession of the city, and of the prince; and the rest to be given to the house of Israel, the boundaries of which, are here fixed:

whereby ye shall inherit the land, according to the twelve tribes of Israel; by which are meant, not literal Israel, or according to the flesh, these being not all Israel, or the children of God, and so not heirs, and shall not inherit; but spiritual Israel, or the special people of God, that shall dwell in the church, and enjoy all the privileges of it; these are the sealed ones of all the tribes of Israel, an equal number out of each tribe; (see ^{<6004>}Revelation 7:4-8). Joseph shall have two "portions" for his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and in virtue of the birthright which fell to him on the forfeiture of it by Reuben; he was an eminent type of Christ, with whom the saints are joint heirs; and who has two portions, one for himself as Mediator, and another for them.

Ver. 14. *And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another,* &c.] That is, the twelve tribes shall equally inherit it; one tribe shall not have more, and another less, but each alike: this was not the case, at the division of the land, in the times of Moses and Joshua; for to such tribes as were very numerous a greater inheritance was given; and to those that were fewer in number a lesser inheritance, (^{<0454>}Numbers 26:54 33:54), and upon the return from the Babylonish captivity, as the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were the largest, and indeed the only tribes that returned as such, they had the share of the land; but as this respects the dispensation, it signifies, that those who are true Israelites indeed shall share in the same Gospel church state, the privileges and immunities of it alike, with all the blessings of grace and eternal glory; they being all one in Christ Jesus, (^{<4838>}Galatians 3:28):

concerning the which I lifted up my hand to give it unto your fathers; that is, swore that he would give unto them the land of Canaan; typical of the Gospel church state and the heavenly glory; which are as sure to all the seed, by the word and oath of God, as that was:

and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance; by lot, by the appointment of God, and a goodly one it is, (³⁹¹⁶Psalm 16:6 47:4).

Ver. 15. *And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side,* &c.] The description of the borders of the land begins on the north side; because the Gospel, and the interest of Christ, would be, as they now are, chiefly in the northern part of the world, before the latter day glory takes place, and from thence spread into the other parts of it:

from the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad; the line of this border shall begin at the Mediterranean sea, commonly called the great sea, and so proceed to Hethlon, a city in Syria Damascene, and from thence to Zedad; of which (see ⁹⁶⁴⁸Numbers 34:8), the description is taken all along from the places which were on the border of Canaan, or in countries adjacent to it, which plainly point out the enlargement of it.

Ver. 16. *Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, &c.]* The line of the northern border should be drawn on by Hamath, the same with Antiochia in Syria, since called Epiphania, as Jerom observes, from Antiochus Epiphanies; and go on by Berothah, a city of Hadadezer king of Zobah, (⁴⁰⁸⁸2 Samuel 8:8), the same with the Barothena of Ptolemy^{f858}, placed by him in Syria; and from thence the line would be carried on to Sibraim, a city in Arabia Deserta:

which is between the border of Damascus; the chief city in Syria: and the border of Hamath; before mentioned. Calmet^{f859} imagines it to be that which Ishmael Abulfeda calls Hovvarin; which he says is a village of the country of Ems or Hamath, to the southeast of the city.

Hazarhatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran; this seems to be explanative of Sibraim, which lay between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; and therefore is called the middle town or village, as “Hazarhatticon” signifies; and lay by the coast of Hauran, which Jerom calls a town of Damascus, with which it is mentioned, (³⁴⁷⁸Ezekiel 47:18), from whence the country adjacent is called Auranitis, as this place is here by the Septuagint. The Targum calls Hazar the fish pool of the Agbeans; but for what reason, and what is meant by it, I know not.

Ver. 17. *And the border from the sea shall be Hazarenan, the border of Damascus, &c.*] Which was the furthestmost part and end of the northern border, as fixed by Moses, (^{<3476>}Numbers 34:9):

and the north northward, and the border of Hamath; if this is carrying on the border further, it seems to be another Hamath, distinct from the former, (^{<3476>}Ezekiel 47:16),

and this is the north side: of the land, and the description of the northern border of it, from the Mediterranean sea to Hazarenan.

Ver. 18. *And the east side ye shall measure Hauran, &c.*] The line of the eastern border of the land shall begin at Hauran or Auranitis; (see ^{<3476>}Ezekiel 47:16), which lay to the south ^{f860} of Damascus: and it follows,

and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea; and so from Damascus, the metropolis of Syria; and likewise from Gilead, a mountain and country beyond Jordan; and also from that part of the land of Israel near to Jordan; and so from the northern border to the east sea, or sea of Galilee or Tiberias:

and this is the east side: of the land, or the eastern border of it, reaching from Hauran to the lake of Gennesaret, or to the Salt sea, the sea of Sodom; (see ^{<0610>}Numbers 34:10-12).

Ver. 19. *And the south side southward from Tamar, &c.*] Not Jericho, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, called by this name from the palm trees which grew near it; according to Jerom, this is Palmyra, so called for the same reason; but it is rather Engedi, called Hazazontamar, (^{<4012>}2 Chronicles 20:2), the line of the southern border began here, and went on,

even to the waters of strife in Kadesh; to the waters of Meribah in Kadesh; so called, from the strivings of the children of Israel with the Lord there, (^{<0013>}Numbers 20:1,13):

the river to the great sea; it proceeded by the river of Egypt, the river Sihor, the Nile, which is before Egypt, (^{<4633>}Joshua 13:3 15:47) and so on to the Mediterranean sea:

and this is the south side southward; the south side of the land, and the southern border of it.

Ver. 20. *The west side also shall be the great sea from the border, &c.*] From the border of Egypt, and the river of it, to the Mediterranean sea, is the west side of the land, and the western border of it; hence the western point is often expressed in Scripture by the sea:

till a man come over against Hamath; Antioch in Syria; see (³⁵⁷¹⁶Ezekiel 47:16)

this is the west side; of the land, and of the western border of it.

Ver. 21. *So shall ye divide this land unto you, &c.*] As thus bounded, east, west, north, and south:

according to the tribes of Israel; (See Gill on "³⁵⁷¹³Ezekiel 47:13").

Ver. 22. *And it shall come to pass, &c.*] In the last days, under the Gospel dispensation:

that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you; who were Israelites, both by natural descent, and by the Spirit and grace of God: the Gospel was first preached to Israel after the flesh, and made effectual to the conversion of many of them; and the first churches were made up of them, and they shared all the blessings and privileges thereof; as they also will in the latter day, when converted:

and to the strangers that sojourn among them; not such as were strangers to spiritual and divine things; for this would contradict the rule in (³⁵⁴¹⁹Ezekiel 44:9), but converted Gentiles, so called because of their natural descent and civil state, being, with respect to both, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; yet were to be, as they have been, and will be, taken into the same Gospel church state with the believing Jews:

which shall beget children among you; not only in a natural, but in a spiritual sense; be the means of begetting many souls again to the lively hope of a glorious inheritance:

and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; that is, the children begotten by the Gentiles shall be considered all one as those of the children of Israel, being born again of the same Spirit and grace; and so have an equal right to the same privileges, and to which they shall be admitted:

they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel; this is a new thing, and what in a literal sense was never granted; for though in the times of Moses and onward, and by his direction from the Lord, such as have been called proselytes of the gate, and proselytes of righteousness, have been admitted to various privileges, by conforming to certain rules, rites, and ceremonies, yet never were allowed to have any inheritance in the land; and, after the captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah drove out the strangers, who by affinity with some had got among them: but this respects Gospel times, and the coalition of Jews and Gentiles in the same church state; where there is no difference, but Christ is all in all; where they are admitted to the same ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; partake of the same blessings of grace, and promises of the word, and have an equal right to the heavenly inheritance: (~~4006~~Ephesians 3:6), is the best commentary on this passage; which contains the same mystery the Apostle Paul was acquainted with,

that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel; (see Gill on "~~4006~~Ephesians 3:6"). (see ~~4022~~Ephesians 2:12-20 ~~5081~~Colossians 3:11 ~~4023~~1 Corinthians 12:13).

Ver. 23. *And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth*, &c.] Whatsoever particular congregation or church these strangers and sojourners (as all the Lord's people are in this world, and even in their church state), or those Gentiles before described, shall be nearest unto, and to which they shall propose themselves for communion, they shall be readily admitted:

there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord God; allow him a name and a place; put him in the possession of all church privileges and immunities; look upon him as a member, a brother, a fellow citizen, as an heir together of the grace of life, and as equally entitled to the inheritance of the saints in light; and for this they have the authority and order of Jehovah himself.

CHAPTER 48

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 48

In this chapter an account is given of the portions of the twelve tribes in the land of Israel; seven to the north of the sanctuary, Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 48:1-7), between which and Benjamin lay the holy portion of the land, for the sanctuary and the priests of it, and for the Levites, and for the city and its suburbs, and for the prince, (²⁵⁸²Ezekiel 48:8-22) then the portions of the other five tribes to the south of the sanctuary, Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad, (²⁵⁸³Ezekiel 48:23-29), after which the city is described by its outlets, north, east, south, and west; by its twelve gates, three at each point; by its circumference and by its name, (²⁵⁸⁰Ezekiel 48:30-35).

Ver. 1. *Now these are the names of the tribes, &c.]* That shall inherit the land; and an account is given of each of the portions of it they shall have for an inheritance; by which are meant, not the twelve tribes of Israel literally, among whom the land was never so divided as here, either in Joshua's time, or after the captivity of Babylon, but the Christian church, or the people of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, as in (⁶⁰⁰⁴Revelation 7:4), built upon the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ: the stranger sojourners are not here mentioned, who, according to the preceding chapter, were equally to inherit with the children of Israel, but are included; they being Israelites indeed, and fellowheirs, and all one in Christ, be they of whatsoever nation.

From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath: the division of the land, and the distribution of the portions, begin at the north, and so go on to the south, by the way of Hethlon and Hamath; of which (see ²⁵⁷⁵Ezekiel 47:15,16) and along

by Hazarenan, the border of Damascus, northward to the coast of Hamath; (see ²⁵⁷⁷Ezekiel 47:17):

for these are his sides east and west; the sides of the tribe of Daniel next mentioned, and so of every other tribe; which was measured from east to

west, and consisted of 25,000 reeds foursquare, as appears from (³⁸⁸Ezekiel 48:8,20):

a portion for Dan; or, “Daniel one”^{f861}; either one tribe, or one portion. This tribe has its portion first assigned it, though it was provided for last in Joshua’s time, and not sufficiently neither, (⁶⁹⁰Joshua 19:40-47), and is left out in Revelation chapter seven, having fallen into idolatry; but here being provided for first, confirms what our Lord says, that the first shall be last, and the last first, (⁴⁰⁰Matthew 19:30 20:16), and shows that the chief of sinners are received by Christ, and provided for by him, with grace here, and glory hereafter, who come to him, and believe in him; and that their inheritance is of grace, and not of works.

Ver. 2. *And by the border of Dan, &c.]* Next to it, just by it, closely adjoining to it; for it should be observed, that these tribes, and their inheritances, are contiguous to each other; which denotes the union of true Christians, or believers in Christ, with each other; they are members one of another, one body, one bread, and all one in Christ; and their harmony, unity, and concord, their comfortable communion and fellowship with each other; especially as it will be in the latter day, when they shall no more grieve and vex each other, nor separate from one another; but the two sticks shall be one in the hand of the Lord, (²¹¹³Isaiah 11:13 ³⁷¹⁹Ezekiel 37:19):

from the east side unto the west side; being just in the same position as the former tribe, and of the same measure and extent:

a portion for Asher; an inheritance for the tribe of Asher, the “blessed” of the Lord with all blessings, spiritual and eternal: and it should be known, once for all, that the portions of the several tribes are exactly alike: true believers have the same covenant God and Father for their portion; the same Lord, Redeemer, and Saviour, Head and Husband, Jesus Christ; they are members of the same body; partake of the same Spirit, and his graces; obtain like precious faith; are called in one hope of their calling; have a right to the same privileges and ordinances, and will share in the same heavenly inheritance, (⁴⁰⁴Ephesians 4:4-6).

Ver. 3. *And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a portion for Naphtali.]* Close to the tribe of Asher and his inheritance, in the same direction from east to west, lay the part assigned to the tribe of Naphtali: such Christians who are wrestlers with God in prayer,

and against their spiritual enemies, and strive and contend for the doctrines of the Gospel, may be designed.

Ver. 4. *And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Manasseh.*] Just in like manner, next to Naphtali lay the tribe of Manasseh, and the portion of land appointed for that tribe; even such Christians who “forget” the things that are behind, and reach to those that are before; forget their former companions, their own people, and father’s house, their carnal lusts and pleasures, and their own works of righteousness, and follow after Christ and his righteousness.

Ver. 5. *And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Ephraim.*] Close to the tribe of Manasseh, and the inheritance of it, which is no more reckoned a half, but a whole tribe, and has an inheritance equal to the rest, lay the tribe of Ephraim, and the inheritance assigned to that; even to such believers as are fruitful in grace and good works. Joseph is not mentioned, as in (³⁴⁷³Ezekiel 47:13), the two portions there given him being here allotted to his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Ver. 6. *And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Reuben.*] Who, through his sin, lost his birthright; but now, his sin being forgiven and forgotten, has a portion assigned him upon the border of Ephraim, and next to the tribe of Judah; when in Moses and Joshua’s time it lay on the other side Jordan: this points to such persons that shall have their lot and portion in spiritual things; that “see the Son”, that look to Christ alone for righteousness, peace, pardon, and eternal life.

Ver. 7. *And by the border of Reuben, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Judah.*] Such who “confess” the Lord before men, and “praise” his name for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, they receive from him: these seven tribes already mentioned, as they lay contiguous to each other, and had portions and inheritances alike assigned to them; so they were all of them to the north of the sanctuary and city after mentioned.

Ver. 8. *And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the offering, &c.*] Or the oblation of a holy portion of the land unto the Lord before made mention of, (³⁵⁰¹Ezekiel 45:1) this was close by the tribe of Judah, and in the same direction with that and the rest of the tribes, proceeding in length from east to west: this takes in the whole

allotted to the sanctuary, the priests, the Levites, the city, and the prince; each of which are taken notice of in the following verses:

which they shall offer of five and twenty thousand reeds in breadth; from north to south; which makes, as the Jews^{f862} say, seventy five miles; some make it seventy seven, and others more:

and in length as one of the other parts, from the east side unto the west side; that is, equal to one of the portions allotted to anyone of the tribes, which were alike: what this measure was is not said, but was the same with the breadth; since the whole oblation was five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand, (^{<368D>}Ezekiel 48:20):

and the sanctuary shall be in the midst thereof; of the holy portion of land; (see ^{<368B>}Ezekiel 45:3), not in the tribe of Judah or Benjamin; nor in the city of Jerusalem, as before; but many miles from thence.

Ver. 9. *The oblation that ye shall offer to the Lord, &c.*] That which belonged to the sanctuary, and to the priests, which was taken and separated for that use; which here, and in the following verses, is particularly and separately considered:

shall be of five and twenty thousand in length; that is, five and twenty thousand reeds from east to west:

and of ten thousand in breadth; from north to south; (see ^{<368B>}Ezekiel 45:3).

Ver. 10. *And for them, even the priests, shall be this holy oblation, &c.*] This holy portion of land, excepting that which is for the sanctuary, is to be for the use of the priests to build houses on to dwell in; signifying, that the ministers of the Gospel are to be taken care of, and sufficient provision made for their maintenance; (see ^{<368D>}Ezekiel 45:4):

toward the north five and twenty thousand in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length; to the north and south five and twenty thousand reeds each; and to the east and west ten thousand each; all this belongs to the priests, excepting the place for the sanctuary, that stood in the middle of it, as repeated in the following clause: and the sanctuary of the Lord shall be in the midst thereof; as in (^{<368B>}Ezekiel 48:8).

Ver. 11. *It shall be for the priests that are sanctified, &c.*] That are set apart by the Lord; called by him to this office, and sanctified with the gifts and graces of his Spirit; and so fitted and qualified for the work:

of the sons of Zadok, which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray; ministers faithful to the Lord in the worst of times; and who are and will be taken notice of by him, both now and hereafter, (⁴¹²⁰Matthew 25:21 ⁴¹⁸⁰Revelation 3:10), (see Gill on "²⁶⁴¹⁵Ezekiel 44:15-16").

Ver. 12. *And this oblation of the land that is offered shall be unto them a thing most holy, &c.*] Be peculiarly theirs, and not converted to any other use; but be accounted most sacred, and not alienable, or made use of by other persons, or to other purposes by the border of the Levites; it should be continued, and reach unto their border; or where that should begin, and their part assigned them, which is next considered.

Ver. 13. *And over against the border of the priests, &c.*] Next to their border, close to it, running parallel with it:

the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth; for accommodations for them; for chambers to lodge in, and other uses; all concerned in the house and worship of God shall be provided for with everything necessary and convenient for them; (See Gill on "²⁶⁸⁵Ezekiel 45:5"):

all the length shall be five and twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand; all the length of the land, both for the priests and Levites, should be five and twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth of the land for both ten thousand reeds: this is repeated for the certainty of it, and to prevent any mistake about it.

Ver. 14. *And they shall not sell of it, &c.*] Any part of it that is allotted to them, neither the priests nor the Levites; simony is not to be practised:

neither exchange; for any other land in lieu of it:

nor alienate the first fruits of the land; or appropriate them to any other use than that of the priests and Levites: whatever is appointed for ecclesiastic uses ought not to be converted to any other; nor should church privileges be parted with on any account: ministers and other officers, nay,

even private Christians, should not part with their Christian liberty, nor with any of the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel:

for it is holy unto the Lord; what is separated and devoted to religious uses is sacred to the Lord.

Ver. 15. *And the five thousand that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand, &c.]* Which belonged to the Levites, which was a square of twenty five thousand reeds by twenty five thousand; by the side of, or parallel to, the twenty five thousand in length, ran twenty five thousand in breadth, two ten thousands, as in the portion of the priests, (²⁶⁸⁰Ezekiel 48:10) so in theirs, (²⁶⁸³Ezekiel 48:13), the residue whereof, five thousand,

shall be a profane place for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs; to build a city upon for the Israelites to dwell in, and suburbs to be inhabited by those that were not of the city; or for fields and gardens, to supply the city with things necessary and convenient; though the Jewish commentators, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, say the suburbs were an open place, where were neither houses, nor fields, nor gardens: when this spot for the city and suburbs is said to be a “profane place”, it is to be understood comparatively, with respect to the portion for the priests and Levites; otherwise it was a part of the holy oblation; or rather, that it was common to all the people of Israel, who might all dwell in it; and therefore Symmachus and Theodotion render it *λαϊκον*. This “city” signifies the Gospel church, often compared to a city in Scripture, being compact together; consisting of Christians knit together in love, of the same sentiment, and joining in religious worship: a city seated on an eminence; well founded; built on the rock Christ Jesus; its buildings large and beautiful, and of lively stones; its inhabitants many, the fellow citizens of the saints; these inhabitants, of all nations, of every rank, age, and sex; and very healthful, none of them sick and diseased; healed of all maladies; living in a wholesome air, by a river, the streams whereof make glad this city, and the inhabitants of it; who have many privileges, being Christ’s freemen; governed by good laws, under proper officers appointed to explain them, and see them executed: a city well fortified with the bulwarks of salvation; the city of solemnities, and of the great King. The suburbs of it are for such who are not yet of it, but are waiting at Wisdom’s gates, and at the posts of her door, hoping for admittance ere long:

and the city shall be in the midst thereof; of the area of five thousand reeds.

Ver. 16. *And this shall be the measures thereof, &c.]* Of the city:

the north side four thousand and five hundred; that is, measures or reeds:

the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred; in all eighteen hundred measures or reeds, as in (³⁶⁸⁵Ezekiel 48:35) which denotes the largeness of the Gospel church, especially in the latter day; when Jews and Gentiles will be converted, and multitudes, east, west, north and south, will be gathered to it; and as it is an equilateral square, this shows the perfection, firmness, stability, and duration of the church of Christ; so the holy city, the New Jerusalem, is for the same reasons said to be foursquare, (⁶²¹⁶Revelation 21:16).

Ver. 17. *And the suburbs of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty, &c.]* That is, so many reeds: and

toward the south two hundred and fifty; which make five hundred; and these being added to four thousand five hundred, north and south, make five thousand:

and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty; which being added to four thousand five hundred, east and west, make five thousand; and so an equilateral square on each side, length and breadth.

Ver. 18. *And the residue in length over against the oblation of the holy portion shall be ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward, &c.]* What remained in length, which ran parallel with the holy portion of the land, after five thousand reeds were taken out for the city and suburbs, were twenty thousand; ten thousand to the east, and ten thousand to the west:

and it shall be over against the oblation of the holy portion; that is, that space as yet undisposed of, the twenty thousand reeds, ten on the east, and ten on the west of the city, were close to, and ran even with, the oblation of the holy portion assigned to the priests and Levites:

and the increase thereof; or what these twenty thousand reeds of land should produce, or could be made of them:

shall be for food for them that serve the city; not the Gibeonites given to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, as Jarchi interprets it; which sense is justly rejected by Kimchi; since, as he observes, the Gibeonites shall not dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, nor minister in time to come: but either civil magistrates, who serve the church of Christ, when they secure the peace of it, protect and defend it; as they will, especially in the latter day, when these officers will be peace, and these exactors righteousness do all things justly and equitably; and when kings shall be nursing fathers and queens nursing mothers to the church; and it is but right they shall be provided for suitably to their rank, dignity, and office, and tribute be given to whom tribute is due: or ministers of the word, who are the church's servants, and serve it in preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances of it; and go by various names, as husbandmen concerned in ploughing, sowing, reaping, and gathering in the harvest; as labourers in the vineyard, and employed in planting, watering, pruning, and propping the vines; and as stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God, to give to everyone in the city and family his portion of meat in due season; and as guides and governors, engaged in taking care of the good order and discipline of it; as watchmen, that go about it, or are set on the walls of it: and it is the will of God they should be comfortably provided for, and eat of the fruit of the field and vineyard they labour in; and of the milk of the flock they take care of; and reap carnal things where they have sowed spiritual, things: or else private believers, who serve the interest of Christ and one another by love; praying with and for one another; bearing one another's burdens, and building up each other on their most holy faith: and for whom "food", or "bread"^{f863}, as in the original, both temporal and spiritual, is provided; both being to be had of the Lord, with whom there is enough, and to spare; Christ is the bread of life, and his word and ordinances are the provisions of Zion; which all that serve the city or church of God may partake of.

Ver. 19. *And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel.*] Whether they be civil magistrates, or ministers of the word, they shall be of Israel, and be Israelites indeed; and shall be taken out of the several tribes; some out of one tribe, and some out of another; all shall have the honour, as well as the labour, of serving the church and interest of Christ; yea, all true Israelites shall contribute as much as in them lies to the service of it.

Ver. 20. *All the oblation shall be five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand, &c.]* Or, “every oblation”^{f864}; everyone of the oblations; that for the priests and the sanctuary; that for the Levites, and that for the city, its suburbs, and the maintenance of those that served the city; each were a square of five and twenty thousand reeds:

ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city; taking in the possession of the city, or what that possessed, the oblation of land for that, and its suburbs, and for produce to support those that served it, should be a foursquare of the above dimensions.

Ver. 21. *And the residue shall be for the prince, &c.]* Not the civil magistrate, but the Prince Messiah; the King, Governor, and Protector of his church and people:

on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city: his portion shall lie on each side of the portion for the sanctuary, the priests and Levites, and for the city and its appurtenances; so that he will be the guardian and preserver of them all; (see Gill on “⁻²⁶¹⁷Ezekiel 45:7”):

over against the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the five and twenty thousand toward the west border; or, “before the face”^{f865} “of the five and twenty thousand of the oblation”, &c.; that is, next to the tribe of Judah, close by that, and just before the holy oblation of five and twenty thousand reeds, both eastward and westward, should be the portion of the prince on one side:

over against the portions for the prince; or, “over against” these shall be that

for the prince^{f866}; parallel with the portions of the several tribes before described shall be that of the prince, which belongs to him:

and it shall be the holy oblation; and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst thereof; that is, the holy oblation of the land for the priests and Levites, and the sanctuary should be between that part of the prince’s portion which lay next to Judah, and that which lay next to Benjamin; of which in the next verse.

Ver. 22. *Moreover, from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, &c.]* Or, “beyond” these, as it may be rendered, on the other side of them; or, “except”^{f867} these:

being in the midst of that which is the prince’s; between his two portions; or, as it is next explained,

between the border of Judah, and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince; that is, all beyond and excepting that which belonged to the priests and Levites, the sanctuary and the city, were the prince’s, which lay between Judah and Benjamin: or thus it was; before the holy oblation one part of the prince’s portion ran, parallel with the tribe of Judah, east and west; after the holy oblation on the other side, another part of his portion touched the tribe of Benjamin, and ran parallel with the east and west: and so were between them both, as well as on each side of the holy oblation: all this denotes the nearness of Christ to his church and people; his protection of them on all sides; and the largeness of his interest and kingdom; (see ^{<3507>}Ezekiel 45:7).

Ver. 23. *As for the rest of the tribes, &c.]* Not yet mentioned, which lay to the south of the sanctuary, and are as follow:

from the east side to the west side, Benjamin shall have a portion;

the sons of God’s right hand, who are as near and dear to him as a man’s right hand is to him. Judah and Benjamin are nearest to the holy oblation, sanctuary, city, and prince; the one to the north of them, the other to the south; these tribes being faithful to God, and with his saints, when others departed from him; the Lord takes great notice of his faithful ones, and honours them, (^{<28112>}Hosea 11:12).

Ver. 24. *And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side, Simeon shall have a portion.]* Close by the border of Benjamin, running east and west, Simeon’s part and inheritance in the land shall be; even such true Israelites as “hear”, understand, and believe the Gospel, and practise what they hear. This tribe is not now to be divided and scattered in Israel, or to have its inheritance in Judah, as formerly, (^{<0408>}Genesis 49:5-7 ^{<6501>}Joshua 19:1-9), but to be distinct, and have a portion by itself.

Ver. 25. *And by the border of Simeon, from the east side unto the west side, Issachar a portion.]* Next, closely adjoining to Simeon’s inheritance, and in the same direction, shall be Issachar’s; such Christians as shall have

the “rewards” of grace for their services and sufferings in times of tribulation.

Ver. 26. *And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the west side, Zebulun a portion.*] In like manner, next to Issachar’s inheritance, and bordering on it, shall be Zebulun’s; who shall be no more a haven for ships, having a different situation and allotment; and may describe such Christians as dwell in Christ, and he in them.

Ver. 27. *And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side, Gad a portion.*] The last of the tribes; a “troop” of overcomers, who are more than conquerors over all their enemies through Christ: all Christians shall have their part and portion in the church below, and in all the privileges and immunities of it; and in the church above, in all the glories and blessedness thereof.

Ver. 28. *And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, &c.]* Of the sanctuary of the Lord, of the portion of the priests and Levites, of the city, and what belonged to that, and of the prince’s portion. The description begins at the northern part of the land, and ends in the southern:

the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife in Kadesh; and to the river toward the great sea; (See Gill on “²⁵⁷⁹Ezekiel 47:19”).

Ver. 29. *This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, &c.]* This is the land, as thus described; and these the tribes of Israel, or the Israelites indeed, who shall have their respective shares in it, as thus allotted to them for their inheritance; which is not of a worldly, but spiritual nature; and a goodly heritage it is, a place and a name better than sons and daughters; namely, a place in the house and church of God; and a right to enjoy all the ordinances of it:

and these are their portions, saith the Lord God; which he has appointed to them, of his grace bestows on them, and of which they may be assured, since he has said it: no mention is made of any cities of refuge in this division of the land, as in Joshua’s time, because now the antitype of them is come, the Messiah, to whom all sensible sinners are directed to flee; and there is no other asylum for them, nor salvation in any other but in him; and besides, in this period there will be no manslayers, nor any that will hurt and destroy in all the holy mountain; and so no need of cities of refuge, (²³¹⁰Isaiah 11:9).

Ver. 30. *And these are the goings out of the city, &c.*] The gates of it, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it, by which they went out of it, and into it; and also the sides of it. The Lord here returns to the city again, to give an account of its circumference and name:

on the north side four thousand and five hundred measures; the north side of the city measured so many measures; that is, reeds, as Jarchi explains it.

Ver. 31. *And the gates of the city shall be after names of the tribes of Israel, &c.*] According to number of them, twelve, and called by their names; the names of the several tribes being written on them; (see ~~Rev~~ Revelation 21:12), this shows that all true Israelites indeed, Israel not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, have a right of entrance into, and communion with, the church of God; even the whole Israel of God, whom he has chosen for himself; Christ has redeemed by his blood, and the Spirit calls by his grace, and sanctifies; these are all, be they Jews or Gentiles, fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: these gates, though twelve, with respect to the twelve tribes that enter in at them, and the twelve apostles of the Lamb that direct unto them, and whose doctrine they embrace and profess that go in by them; yet are but one in the main, which is Christ, faith in him, and a profession of it, and a professed subjection to his Gospel and ordinances, (~~John~~ John 10:1,9):

three gates northward; for those that lay on that side to enter in at:

one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, and one gate of Levi: these tribes, and so the rest, were not placed according to their encampment about the tabernacle in the wilderness, or as they were placed by Joshua in the land of Canaan; which shows that the tribes literally considered are not intended. Levi had a gate, though it had not a portion in the manner the other tribes had.

Ver. 32. *And at the east side four thousand and five hundred, &c.*] Measures or reeds: this side was equal to the north, as the rest were to this; the whole city in its circumference making an equilateral square:

and three gates; which were as follow:

one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan; Joseph is here as having a gate, though he is not mentioned as having a portion; but his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who are here omitted; which made room for Levi's name to be inserted; and Dan, who had his portion first, is here

placed in the middle, no order being observed; the whole being mystical and spiritual.

Ver. 33 *And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures, &c.]* The south side of the city measured just the same as the north and east sides did:

and three gates; were on that side, as on the others:

one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun; at which these tribes entered, or those they represent.

Ver. 34. *At the west side four thousand and five hundred, &c.]* Measures or reeds; so many were the length of this side; the same with north, south, and east, and made a foursquare; and such the city was, as the New Jerusalem is said to be, (^{f8216}Revelation 21:16):

with their three gates: one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali; the situation of these gates on all sides, east, west, north, and south, show that in the latter day people will flock from all quarters to the church of Christ, and that there will be an open and free access of all persons into it; (see ^{f8311}Isaiah 2:2 43:5,6 49:12,18 40:4,5).

Ver. 35. *It was round about eighteen thousand measures, &c.]* Putting the numbers together which each side made, the circumference of the city was eighteen thousand measures; which, according to Cornelius a Lapide, were thirty two thousand miles; which shows that no city literally taken can be here meant, but mystically and spiritually the church of Christ, which will be of great extent in the latter day; and a large one it had need to be, to hold all nations that will flow into it; it will be spread all over the world; the world will become the church; the kingdoms of it will become Christ's; the little stone will become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth; the kingdom and interest of Christ, which is his church, will be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth; even from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same. Some Jewish writers^{f868}, not knowing what to make of these large measures, say that they have respect to the eighteen thousand worlds God is said^{f869} to make, which these were a similitude, figure, or exemplar of; but those Jews are nearer the true sense of them, who say^{f870} that this is to be understood of Jerusalem above, or as it will be in future time, in the world to come, the dispensation of the Messiah, (^{f8005}Galatians 4:26):

and the name of the city from that day shall be, the Lord is there; the Gospel church has other names, as Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the Lord our righteousness, Hephzibah and Beulah, a city not forsaken, (^{<3822>}Hebrews 12:22) (^{<2316>}Jeremiah 33:16 ^{<2314>}Isaiah 62:4,12), but here it is called “Jehovah Shammah”, the Lord is there, or dwells there; which is to be understood of his presence in it; not in a general way, as he is in all places, and with all his creatures, continually, constantly, and everywhere working in a providential manner; but of his gracious presence in a special way and manner: in this sense Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, are in the Gospel church, and will be more manifestly in the latter day; Jehovah the Father, as the Father of Christ, blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him; granting them his presence in him, and communion with him, through him; as their Father providing all good things for them, and as the God of all grace unto them: Jehovah the Son, as the master of the family taking care of it, as a son in his own house, and the first born among his brethren; as the prophet in the midst of his church, teaching and instructing; as the high priest in the midst of the golden candlesticks, lighting and trimming them; as the King in Zion, to rule and govern, protect and defend it; showing himself in all the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace, according to his promise, (^{<4131>}Matthew 28:20). Jehovah the Spirit is here to qualify men with gifts for the ministry, to apply the word, and make it useful; as a Spirit of grace and supplication, and to help the Lord’s people in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; and to be their comforter and remembrancer. Jehovah here does and will display his glorious perfections; his power in the preservation of his saints; his wisdom in the guidance and direction of them; his truth and faithfulness in the performance of promises to them; his purity and holiness in the sanctification of them; his love, grace, and mercy, in the large discoveries made unto them; in short, he will appear all glorious to them, and will be the glory in the midst of them, (^{<4415>}Psalm 46:5,6 ^{<3117>}Zephaniah 3:17) (^{<3115>}Zechariah 2:5) the date from whence this will commence is “that day”; either from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, that famous day made by the rising of the sun of righteousness; or from the day and date of Christ’s promise of his presence, (^{<4131>}Matthew 28:20) or from the time the Gospel church state was set up; or from the day this city will be rebuilt and restored, the Lord will more visibly and manifestly grant his presence to the inhabitants of it, and never more depart from them; see (^{<2112>}Isaiah 42:12), The Targum is,

“the name of the city which is separated from the day, the Lord will cause his Shechaniah to dwell there.”

The Jews^{f871} produce this place to show that Jerusalem is called Jehovah, and say, do not read Shammah, “there”, but Shemah, “its name”; and the Socinians from hence would disprove the incommunicableness of the name Jehovah to a creature, but without effect; since this city is not called simply Jehovah, but with an additional epithet; and this is to be understood, not in a divided, but compound sense, as the altar in (^{<01715>}Exodus 17:15), and the mount in (^{<01214>}Genesis 22:14).

FOOTNOTES

- ft1 -- Onamast. Sacr. p. 224, 320, 845.
- ft2 -- Stromat. l. 2. p. 344.
- ft3 -- Praeper. Evangel. l. 9. c. 23. p. 436. & c. 29. p. 439.
- ft4 -- Deuteronomy Dis Syris, Syntag. 2. c. 1. p. 210, 211.
- ft5 -- Praefat. in Ezek. tom. 3. fol. 9. D.
- ft6 -- Praefat. in ib. ad Eustochium, tom 5. fol. 174. G.
- ft7 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 13. 2. & Taanith, fol. 17. 1, 2. & Maimon. Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 1. sect. 4.
- ft8 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 5. sect. 1.
- ft9 -- Synops. Sacr. Script. p. 134, 136. tom. 2.
- ft10 -- Demonstr. Evang. Prop. 4. p. 272.
- ft11 -- Deuteronomy Prophet. Vit. c. 9.
- ft12 -- Deuteronomy Vit. & Mort. Sanct. c. 39.
- ft13 -- Massaot, p. 78, 79.
- ft14 -- P. 74.
- ft15 -- Deuteronomy Resurrect. Mort. l. 1. c. 2. sect. 5.
- ft16 -- In Ezek. xliiii. 19.
- ft17 -- Apud R. D. Kimchi in loc.
- ft18 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26.
- ft19 -- Praefat. in Ezek. tom. 3. fol. 9. D.
- ft20 -- Typus Doctrin. Prophetic. sect. 7. p. 41. Vid. Witsii Miscel. Sacr. tom. 1. l. 1. c. 19.
- ft21 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3409. p. 127.
- ft22 -- Scripture Chronology, p. 681.
- ft23 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
- ft24 -- Vol. 21. p. 61.
- ft25 -- Geograph. l. 5. c. 18.

ft26 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. 1. 6. c. 26.

ft27 -- Travels, par. 2. B. 1. ch. 10. p. 46.

ft28 -- **hyh hyh** “essendo fuit”, Pagninus, Montanus. Heb. ; “existendo exstitit”, Polanus.

ft29 -- Orat. 47. vol. 1. p. 724.

ft30 -- **l mçj h ^y[k** “tanquam species hasmal, [vel] chasmal”, Calvin, Tigerius version, Starckius; “angeli”, Munster; “flammae crepitantis”, Montanus; “prunarum ardentissimarum”, Polanus; “purissimi aeris”, Piscator; **ηλεκτρον**, Sept. “electri”, V. L. Pagninus.

ft31 -- Baal Aruch, Philip. Aquinas. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi ib loc.

ft32 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 1. 2.

ft33 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 33. c. 4.

ft34 -- Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.

ft35 -- So R. Sol. Urbin, Ohel Moed, fol. 60. 2.

ft36 -- Bab. Pesachim, fol. 119. 1.

ft37 -- **htwj a l a hça** “foemina adsororem suam”, Montanus, Polanus; “vira, [sive] mulier ad sociam suam”, so some in Vatablus.

ft38 -- Apud Schindler. Lex. Pentaglott, p. 267.

ft39 -- **twdwrp** “disjunctae”, Montanus; “divisae”, Calvin, Starckius. So Ben Melech.

ft40 -- **wynp rb[l a** “coram facie sua”, V. L. “in tractam faciei suae”, [objectum], Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “ante faciem suam”, Starckius.

ft41 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 2.

ft42 -- **phl haryw** “et timor illis erat”, Cocceius; “et timor ipis”, Starckius; “and they were reverent”, so Dr. Lightfoot, Prospect of the Temple, &c. c. 38. p. 2055.

ft43 -- Nat. Hit. 1. 37. c. 2.

ft44 -- **pydrwmh pywg l a** “ad gentes, rebelles”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.

- ft45 -- **μνρp yçq** “duri facie”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Calvin, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft46 -- **bl yqzj** “duri corde”, Pagninus, Montanus; “fortes corde”, Vatablus, Polanus.
- ft47 -- **wl dj y** “cessaverint”, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius; “desistent”, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft48 -- **yrm tyb** “domus rebellionis”, Montanus, Calvin, Piscator, Junius & Tremellius, Starckius.
- ft49 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 21. c. 15. and l. 22. c. 16.
- ft50 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 25.
- ft51 -- **hmf yrm** “rebellio ipsi”, Montanus, Polanus, Starckius; “inobedientia sunt”, Cocceius.
- ft52 -- “----Aut summi plena tam margine libri Scriptus, et in tergo, nec dum finitus Orestes”. Juvenal. Satyr. 1.
- ft53 -- T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 21. 1.
- ft54 -- **l kat** “devoret, consumat”, Vatablus.
- ft55 -- **hpç yqm[** “profundi labii”, Vatablus; “profundorum labio”, Polanus, Cocceius; “profundi sermonis”, Starkius.
- ft56 -- **ˆwçl ydbk** “graves linguae”, Montanus; “gravium lingua”, Polanus.
- ft57 -- **Æytj l ç μhyl a al μα** “si non ad eos misissem te”, Vatablus; “si non misero te”, Montanus; “si non mitterem”, Pagninus.
- ft58 -- “Si non misissem te ad eos”, Calvin.
- ft59 -- **wbay al** “non cupient”, Montanus; “non volunt”, Cocceius; “non illi volentes”, Starckius.
- ft60 -- **bl yçqw j xm yqzj** “obfirmati fronte et duri corde”, Polanus, Starckius; “obfirmati frontis et duri cordis”, Piscator.
- ft61 -- **Æynp ta yttñ** “dedi faciem tuam”, V. L. Vatablus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft62 -- **rwxm** “rupe”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; “prae rupe”, Cocceius; “ex rupe”, Starckius; “prae petra”, Montanus.

- ft63 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 8. p. 12.
- ft64 -- **dwbk Æwr b** “benedictam gloriam Jehovahae e loco ipsius, migrantem”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft65 -- **htwj a l a hça twqyçm** “attingentium [more osculantium], vira ad sororem suam”, Vatablus; “osculantium”, Polanus, Starckius. So Ben Melech.
- ft66 -- Vid. Hillerum de Arcano Kethib & Keri, l. 2. p. 329.
- ft67 -- **Æy t t n h p x** “speculatorem dedi”, V. L. Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius. So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft68 -- Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 2.
- ft69 -- **h[q b h l a** “in istam convallem”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, “in vallem”, Vatablus, Cocceius; “in vallem, quasi fissum locum”, Starckius.
- ft70 -- Vid. Menasseh Ben Israel, Spes Israelis, p. 110.
- ft71 -- **l d j y l d j h w** “et qui cessat cesset”, Pagninus, Tigurine version, Starckius; “qui desistere volet desistat”, Piscator; “qui desistit [audire], desistet”. So some in Vatablus.
- ft72 -- **hnbl** “laterem”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus. Piscator.
- ft73 -- Apud Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
- ft74 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 50. 9.
- ft75 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 46.
- ft76 -- Miscel. Sacr. tom. 1. l. 1. c. 12. sect. 14, 15, &c.
- ft77 -- Vid. Lyra in loc.
- ft78 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 73.
- ft79 -- **t b k ç w h l a t a t y l k w** “et absolves hos, et decumbes”, Cocceius, Starckius; “et consummabis haec, et jacebis”, Montanus.
- ft80 -- Vid. Lydium de Revelation Militari, l. 4. c. 3. p. 160.
- ft81 -- Antiqu. l. 3. c. 8. sect. 2.
- ft82 -- T. Bab. Sota, fol. 4. 2.

- ft83 -- **^ [ml** “eo quod”, Munster, Vatablus; “propterea”, Tigurine version.
- ft84 -- **brj** “gladium”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.
- ft85 -- Kimchi in Ezek. xxxviii. 12.
- ft86 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin. fol. 37. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft87 -- **twxra hytwbybsw** “et circa eam [erant] terrae”, Cocceius.
- ft88 -- **h[çrl** “ut improbe ageret”, Cocceius.
- ft89 -- **rmt** “transgressa est, [vel] rebellis fuit”, Calvin; “refractaria
- ft90 -- “Verbum” **sam** “significat spernere, reprobare, rejicere, idque ex contemptu et fastidio”, Polanus.
- ft91 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 39, 9.
- ft92 -- **yna µg Æyl [ynh** “ecce ego ad te, etiam ego”, Pagninus, Montanus; “ecce ego contra te, etiam ego”, Starckius.
- ft93 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 6. c. 3. sect. 4. Ed. Hudson.
- ft94 -- **rswm** “disciplina”, Pagninus; “castigatio”, Vatablus, Starckius.
- ft95 -- **µkyl [Psa** “famen congregabo, super vos”, V. L. Pagninus; “famen colligam super vos”, Montanus, Polanus, Starckius.
- ft96 -- **µhyl a** “ad eos”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “ad illos”, Piscator.
- ft97 -- **µkynmj** “simulacra vestra solis”, Pagninus; “solaria vestra”, Vatablus; “subdiales statuæ vestrae”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.
- ft98 -- **µkyl wl g ynpl** “coram stercoreis diis vestris”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “coram stercoreibus vestris”, Cocceius.
- ft99 -- **Æl grb [qr** “extende pede tuo”, Pagninus, Montanus, Polanus; “fac distensionem cum pede tuo”, Munster; “divarica pedes tuos”: Calvin.
- ft100 -- Clio, sive l. 1. c. 131.
- ft101 -- **Æyl [yttn** “ponam super te”, Pagninus; “dabo super te”, Montanus; “reponam super te”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

- ft102 -- **hrypxh** “corona”, Tigurine version, so some is Vatablus; “cidaris matutina”, Montanus.
- ft103 -- **hmwhm** “tumultus”, Montanus, Piscator, Starckius; “strepitus”, Calvin; “clamoris”, Vatablus.
- ft104 -- **ˆwagl** “in superbiam”, V. L. Calvin, Starckius.
- ft105 -- **wb** “ex eo”, Tigurine version.
- ft106 -- “In eo”. Pagninus, Montanus, Polanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Starckius.
- ft107 -- **µymd j pçm** “judicio sanguiuum”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Polanus, Starckius; “criminibus capitalibus”, Piscator; “sanguianariis judiciis”, Castalio.
- ft108 -- **µyz[ˆwag** “superbiam fortium”, Calvin; “superbiam robustorum”, Starckius.
- ft109 -- So R. Sol. Urhin. Ohel Moed, fol. 96. 1.
- ft110 -- **µkrdm** “pro viis ipsorum”, Calvin; “pro via ipsorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus,
- ft111 -- **µj pça µhyj pçmbw** “et in”, sive “pro judiciis eorum judicabo eos”, Calvin, Polanus, Cocceius.
- ft112 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 73. Vid. Kimchi in loc.
- ft113 -- **tymynph r[ç j tp l a** “ad ostium portae interioris, [sub.] atrii”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Piscator.
- ft114 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 903.
- ft115 -- **yçdqm l [m hj r l** “ut longius recedant, [vel] abeant, [sub.] Israelitae a sauctuario meo”, Vatablus; and to this sense are the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; “ad longe recedendum”, Cocceius.
- ft116 -- **twl dg twb[wt** “abominationes magnas”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Piscator, Cocceius. Starckius.
- ft117 -- Prospect of the Temple, c. 28. p. 2018.
- ft118 -- Misn. Middot, c. 5. sect. 3.
- ft119 -- Maimon. Hilhot Melachim, c. 2. sect. 4.

- ft120 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 29, p. 426.
- ft121 -- Corinthiaca, sive l. 2. p. 121.
- ft122 -- Deuteronomy Dea Syria. Vid. Theocriti, *αδονιαζουσαι*, Idyll. 15.
- ft123 -- Phaedrus, tom. 3. p. 974, Ed. Serran.
- ft124 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 903. So Luther apud Dieteric. Antiqu. Bibl. par. 2. p. 132.
- ft125 -- *hl am twl dg twb[wt* “abominationes magnas praeter istas”, Calvin.
- ft126 -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 184. 4.
- ft127 -- *μtywj tçm*.
- ft128 -- Vid. Hottinger. Smegma Orientale, l. 3. par. 1. c. 24. p. 154. who rather is of opinion that the word is compounded of the participle and the particle *ta*, or the pronoun *μτα*.
- ft129 -- Sacror. Eleaochr. Myrothec. l. 2. p. 536.
- ft130 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 231.
- ft131 -- Heb. & Talmud. Exercitat. in Johan. xv. 6.
- ft132 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1.
- ft133 -- Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 6.
- ft134 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft135 -- *wyntmb* “in lumbis suis”, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
- ft136 -- Lexic. Polyglott. col. 3393.
- ft137 -- Travels, p. 227. Ed. 2.
- ft138 -- Supplementum de Sicl. Formis, p. 37. 3. Prolegom. 3. de lingua Hebr. sect. 36.
- ft139 -- Palaeograph. Graec. l. 2. c. 3.
- ft140 -- T. Bab. Ceritot, c. 1. fol. 5. 2.
- ft141 -- Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1.
- ft142 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1.

- ft143 -- **bwrkl tj t l a** “in locum cerubinatorum, [vel] cheruborum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “ad cherubim”, Tigurine version; which is approved by Noldius, p. 84. No. 398.
- ft144 -- Josephus de Bello Judaeorum, l. 6. c. 5, sect. 3.
- ft145 -- **hyj h j wr πνευμα βωης**, Sept. “spiritus vitae”, V. L. Starckius.
- ft146 -- **ˆwa** “vanitatem”, Calvin, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius; “vanum”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft147 -- **μytb twnb bwrqb al** “non in propinque aedificandae domus”, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Polanus; “non in propinquo aedificare domos”, Montanus, Piscator, Starckius.
- ft148 -- **μhyl [** “de eis”, V. L. “super eos”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft149 -- **wyht μtaw** “et vos critis”, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft150 -- **μyywgh yj pçmk** “juxta judicia genitium”, Pagninus, Montanus; “secundum jura gentium”, Junius & Tremellius; Piscator; “secundum judicia gentium”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft151 -- **yabnhk** “me prophetante”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft152 -- **hç[hta** “tu faciem”, Montanus, Starckius.
- ft153 -- **Ætl ag yçna** “viri redemptionis tua”, Montanus, Heb. “viri redempturae tuae”, Piscator.
- ft154 -- Exodus T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 29. 1.
- ft155 -- **j [m çdqml** “ad sanctuarium paucitatis”, Calvin; “in sanctuarium paucorum”, Cocceius. So Ben Melech says the word is a substantive in some copies.
- ft156 -- Paulisper, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Castalio.
- ft157 -- Zokar in Gen. fol. 107. 3.
- ft158 -- T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 31. 1.
- ft159 -- **yrm tyb** “domus rebellionis”, Montanus, Vatablus, Starckius; “domus inobedientiae”, Cocceius.
- ft160 -- **hl wg yl k** “vasa transmigrationis”, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius; “instrumenta migrationis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.

- ft161 -- **wary yl wa** “fortasse visuri sunt”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “fortasse videbunt”, Piscator, Starckius.
- ft162 -- Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 2. and c. 8. sect. 2.
- ft163 -- **wypga** “alas militum”, Montanus; “alas ejus”, Cocceius, Starckius; so Ben Melech.
- ft164 -- **rpsm yçna** “viros numeri”, Montanus, Vatablus; “homines numero”, Starckius.
- ft165 -- **µl çwry ybçwyl** “habitoribus Hierosolymorum”, Montanus, Starckius; “de habitatoribus”, Piscator; “de habitantibus Hierosolymam”, Cocceius.
- ft166 -- **l arçy tmda l a επι της γης του ισραηλ**, Sept. “super terram Israel”, Calvin; “in terram Israelis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; so Ben Melech.
- ft167 -- **hal mm** “a plenitudine sua”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft168 -- **dba** “peribit”, Munster, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; “perit”, Starckius.
- ft169 -- **µj wr rj a µykl h** “qui ambulant post spiritm suum”: Pagninus, Calvin, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft170 -- **twxrbp** “in fracturas”, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version; “rupturas”, Calvin, Piscator, Starckius.
- ft171 -- **rbd µyql** “ut praestet verbum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “ratum fore”, Grotius; “eventurum esse”, Castalio.
- ft172 -- **µkyl a ynnh** “ecce ego ad vos”, V. L. “sub. venio”, Grotius; “veniam”, Piscator, Starckius; “venturus sum cum ira mea”, Vatablus.
- ft173 -- **wyhy al ym[dwsb** “in secreto populi mei non erunt”, Montanus; “in arcano”, Munster; “in comilio”, Junius & Tremellius, Calvin, Polanus; “in concilio”, Vatablus.
- ft174 -- **hnl pt çybg l a ynba hntaw** “et vos, O lapides grandinis, ruere facietis [aedificium]”, Munster.
- ft175 -- “Et dabo lapides grandinis, qui corruiere facient [parietem]”, Pagninus.

ft176 -- Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 7. p. 119.

ft177 -- **twrptml** “applicantibus, [sive] accommodantibus”, Gataker;
 “conjungentibus, vel adunantibus”, Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 947.
lyxa lk l [twtsk “pulvillos super omnes cubitos manus”, Calvin;
 “pro omnibus cubitis manuum”, Piscator.

ft178 -- “Velamina”, Polanus. So Kimchi and Ben Melech.

ft179 -- Gussetius thinks that by the words rendered “pillows” and
 “kerchiefs” are meant “nets”, with which they covered their heads and
 arms; for, otherwise, what connection is there between the above
 things and hunting? Ebr. Comment. p. 395, 565.

ft180 -- **twj rpl** “in floralia”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius; “in
 floridis hortis”, Piscator.

ft181 -- **µbl l [µhyl wl g wl [h** “ascendere fecerunt idola sua in, [vel]
 super cor suum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin.

ft182 -- **µhyl wl g** “stercoreos deos suos”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator;
 “stercora sua”, Cocceius; “stercora ipsorum”, Starckius.

ft183 -- **µhl çrda çrdah** “an [igitur serio] interrogor ab eis?” Piscator.

ft184 -- “An respondeudo respondebo illis?” Starckius. So Sept. Ar.

ft185 -- “Eodem {tempore}”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “in illo
 tempore”, Piscator; “in ea re”, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft186 -- **wyl wl g bwr b ab** “ipsi venienti in multitudine idolorum suorum”,
 Pagninus, Montanus.

ft187 -- **wbyçhw wbwç** “convertimini, et facite converti”, Pagninus,
 Montanus, Vatablus.

ft188 -- **hyl kç** “orbaturas eam”, Pagninus, Montanus; “orbaturas eam”,
 Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “orbam fecere illam”, Cocceius,
 Starckius.

ft189 -- **µdb** “per sanguinem”, Piscator.

ft190 -- “Propter sanguinem”, Vatablus.

ft191 -- **µy[rh** “mala”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius;
 “pessima”, Junius & Tremellius, Vatablus.

- ft192 -- **l km ^pgh l** “lignum vitis prae omni ligno”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.
- ft193 -- **hrwmzh** “surculus”, Cocceius; “surculus vitis”, Starckius; “vitis sylvestris”, Munster. So Ben Melech interprets the branch, of a vine.
- ft194 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 14. c. 1.
- ft195 -- **waxy** “exiverunt”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft196 -- **Ætytrkm** “habitationes tuae”, Pagninus, Calvin; “mansiones tuae”, Montanus; “habitatio tua”, Vatablus, Grotius; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 30. 1.
- ft197 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft198 -- Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 1. 2. c. 25.
- ft199 -- Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 129. 2.
- ft200 -- **hl am tj a** “unum ex istis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “unum ex his”, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius.
- ft201 -- **tsswbtm** “conculcatam”, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius; “praebentem conculcandam te”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.
- ft202 -- **hbbr** “millia dedi”, Pagninus, Montanus; “in multa millia”, Tigurine version; “in myriadem te auxi”, Piscator; so Ben Melech.
- ft203 -- **pyyd[yd[** “ornamenta ornamentorum”, Pagninus, Montanus; “in ornamentum ornamentorum”, Calvin; “pulchritudinem pulchritudium”, Starckius; so Ben Melech; “elegantiam elegantiarum”, Cocceius.
- ft204 -- **pydwd t[** “tempus amorum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft205 -- **Æymd Pj ça** “ut inundans eluerem sanguinem tuum”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “inundavi sanguines tuos”, Montanus; “affundendo ablu”, Cocceius.
- ft206 -- **hmqr** “veste acupicta”, Vatablus, Grotius; “acupicto”, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft207 -- Hierozoicon, par. 2. 1. 3. c. 31. col. 992.

- ft208 -- “Virginibus Tyriis mos est gestare pharetram, Purpureoque alte suras vincire cothurno”. Aeneid l. 1.
- ft209 -- Deuteronomy Calceis Hebr. l. 1. c. 5. sect. 16.
- ft210 -- Misn. Celaim, c. 9. sect. 1.
- ft211 -- **γϸμ** “serico”, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius. So Buxtorf, Stockius, &c.
- ft212 -- Deuteronomy Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 1. c. 8. p. 168, 169.
- ft213 -- <Arabic> “coloravit, pinxitque pannum. Hinc” <Arabic> “coloratus, pinctusque, pannus”, Golius, col. 2678, 2679. Castel. col. 996.
- ft214 -- Travels, par. 2. B. 2. c. 9. p. 94.
- ft215 -- Travels, p. 241. Ed. 2.
- ft216 -- **Æmç I [** “propter nomen tuum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.
- ft217 -- “In nomine tuo”, V. L. Munster, Tigurine version, Grotius; “super nomen tuum”, Starckius; “cum nomine tuo”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft218 -- **twal j twmb Æl yç[tw** “et fecisti tibi excelsa maculosa”, Montanus; “excelsa conspera maculis”, Calvin; “latis maculis interstincta”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.
- ft219 -- T. Bab. Gittin. fol. 45. 2. Misn. Celim, c. 27. sect. 6.
- ft220 -- **μhyl [** “iisque”, Ar. Interp.
- ft221 -- **hyhy al w twab al** “non eventurae sunt [tales scortationes], nec erit [qui sic scortetur]”, Piscator.
- ft222 -- **ypskmw ybhzm Ætrapt yl k** “vasa gloriae tuae de auro meo, et de argento meo”, Pagninus, Montanus; “vasa tua insigniora et elegantiora, facta ex auro meo?” Vatablus.
- ft223 -- **ymj I w** “et panem meum”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius.
- ft224 -- **bg οικημα πορνικον**, Sept. “lupanar”, V. L. “prostibulum”, so some in Starckius.
- ft225 -- **^[nk θa I a** “cum terra Canaan”, Munster, so some in Vatablus, Tigurine version, Noldius, p. 39. No. 288.
- ft226 -- “ad terram Canaan”, so some in Vatablus. Approved by Kimchi and Ben Melech.

- ft227 -- **μτwa ydj çt** “munerans eos”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “et muneratis eos”, Piscator; “et largita es ipsis”, Cocceius; “donasti illis”, Starckius.
- ft228 -- **hnwz al Æyrj aw** “et post te non fornicatio fuit”, Pagninus, Montanus; “nec post te fuit sic fornicatum”, so some in Vatablus; “post te non erit fornicatio”, Calvin.
- ft229 -- **Ætçj n τον χαλκον σου**, Sept. “aes tuum”, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Tigurine version, Starckius; “virus tuum”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator, Grotius; “aerugo tua”, Cocceius.
- ft230 -- Misn. Celim, c. 8. sect. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 41. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft231 -- **μhyl [tbr[rça** “quibus commixtuisti cum illis”, Starckius.
- ft232 -- **Ætrapt yl k** “vasa decoris tui”, V. L. “instrumenta ornatus tui”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “vasa ornatus tui”, Piscator, Starckius.
- ft233 -- **Æb ytmj ytj nhw** “et requiescere faciam iram meam in te”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Cocceius.
- ft234 -- **Æytb[wt l k l [hmz ta tyç[al w** “et non fecisti cogitationem super omnibus abominationibus tuis”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; “nec tamen fecisti”, &c. Vatablus, Grotius.
- ft235 -- This is followed by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Luther, Starckius, and others.
- ft236 -- **hl wdgh** “major”, V. L. Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft237 -- **j q j [mk** “tanquam parvum, fastidio fuit hoc”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “velut parum fastidi”, Starckius.
- ft238 -- **j qçh twl çw** “quies otii, [vel] otium quietas”; so some in Vatablus; “prosperitas otii”, Castalio; “tranquillitas quietas”, Starckius.
- ft239 -- **ytyar rçak** “cum vidi”, Cocceius; so some in Vatablus; “postea quam”, Tigurine version, Piscator, Starckius.
- ft240 -- **yaç ta** imperat. pro fut. i.e. “confunderis”, Vatablus.
- ft241 -- **tyç[rça l km** “propter omnia quae fecisti”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

- ft242 -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 101. 3.
- ft243 -- **Æypb h[wmçl** “in auditu in ore tuo”, Pagninus, Montanus; “in auditum”, Vatablus.
- ft244 -- **Æynwag μwyb** “in die superbiarum tuarum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; “in die excellentiarum tuarum”, Piscator; “in die erectionum tuarum”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft245 -- **tyç[rçak Ætwa tyç[w** “ego quidem agerem tecum, quemadmodum fecisti mecum”, Tigurine version.
- ft246 -- **hdyj dwj**, Heb. “acue acumen”, Piscator.
- ft247 -- **l arçy tyb l a** “de domo Israelis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft248 -- **rbah Æra** “longa corpore”, Castalio; “longa membris”, Munster, Grotius; “longo membororum ductu”, Pradus.
- ft249 -- **hmqrh wl rça**, Heb; “opus phrygionicum”, Piscator.
- ft250 -- Aelian. Hist. Animal. l. 2. c. 39.
- ft251 -- **μyl kwr** “aromatariorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Polinus. So Stockius, p. 1017.
- ft252 -- **^[nk ða l a** “tetra Chanaan”, Texelius, Phoenix, l. 3. c. 4. sect. 6. p. 205.
- ft253 -- Vid. Noldii Concord. Part. Ebr. p. 56.
- ft254 -- **wmç hpxpx** “circumspectissime posuit illud, Junins & Tremellius, Polanus; “cum magna circumspectione”, Piscator; “circumspecte, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft255 -- And so it does; see Castel, col. 3220, 3221. and in this way Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the word, in which they are followed by many; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 73. 1. nevertheless, the sense of it here is disapproved of by Castel, who observes, what has a willow to do with a vine? col. 3222. and commends the Greek version, which renders it, **επιβλεπομενον**, “conspicuous”, to be seen; and so others translate it, “in superficie”, V. L. Grotius; yet the “safsaf” of the Arabs is a tree by which they understood the “abeile” or poplar tree; see Shaw’s Travels, p. 432. Ed. 2.
- ft256 -- L. 2. sive Euterpe, c. 161.

- ft257 -- h[j m twgr[m “ex rivulis [loci in quo] plantata est”, Gussetius, p. 642. such as run between beds in gardens, of which this word is sometimes used; hence some render it “ex areolis”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, so Ben Melech; or ditches and canals, such as were made out of the river Nile to water the land; “a fossa plantarii sui”, Texelius, ut supra, p. 209.
- ft258 -- ὄαη ἢ ἢ ἢ “arietes terrae”, Montanus.
- ft259 -- hdm[l wtyrb ta rmçl “ad custodiendum pactum ejus, ad astandum ei”, Montanus; “ad servandum foedus suum, ad consistendum”, Starckius.
- ft260 -- χειρας τ αλληλων λαβετην και πιστωσατε, Iliad. 6.
- ft261 -- Florus, Hist. Rom. Gest. l. 4. c. 5.
- ft262 -- “Ipse pater dextram Anchises, haud malta moratur, Dat juveni atque animum praesenti pignore firmat”. Aeneid. l. 3. prope finem.
- ft263 -- hqdxw j pçm “judiciam et justitiam”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
- ft264 -- ἢ ἢ ἢ ἢ ἢ “ad stercoreos deos”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “ad stercora”, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft265 -- ἢ ἢ “effractorem”, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator, Grotius.
- ft266 -- tmwy twm “moriendo morietur”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft267 -- wymd “sanguines ejus”, Montanus.
- ft268 -- l bj al l bj “pignus non pignoravit”, Vatablus; “pignus non acceperit in pignus”, Pagninus; “pignori”, Montanus.
- ft269 -- qç[qç[“oppressit oppressionem”, Pagninus, Montanus; “oppressit oppressione”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft270 -- wytwdx l k “omnes justitiae ejus”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft271 -- ἢ ἢ [mb “propter prvevaricationem ipsius, [vel] suam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.

- ft272 -- **μhyl** [“propter illa”, Pagninus, Piscator, Grotius, Cocceius; so some in Vatsbins.
- ft273 -- **hqdxw j pçm** “judicium et justitiam”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Cocceius.
- ft274 -- **hyj y wçpn ta awh** “animam suam vivificabit”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; “vivificat”, Cocceius.
- ft275 -- **wbyçhw wbwç** “convertimini et facite converti”, Pagninus, Montanus, “sub. proximos”; so some in Calvin; “quisque suam fratrem”, Munster, Vatablus.
- ft276 -- **l wçkml μkl hyhy al w** “et non erit vobis in offendiculum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.
- ft277 -- **wyj w** “et vivetis”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft278 -- **l arçy yayçn l a** “de principibus Israel”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Starckius; so Ben Melech.
- ft279 -- **l [tw** “et ascendere fecit”, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version.
- ft280 -- **μyj j b** “in, [vel] cum hamis”, Montanus, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft281 -- **hl j wn yk** “quod infirmatus esset”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft282 -- **wytwml a [dyw** “et cognovit viduas ejus”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; “viduas eorum”, Vatablus, Starckius; so R. Joseph Kimchi. Which sense is approved by Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 312. R. Jonah interprets it, “he broke their palaces”; so Calvin, and some in Vatablus, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 96. 1.
- ft283 -- **wyl [wntyw** “et ediderunt vocem”; Vatablus.
- ft284 -- “Capere eos ardui erat quondam operis, foveisque maxime”. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 16.
- ft285 -- Dr. Shaw’s Travels, p. 172. Ed. 2.
- ft286 -- **μyj j b rgwsb** “in claustro uncis adhibitis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “in clastrum in hamis”, Montanus; “in claustro in hamis”, Starckius; “in cavea hamis”, Cocceius.
- ft287 -- Iliad. 1. l. 234, &c.

ft288 -- Paschal. de Coronis, l. 6. c. 19. p. 406, 407.

ft289 -- Seder Olam Rabba apud Abarbinel in loc.

ft290 -- **yl wl gb** “stercoreis diis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus;
“stercoribus”, Piscator, Cocceius.

ft291 -- **µhb** “per ea”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; “propter ea”,
Pagninus.

ft292 -- **wsam** “abjeoerunt”, Pagninus; “reprobaverunt”, Montanus.

ft293 -- **wl l j** “prophanarunt”, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius.

ft294 -- **rmaw** “postea dixi”, Piscator.

ft295 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 576, 939.

ft296 -- Selecta Sacra, l. 4. c. 11. p. 522.

ft297 -- Euterpe: sive l. 2. c. 138.

ft298 -- **tbhl ç tbhl** “flamma flamma, pro flamma continua et perpetua”,
Vatablus; “flamma inflammatissima”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus
“flamma flammae”, Montanus, Piscator.

ft299 -- **h[wmç l a, επι τη αγγελια**, Sept.; “propter rumorem”, Vatablus,
Cocceius; “propter [vel] ad auditum”, Pagninus, Montanus.

ft300 -- **µym hnkl t** “fluent aquis”, Munster, Tigurine version, so Ben
Melech; “manabunt ut aqua” Cocceius.

ft301 -- **çyçn** “laetemar”, Castalio; “gaudeamus”, Glassius.

ft302 -- **¶ l k tsam ynb j bç** “virga est filii me ilia spernit, [vel] quae
spernit omne lignum”, Tigurine, version, Piscator, the margin of our
Bibles.

ft303 -- “Aut hilarabimur”, Cocceius.

ft304 -- So R. Sol Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 59. 1.

ft305 -- **hmw ñ j b yk** “quum fuit probatio quid tandem fuit?” Junius &
Tremellius, Polanus.

ft306 -- **hyhy al**, “non erit”, V. L. “scilicet sceptrum”, Mariana.

ft307 -- **Pk l a Pk Æhw** “percute manum ad manum”, Pagninus, Polanus;
“volum ad volam”; Montanus; “feri manum ad manum”, Starckius.

- ft308 -- **brj tj ba** “terrorem gladii”, Munster, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft309 -- **ydj ath** “unito Montanus”, Piscator, Polanus; “unitor te”, Starckius; “in unum dirigitor”, Cocceius.
- ft310 -- So R. So. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 25, 2, interprets the word.
- ft311 -- Specimen Arab. Hist. p. 327.
- ft312 -- Animadv. in Job, p. 169, 170.
- ft313 -- Travels, par. 1. B. 1. ch. 6. p. 36.
- ft314 -- Midrash Tillim in Psal. lxxix. 1.
- ft315 -- See Godwin’s Moses and Aaron, l. 4. c. 9.
- ft316 -- Vid. Alex. ab flex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 25. & Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37.
- ft317 -- Vid. Valtrinum de Revelation Militari Roman. l. 1. c. 6. p. 27. Liv. & Ciceron. in ib.
- ft318 -- “Cernit tabe jecur madidum, venasque minaces, Hostili de parte videt”, &c. Pharsal. l. 1.
- ft319 -- “Hostile valido robore insurlit latus.” Oedipus, Act. 2.
- ft320 -- Vid. Lydium de Revelation Militari, l. 1. c. 3. p. 9, 10.
- ft321 -- Pausanias, l. 6. p. 345.
- ft322 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 19. Vid. Valtrinum de Revelation Militari Roman. l. 5. c. 6. p. 526.
- ft323 -- Deuteronomy Architectura, l. 10. c. 19.
- ft324 -- Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
- ft325 -- Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 113.
- ft326 -- **μhl tw[bc y[bc** “quia obstrieti jurameutis eis suat”, Piscator.
- ft327 -- **j pçmh wl rça** “cujus est judicium”, Pagninus, Starckius; “[vel] jus”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.
- ft328 -- Not. in Ben Melech, Miclol Yophi in loc.
- ft329 -- Antiqu. Jud. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.

- ft330 -- **yl lj yrawx la Ætwa tti** “ut ponant te cum cervicibus interfectorum”, Munster, Tigurine version; “applicando te ad cervices confossorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft331 -- **µyr [b** “ardentium”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “urentium”, so some in Vatablus.
- ft332 -- **µymd ry[ta** “civitatem sanguinum”, V. L. Munster, Montanus.
- ft333 -- **l ykr yçna** “homines mercaturae, [vel] aromatis”; so Ben Melech observes.
- ft334 -- **hl g** “revelavit”, Montanus; “discooperuit”, Vatablus; “retegit”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “[sub.] filius”, Piscator.
- ft335 -- **hç [çyaw** “et vir fecit”; Cocceius.
- ft336 -- **dm [yh** “num quid stabit cor tuum?” Paginus, Montanus; “consistet” Munster, Vatablus, Piscator; “perstabit”, Junius and Tremellius, Polanus; “constabit”, Coeccius, Starckius.
- ft337 -- **Æb tl j nw** “et prophana effecta in te”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “prophana efficeris”, Piscator; “et polluta eris in te”, Grotius; “et prophnata eris in te”, Starckiss; “et prophanaberis in te”, Cocceius.
- ft338 -- **rwk** “catinus”, Junius and Tremellius, Polanus, Grotius, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft339 -- **ytj nhw** “et requiescam”, Mercerus; “et requiescere faciam”, Paguinus, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft340 -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 113. 1.
- ft341 -- **ytrwt wsmj** “vim faciunt legimeae”, Junius & Tremellius: Polanus; “vim fecerunt”, Cocceius: Starckius.
- ft342 -- **j pçm al b** “absque iudicio”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, “non in iudicio”, Cocceius.
- ft343 -- **ydd wç [** “fecerant mammas”, Starckius; “fecerent ut earam mammae agerent”, Gussetius; “sese commovendo scilicet, in contentione libidinis aestuantes, et pectoris anhelii reciprocationem sequentes”, ib. p. 652. “ibi subagitarunt ubera virginum”, Coeccius.
- ft344 -- **hl wdgh** “major”, Junius and Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.

- ft345** -- **yl hnyhtw** “et habui eos”, V. L. Heb.; “facte sunt mihi”, Piscator; “[sub] uxores”, Grotius.
- ft346** -- **ytj t** “sub me”, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version. Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft347** -- “Exteros excipiens loco meo”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft348** -- **l wl km** “omni genera pulchrarum vestinto”, Pagninus; “absoluto vestira”, Montanus; “perfectione, [sive] universitate, [sub.] vestium”, Vatablus; “perfectissime”, Janius & Tremellius, Polanus; “perfecto ornatu”, Piscator; “vestitos accurate”, Cocceius.
- ft349** -- **rççb µyqqj** “depictas sinopide”, Pagninus; “pictas minio”, Piscator.
- ft350** -- “Pan deus Arcadiae venit, quem vidimus ipsi Sanguineis ebuli baccis, minioque rubentern.” Bucolic. Eclog. 10.
- ft351** -- Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 452. & Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 520.
- ft352** -- Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 7.
- ft353** -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 6. p. 332.
- ft354** -- Originum, l. 18. c. 2.
- ft355** -- **µhm hçpn [qtw** “avulsa est”, Munster; “et luxata est anima ipsius ab eis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft356** -- **µhyçgl p** “equecubinas eorum”, Vatablus, so Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “concupitores”, Munster, Tigurine version; “cinaedos”, Castalio; and, as Ben Melech observes, these were men, and not women.
- ft357** -- **Æyrw[n tmz ta ydqptw** “et visitasti scelus adolescentiae, vel pueritiae tuae”, Piscator, Starckius; i.e. “visitari fecisti a Deo”, a Lapide.
- ft358** -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 51. 1.
- ft359** -- **Ætrapt yl k** “vasa gloriae tuae”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “instrumenta ornatus tui”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; “vasa ornatus tui”, Starckius.
- ft360** -- Iliad. 1. l. 550.
- ft361** -- Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 6.

ft362 -- Travels, p. 229. Ed. 2.

ft363 -- **hdwbk** “honorato”, Junius and Tremellius, Polanus, Coeccius, Starckius.

ft364 -- **hb** “in ea”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “in illa”, Cocceius, Starckius, “in illo”, Piscator; “circa eam”, a Lapide.

ft365 -- **µda brm µϥcna I aw** “et cum viris ut multiplicarent homines” Pagninus; “ut adessent multi homines”, Munster; “prae multitudine hominum”, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Starckius; “propter multiplicare homines”, Vatablus.

ft366 -- **rbdmm µyabws** “ebrosi ex deserto”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 99. 1.

ft367 -- **hl bl** “de inveterata illa”, Vatablus.

ft368 -- **I hq µhyl [hl [a αναγαγε επ αυτας οχλον**, Sept.; “adduc super eas coetum”, V. L. “ascendere tac contra eas, [vel] eaos, coetum”, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft369 -- “Facium ascendere”, Pagninus; “adducam”, Munster, Tigurine version; “quum adduxero”, Piscator.

ft370 -- **I hq** “congregatio”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “consessus judicum”, Grotius, Starckius.

ft371 -- **zbl w hw[zi** “commotioni et directioni”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; “in commotionen et in praedam”, Starckius.

ft372 -- **hnktmz wntnw** “et dabunt scelus vestrum”, V. L. Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft373 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3414.

ft374 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.

ft375 -- **Æms** “appropinquavit”, Pagninus, Vatablus; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 84. 2. “adjunxit se”, Montanus

ft376 -- **hytj t µymx[h rwd** “pyram ossium sub ipsa”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Starckius. **rwd** “rogus, strues materiae combustibilis rotunda”, Stockius, p. 223.

- ft377 -- **htçj n** “fundum ejus”, Pagninus, Vatablus.
- ft378 -- **µd** “tace”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft379 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1.
- ft380 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 2. sect. 1. Buxtorf. Jud. Synagog. c. 49. p. 708.
- ft381 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 5. sect. 1.
- ft382 -- Schulchan Aruch, lib. Jore Dea, c. 380. sect. 1. c. 386. sect. 1, 2.
- ft383 -- Deuteronomy luctu Ebr. c. 11. sect. 5. p. 250.
- ft384 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 11. 1. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1. Succa, fol. 25. 2.
- ft385 -- Messech, Semachot, c. 1. sect. 5.
- ft386 -- Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 5. sect. 1. Schulchan Aruch, lib. Jore Dea, c. 380. sect. 1. 382. sect. 1, 2.
- ft387 -- Buxtorf. Jud. Synagog. c. 49. p. 706.
- ft388 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 11. 1. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1. Succa, fol. 25. 2.
- ft389 -- T. Bab. Moed Katan, fol. 27. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 9. Schulchan Aruch, lib. Jore Dea, c. 378. sect. 1.
- ft390 -- Buxtorf. Jud. Synagog. c. 49. p. 708.
- ft391 -- Hieron. ad Paulam super obitu Blesillae, tom. 1. operam, fol. 54. L.
- ft392 -- Vid. Kirchman. de Funer. Rom. l. 4. c. 7. p. 591.
- ft393 -- Joesph Antiqu. l. 17. c. 8. sect. 4.
- ft394 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 1. sect. 1.
- ft395 -- **µçpn açm ta** “onus animae eoram”, Munster; “curam, [vel] solitudinem”; so some in Vatablus.
- ft396 -- Antiqu. l. 16. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft397 -- **µhytwryj** “arces suas”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Coeccius. **µhynkçm** “tentoria sua”, V. L. “tabernacula sus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

- ft398 -- **gbl** “in cibum”, Montanus, Gussetius. This is the Cetib or textual writing; but the Keri or marginal reading is **ˆbl** , “in direptionem”, Pagninus, Cocceius; “in praedam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Both come to much one and the same sense, as Ben Melech observes, for food was of the spoil; and one word answers to another by “athbash”, which is a certain form of placing the alphabet; (see Gill on ~~“-2256-~~Jeremiah 25:26).
- ft399 -- **Πτκ** τον ωμον, Sept.; “humerum”), V. L. Montanus.
- ft400 -- **μyρ [hm** “ab ipsis”, Haris, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft401 -- **μqη μqηb** “in ulciscendo ultionem”, Montanus, Starckius.
- ft402 -- Antiqu. l. 13. c. 9. sect. 1.
- ft403 -- In Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 3.
- ft404 -- **μl w[tbya** “inimicitias perpetuas”, Pagninus; “iuimietia perpetua”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator
- ft405 -- **μytrk ta ytrkhw.**
- ft406 -- **hal ma** “implebor”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft407 -- Evangel. Demonstrat. prop. 6. p. 328.
- ft408 -- Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 48, 49. Ed. 7.
- ft409 -- Travels, p. 273. Ed. 2.
- ft410 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
- ft411 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3419, 3432.
- ft412 -- Apud Joseph. adv. Apien. l. 1. c. 19, 20, 21.
- ft413 -- **h[qbm ry[yawbmk** “tanquam introitus civitatis disruptae”, Montanus; “dissipatae”, Pagninus; “quemadmodum ingrediuntur urbem disruptam”, Piscator; “quemadmodum intratur urbs praerupta”, Cocceius.
- ft414 -- **Æz[twbxm** “statuae fortitudinis tuae”, Pagninus, Montanus; “columnas tuas robustas”, Cocceius; “columnas ruboris tui”, Starckius.
- ft415 -- **Ætdmj ytb** “domos desiderii tui”, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft416 -- Curt. Hist, l. 4. c. 2. 4.

- ft417 -- R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 42. 2.
- ft418 -- **μy[gr]** “super repentino casu suo”, V. L.
- ft419 -- Vid. Kimchi in loc. & T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 1.
- ft420 -- Exodus Trago, l. 18. c. 3.
- ft421 -- **μytwj |** “tabulata duplicia”, Munster; “duas tabulas”, Vatablus.
- ft422 -- “Prima ratem ventis credere docta Tyros.” Catullus.
- ft423 -- **χωρω ενιδρυσεντ , ιουδης εν πιονι δημω**. Homer. Iliad. 2.
Vid. Dickinson, Delphi Phoenicix. c. 2. p. 13, 16.
- ft424 -- Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 16.
- ft425** -- Heb. Hist. l. 1. c. 1. p. 7.
- ft426 -- Nat. Hist. l. 19. c. 1.
- ft427 -- Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 7.
- ft428 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 34. 2.
- ft429 -- Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, ib.
- ft430 -- “----Velantur corpore lino, Et Pelusiaco praeifulget stamine vertex.”
L. 3. de Bell. Punic.
- ft431 -- Aben Ezra in Exod. xxv. 4.
- ft432 -- Vid. Reinesium de Lingua Punica, c. 2. sect. 13.
- ft433 -- **swl** “in signum, [sive] vexillum”, Gussetius; so some in Bootius.
- ft434 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 48. 1.
- ft435 -- Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 19. Ed. 7.
- ft436 -- Travels, p. 267. Ed. 2.
- ft437 -- Geograph. l. 16. p. 518.
- ft438 -- **μy| ç** “remiges”, V. L. Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft439 -- **Æyl bwj a | bj** “funis, ita dicuntur a contrahendis aut laxandis funibus veli”, Vatablus.
- ft440 -- Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 20.
- ft441 -- Journey &c. p. 33, 34.

- ft442 -- **Æqdb yqyzj m** “roborantes scissuram tuam”, Montanus;
“instituentes
- ft443 -- Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 319, 320.
- ft444 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 2. c. 91.
- ft445 -- Onomast. Sacr. p. 159.
- ft446 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 3. c. 3.
- ft447 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 594, 595.
- ft448 -- Geograph. 1. 5. c. 12.
- ft449 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 1. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
- ft450 -- **µδα ζρνθ** “animabus hominum”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Cocceius,
Starckius.
- ft451 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 34. c. 2.
- ft452 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 642.
- ft453 -- **Æbr [m την εµποριαν βου**, Sept.; “negotiationem tuam”,
Tigurine version; “in commercio tuo”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator,
Polanus; “mercaturam tuam”, Cocceius.
- ft454 -- Phaleg. c. 11. col. 178.
- ft455 -- Polyhistor. c. 65.
- ft456 -- “----Sola India nigrum fert ebum.----” Virgil. Georgic. 1. 2.
- ft457 -- Vid. Braunium de Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. 1. 2. c. 11. p. 669.
- ft458 -- Chambers’s Cyclopaedia in the word “Coral”.
- ft459 -- Origin, 1. 16. c. 11.
- ft460 -- Vid. Reinesium de Lingua Punic. c. 2. sect. 12.
- ft461 -- Hist. 1. 4. c. 22. p. 379.
- ft462 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 903.
- ft463 -- Vid. Scheffer. de Militia Navali, p. 43. 319.
- ft464 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 12. c. 25.
- ft465 -- Polyhistor. c. 48.
- ft466 -- Geograph. 1. 5. c. 15.

ft467 -- Ibid. l. 12. p. 505.

ft468 -- L. 1. c. 22.

ft469 -- Travels, part 2. B. 1. c. 5. p. 25. & c. 7. p. 33.

ft470 -- Geograph. l. 7. c. 4.

ft471 -- **çpj ydgb** “pannis libertatis”, Vatablus, Piscator; “ingenuorem”, Junius & Tremellius. So Ben Melech, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 30. 2.

ft472 -- **Ædy yrj s** “negotiatores manus tuae”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “mercatores manna tuae”, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft473 -- Geograph. l. 6. c. 7.

ft474 -- Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 17.

ft475 -- “---Solis est thurea virga Sabaeis”. Virgil. Georgic. l. 2.

ft476 -- Nat. Hist. l. 37.

ft477 -- Geograph. l. 6. c. 2.

ft478 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 108.

ft479 -- **µyl l kmb** “rebus perfectissimis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft480 -- **Ætl krmb µyzraw** “et torquibus in negotiatione tua”, Pagninus; “et torques fuerunt in nundinis tuis”, Vatablus. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 71. 2.

ft481 -- **Æytwrç** “principes”, V. L. Montanus, Castalio, Starckius; “praecipuae”, Tigurine version, Grotius. So some in Vatablus.

ft482 -- **twçrgm wç[ry** “commoti sunt fluctus jactni”, Junius & Tremellius; “contremiscent fluctus”, Piscator.

ft483 -- **Æyl [** “de te”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, “super te”; Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft484 -- **Ætl krb** “in negotione tua”, V. L. Pagninus, Starckius; “in mercatura tua”, Junius & Tremellius.

ft485 -- **tj çl** “ad corruptionem”.

ft486 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1.

- ft487 -- **ty**n**bt** “exemplar, [sive] specimen”, Tigurine version: Castalio.
- ft488 -- “Signator mensurae”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft489 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 14. 2.
- ft490 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 38. c. 8.
- ft491 -- Origin. 1. 16. c. 7.
- ft492 -- Vid. Braunium de Vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. 1. 2. c. 12-19.
- ft493 -- Vid. Gurtler. Voc. Typic. Prophet. Explicat. p. 238.
- ft494 -- **Æyt tn** “et dedi te”, Montanus.
- ft495 -- Curtius, Hist. 1. 4. c. 4. p. 75.
- ft496 -- **Ι Ι ρη πρσουνται**, Sept.; “corruent”, Pagninus, Vatablus; “cadet”, Montanus; so Kimchi and Ben Melech; and which is approved of by Gussetius.
- ft497 -- Euterpe, sive 1. 2. c. 161.
- ft498 -- **Æyl [** “super te”, Montanus.
- ft499 -- Herodot. Euterpe, sive 1. 2. c. 169. & 1. 11. c. 163.
- ft500 -- Travels, par. 1. B. 2. c. 72. p. 245.
- ft501 -- Mandelsloe in Harris’s Voyages, &c. vol. 1. p. 759.
- ft502 -- Tavernier in ib. p. 835.
- ft503 -- Euterpe, sive 1. 2. c. 63.
- ft504 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 8. c. 25.
- ft505 -- Hist. Animal: 1. 2. c. 10.
- ft506 -- Deuteronomy Animal. 1. 10. c. 24.
- ft507 -- Euterpe, sive 1. 2. c. 169.
- ft508 -- Euterpe, sive 1. 2. c. 28.
- ft509 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 2. c. 73.
- ft510 -- Geograph. 1. 2. p. 65, 78.
- ft511 -- “Umbras nusquan flectente”, Syene. Pharsal. 1. 2. v. 587.
- ft512 -- Travels in Egypt and Nubis, vol. 1. p. 143. vol. 2. p. 97, 103.
- ft513 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 5. c. 9.

- ft514 -- Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 518.
- ft515 -- Polyhistor, c. 45.
- ft516 -- Apud Servium in Virgil. Aeneid. l. 6. p. 1011.
- ft517 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 10. sect. 5.
- ft518 -- See Prideaux's Connexion, part 1. B. 2. p. 93. So the words are rendered by Hillerus, Onomast. Sacr. p. 672. who observes, that Syene is now called by the Arabs "Asuan", from the Ethiopic word "Wasou", which signifies to terminate or finish, this being the border of Ethiopia.
- ft519 -- Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 1.
- ft520 -- Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 62. Ed. Rhodoman.
- ft521 -- Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 10.
- ft522 -- Written about 1730. Editor.
- ft523 -- See all this at large, with the proofs of it, in Dr. Newton's Dissertations on Prophecies, from p. 382. to 394.
- ft524 -- C. 26. p. 77.
- ft525 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3432.
- ft526 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
- ft527 -- Hist. Physic. spud Joseph. adv. Aplon, l. 1. c. 21.
- ft528 -- $\mu\omega\gamma\iota$ hh "bah diei", Munster, Vatablus; "heu diei", Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft529 -- $\hat{n}[\mu\omega\gamma]$ "dies nubis", V. L. Pagniaus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft530 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 4.
- ft531 -- See Prideaux's Connexion, part 1. p. 93.
- ft532 -- Geograph. l. 4. c. 5.
- ft533 -- Geograph. l. 17. p. 541, 563.
- ft534 -- Geograph. l. 5. c. 8.
- ft535 -- Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 30.
- ft536 -- Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 2. p. 131, 132.
- ft537 -- Bibl. l. 1. p. 19.

- ft538 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 177.
- ft539 -- Bibl. l. 1. p. 19.
- ft540 -- Idyll. 17. v. 82.
- ft541 -- **wmh ta** “strepitum”, Vatablus, Cocceius.
- ft542 -- Herodot, Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 99.
- ft543 -- Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 46.
- ft544 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 99.
- ft545 -- Travels, p. 304. Ed. 2.
- ft546 -- Ib. p. 292.
- ft547 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 571, &c.
- ft548 -- Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 14.
- ft549 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanctae, p. 122, 123.
- ft550 -- Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 509. Vid. Juvenal. Satyr. 15. ver. 6.
- ft551 -- Geograph. l. 4. c. 5.
- ft552 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 59, 138, 156.
- ft553 -- Deuteronomy Urbibus.
- ft554 -- Bibliothec l. 1. p. 24.
- ft555 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 672.
- ft556 -- Travels, p. 306. Ed. 2.
- ft557 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 29.
- ft558 -- Geograph. l. 4. c. 5.
- ft559 -- **Æcj** “prohibuit”, Montanus; “vitavit”, Munster; “cohibuit”, Cocceius; “probibebit, arcebit”, Vatablus; so Ben Melech.
- ft560 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3416.
- ft561 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3416.
- ft562 -- **μyywg l a dylb** “in manum fortissimi gentium”, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “potentissimi”, Piscator.
- ft563 -- Seder Olam Rabba, p. 69.

- ft564 -- “In manum dei gentium”, Montanus, Starckius; “deo gentium”, Castalio.
- ft565 -- **wl hç[y wç]** “faciendo faciet ei”, Pagninus, Montanus; “faciendo faciebat ipsi”, Starckius.
- ft566 -- **wtl pm l [** “super prolapse ejus”, Cocceius; “super cadivum truncum ejus”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft567 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3417.
- ft568 -- **µyntk** “similis es crocodile”, Noldius, Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 375.
- ft569 -- Ibid. No. 1306.
- ft570 -- **Æytwrhnb** “per flumina tua”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft571 -- “Exodus fluminibus tuis”, Starckius.
- ft572 -- “In fluviis tuis”, V. L. Piscator; “in fluminibus tuis”, Cocceius
- ft573 -- **rwa yrwam l k** “omnia luminaria lucis”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft574 -- **Ærbç** “fractionem tuam”, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft575 -- **wppw[b** “cum volare fecero”, Munster, Tigurine version. Abendaus mentions such a sense of the word.
- ft576 -- Vid. Virgil. Aeneid. l. 6. & Seneca, l. 4. controvers. 4.
- ft577 -- Vid. Lydium de Revelation Militari, l. 6. c. 7. p. 250, 251. & Kirchman, de Funer. Roman. l. 3. c. 18.
- ft578 -- **wtytj** “terrorem ejus”, Grotius; “consternationem ejus”, Starckius.
- ft579 -- **ytytj** “terrorem meum”, Pagninus, Munster, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft580 -- Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 1. sect. 1.
- ft581 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3417.
- ft582 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 54. 2.
- ft583 -- **µdh l [** “super sanguinem”, Munster, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius; “juxta sanguinem”; so some in Vatablus.
- ft584 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 46. p. 484.

- ft585 -- hmçmw hmqç “desolationem et solitudinem”, Montanus;
“vastitatem et solitudinem”, Starckius.
- ft586 -- mybg[ryçk “sicut canticum astorum”, Vatablus.
- ft587 -- y[wr l [“de pastoribus”, V. L. Grotius; “super pastores”,
Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft588 -- hayrbh “quod pingue est”, Vatablus, Bochartus; “pinguem”,
Cocceius, Starckius. So Ben Melech.
- ft589 -- tj dnh “vagam aut errantem”, Bochartus, and some in Vatablus.
- ft590 -- hxwj h l a “foras”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus,
Cocceius, Starckius,
- ft591 -- mçl [j m “plantato in nemen”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius,
Starckius; “plantam celebri nomine”, Tigurine version; “plantam in
nomen”, Vatablus.
- ft592 -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. & Ceritot,
fol. 6. 2.
- ft593 -- Æç[a mçl “in sanguinem redigam te”, Munster; “in sanguinem
faciam te”, Grotius; “sanguinem faciam te”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft594 -- hyh mç hwhyw “licet Dominus ibi habitaverit”, Piscator. So Syr.
- ft595 -- “Ubi Jehovah fuit”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “et Jehovah ibi
fuit”, Starckius.
- ft596 -- hl kal eiç καταβρωμα, Sept.; “in cibum”, Vatablus, Cocceius,
Starckius, So Syr.
- ft597 -- yl [wl ydgt “magnificastis contra me”, Junius & Tremellius,
Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft598 -- mtrt[j ab rt[“orare suppliciter”.
- ft599 -- “Sic laetabitur omnis terra in desolatione quam faciam tibi”,
Vatablus.
- ft600 -- l arçy yrh l a “de montibus Israelis”, Junius & Tremellius,
Polanus.
- ft601 -- “Contra montes Israelis”, Vatablus.

- ft602 -- **wnl htyh hçrwml µl w[twmb** “excelsa seculi haereditario jure futura sunt nobis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “celsa seculi haereditas evenit nobis”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft603 -- **al µa** “si non”, Cocceius, Starckius; “[sub.] mentiar”, Junius & Tremellius; “non ero Deus”, Piscator.
- ft604 -- **wrpw wbrw** “multiplicabuntur et crescent”, Pagninus, Montanus; “multiplicabunter et fructificabunt”, Cocceius.
- ft605 -- **l arçy ym[ta** “cum populo meo Israele”, Junius & Tremcellius.
- ft606 -- **yl çkt al** “non impingere facies”, Montanus, Vatablus; “non offendere facies”, Starckius.
- ft607 -- “Non orbabis”, Starckius.
- ft608 -- **µhyl wl gb** “stercoreis diis suis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “stercoribus suis”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft609 -- T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1.
- ft610 -- Debarim Rabba, fol. 242. 2. & Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 3. 2.
- ft611 -- **µda ^axk** “sicut gregem hominum”, V. L. Syr.; “sicut pecus hominus”, Montanus; “pecudes hominum”, Pagninus.
- ft612 -- **µyçdq ^axk** “sicut oves sanctorum”, Vatablus, Gussetius, Starckius.
- ft613 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 2. Vid. Kimchi & Abendana in loc.
- ft614 -- **bybs bybs** “circum circa”, Pagninus; “undique undique”, Montanus.
- ft615 -- **hl ah twmx[h l [** “super ossa haec”, Starckius.
- ft616 -- “Deuteronomy ossibus istis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.
- ft617 -- **l wq yhyw** “et exstitit vox”, Cocceius, Starckius; “et fuit vox”, Montanus.
- ft618 -- **j wrh** “ad spiritum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius; “alloquens spiritum”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
- ft619 -- Zohar in Nunb. fol. 92. 1.

- ft620 -- To which it is applied in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 152. 2, & Taanith, fol. 2. 2.
- ft621 -- **dj a U** “lignum unuin”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
- ft622 -- **muwwgh ybm** “e medio ipsarum gentium”, Junius & Tremellius; “ex gentibus”, Starckius; “e [vel] medio gentium”, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft623 -- **wkl h** “ambulant, vel ambulantes sunt”.
- ft624 -- **bybsm** “circumquaque”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.
- ft625 -- Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4.
- ft626 -- R. Abendana, Not. in Miclol Yophi in 1 Kings xi. 39.
- ft627 -- **myhl wl gb** “diis stercoreis suis”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “stercoribus suis”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft628 -- **myxwqcb** “abominandis suis”, Starckius; “abominationibus”, Pagninus, Cocceius.
- ft629 -- Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 47. 4. Vid. Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 28.
- ft630 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin. fol. 98. 2. Ben Melech in Psal. cxliv. 14. Abendana Not. in Miclol Yophi in Hagg. ii. 23. Abarbinel, Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 8. 4. & 26. 1.
- ft631 -- **myt tn** “dabo eos”, Montanus, Piscator; “dabo ipsos”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft632 -- Dictionary in the words “Gog” and “Magog”.
- ft633 -- “Deuteronomy fide ad Gratianum”, l. 2. sect. 4. col. 144. tom. 4.
- ft634 -- Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 23.
- ft635 -- Comment. in Jesaiam, vol. 1. p. 954.
- ft636 -- Vid. Calmet. Bibliotheca Sacra, art. 67. p. 442.
- ft637 -- Hiller. Ononmastic. Sacr. p. 67, 406, 477.
- ft638 -- Lexic. Arabic in Rad. <Arabic> col. 26.
- ft639 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
- ft640 -- Apud Schindler. Lex. Polyglott. col. 288. And Harris’s Voyages and Travels, vol. 1. p. 604.
- ft641 -- Vid. Huls. Theolog. Jud. par. 2. p. 511.

- ft642 -- Geograph. Arab. par. 9. clim. 5. lin. 22, 23.
- ft643 -- Phaleg. l. 3. c. 13. col. 187.
- ft644 -- Hilchot Terumot, c. 1. sect. 9.
- ft645 -- See Hyde Not, in Peritsol. Itinera Mundi, p. 42.
- ft646 -- Zonaras, Cedrenus, & Joan. Curopalates apud Selden. de Synedriis, l. 2. c. 3. sect. 6.
- ft647 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
- ft648 -- Strabo. Geograph. l. 11. p. 364.
- ft649 -- Phaleg. l. 3. c. 13. col. 188.
- ft650 -- **Æyṭbbwç** “circumducam te”, Piscator; “circumagam te”, Grotius.
- ft651 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2.
- ft652 -- Cyropaedia, l. 6. c. 14. & l. 7. c. 11.
- ft653 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
- ft654 -- Ibid.
- ft655 -- Dictionary in the word “Togarmah”.
- ft656 -- Heb. Hist. l. 1. c. 1. p. 3.
- ft657 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1.
- ft658 -- **l arçy yrh l [** “ad montes Israel”, Pagninus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft659 -- **Ḃah rwbj l [επι τον ομφαλον της γης**, Sept.; “in [vel] super umbilico terrae”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft660 -- **[dt** “experturus esses”, Junius & Tremellius; “experieris, scil. poenam meam”, Piscator.
- ft661 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 17. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft662 -- **ypab** “in nasum meum”, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft663 -- **twgrdmh** “gradus”, Munster, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft664 -- Concordant. Ebr. Partic. p. 285, 286.
- ft665 -- **Æyṭbbç** “circumducam te”, Piscator; “circumagam”, Grotius.
- ft666 -- **Æytaçç** “harpagone sextuplici extraham te”, Vinarienses apud Starckius. So Buxtorf.

- ft667 -- “Sex poenis, [sive] plagis afficiam te”, Munster, Tigurine version.
- ft668 -- Iliad. 1. 1. 4, 5.
- ft669 -- “----non te optima mater Condēt humi, patriove onerrabit membra sepulchro Alitibus linquere feris”. Aeneid. 1. 10.
- ft670 -- **rbq μç μwqm** “locum ibi sepulchrum”, Starckius; “locum ubi sit sepulchrum”, Cocceius.
- ft671 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 585.
- ft672 -- Dictionary in the word “Vale”
- ft673 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 66. 2.
- ft674 -- **μyrb[h ta ayh tmsj w** “et erit illa obturans transeuntes”, Starckius; “et erit illa frenans transeuntes”, Cocceius.
- ft675 -- **μçl** “in nomen”, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft676 -- Vid. Bochart. de Script. Animal. par. 1. 1. 2. c. 28. col. 284.
- ft677 -- **yb wl [m** “praevaricati essent contra me”, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft678 -- **μhy[çpk** “secundum defectiones eorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius; “pro defectionibus ipsorum”, Cocceius.
- ft679 -- **ytanq** “assumam zelum”, V. L. “zelabo”, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft680 -- **μtml k ta wçnw** “et portabunt”, Pagninus, Montanus, V. L. Grotius; “et ferent ignominiam suam”, Starckius.
- ft681 -- T. Bab. Eracin, fol. 12. 1.
- ft682 -- Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3430.
- ft683 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
- ft684 -- Clio, sive l. 1. c. 178.
- ft685 -- **hmydqh Ærd wynp rça** “facies ejus via ad orientem”, Montanus; “ejus facies, ejus”, Vatablus.
- ft686 -- Middot, c. 2. sect. 3.
- ft687 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 9. fol. 2. 2.

ft688 -- Ibid.

ft689 -- **Ps** “sumitur pro inferiore limine, et pro superliminari, sive superiore limine”, Capellus, Sanctius.

ft690 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 4. fol. 2. 1.

ft691 -- So Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 4. fol. 2. 1.

ft692 -- Ibid. (Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash), sect. 6.

ft693 -- **l wbg** “terminus”, Munster, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

ft694 -- Vid. R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 9. 1.

ft695 -- **twmj a** “clausae”, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

ft696 -- **twml al** “in vestibulis”, Vatablus, Montanus, Piscator; “porticibus”, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft697 -- **l ya** “fortitudo, hinc” **l a** “fortis”.

ft698 -- **twkçl** “cellae”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius; **παστοφορία**, Sept; “gazophylacia”, V. L.

ft699 -- **hpxr** “pruna ardens”, Isa. vi. 6.

ft700 -- **μydq| w**.

ft701 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 17.

ft702 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 5. sect. 2. Vid. Lipman, Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 12.

ft703 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 22.

ft704 -- Misna Succa, c. 5. sect. 4. Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 24.

ft705 -- **hj tpwhkçl w** “et cubiculum, et ostium ejus”, Pagninus, Montanus; “caeterum fuit cella, et ostium ejus”, Tigurine version.

ft706 -- **hnwpxh r[çh j tpl** “ad ostium portae aquilonaris”, Junius & Tremellius. So Cocceius and Starckius.

ft707 -- Tamid, c. 3. sect. 5. & Middot, c. 3. sect. 5.

ft708 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

- ft709 -- Misn. Tamid, c. 3. sect. 5. & Middot, c. 3. sect. 5.
- ft710 -- Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 34.
- ft711 -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 9.
- ft712 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 27.
- ft713 -- Middot, c. 2. sect. 3.
- ft714 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 5. sect. 4.
- ft715 -- [l xh “costae”, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft716 -- Antiqu. 1. 8. c. 3. sect. 2.
- ft717 -- Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 3.
- ft718 -- Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 69. fol. 10. 1.
- ft719 -- Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 5.
- ft720 -- Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 3.
- ft721 -- μyh “ad mare, Piscator; obversa mari”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft722 -- Apud Starckius in loc.
- ft723 -- Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 104. No. 521.
- ft724 -- Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 50.
- ft725 -- Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 7.
- ft726 -- ymynph l kyhhw “et templum interius”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft727 -- bybs ¶ Pyj ç Psh dgn “contra uniuscujusque limen, stratumque ligno per gyrum in circuitu”, V. L. Capellus.
- ft728 -- twdm “mensuras accepit”, Munster; “in omnibus mensurae [monstratae sunt]”, Tigurine version.
- ft729 -- h[br “quadratus”, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft730 -- Not. in Vitruvium de Architect. 1. 4. c. 6. p. 153.
- ft731 -- μynp μj l “panis facierum”, Exod. xxv. 30.
- ft732 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1. Chagiga, fol. 26. 1. Menachot, fol. 97. 1.

- ft733 -- **ח** hm **ל** wah **נ** p l a **ב** [w “etiam denso ligno in fronte vestibuli extrinsecus”, Junius & Tremellius; “et trabs lignea ante vestibulum erat foris”, Starckius.
- ft734 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 71.
- ft735 -- Concord. Ebr. Partic. p. 82.
- ft736 -- **פ** yçl çb **ק** yta **נ** p l a **ק** yta “postis ante postem in triplici”, Starckius.
- ft737 -- **ה** nhm **ל** kwy Keri, **ל** kay “comedebant ex ipsis”, Mariana; “demordebant ab illis”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft738 -- Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 71.
- ft739 -- Ibid.
- ft740 -- **ה** hal **ה** **ת** wkçl **ה** **ת** j **ת** ymw “et ab ima, parte exedrarium”, Vatablus; “et infra calles has [fuisse spatium]”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft741 -- **א** ybmh **מ** ydqhm “is qui deducebat me ab oriente”, Junius & Tremellius; “quumque is qui introduxerat me ab orientes”, Piscator.
- ft742 -- **א** awbb **מ** ydqh **א** Erd **ה** nygh **ת** rdgh **נ** pb **א** Erd “viae, [inquam], quae erat ante maceriam rectam orientem versus, qua venitar ad illas”, Junius & Tremellius; Piscator; “via ante maceriam recta, via orientis in introitu illarum”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft743 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 5. sect. 7.
- ft744 -- Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 4.
- ft745 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanct. Jerusalem, No. 92. p. 161.
- ft746 -- Shebet Judah, fol. 43. 2. Ed. Gentii, p. 464.
- ft747 -- Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1.
- ft748 -- Bartenora in ib.
- ft749 -- Deuteronomy Success. in Pontif. Heb. 1. 2. c. 7. Vid. ib. de Synedriis, 1. 3. c. 11. sect. 6. & Braunium, de Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. 1. 2. c. 25.
- ft750 -- Ad Codicem Joma, c. 7. sect. 1. p. 78, 79.
- ft751 -- Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 1.
- ft752 -- Antiqu. 1. 15. c. 11. sect. 3. Ed. Hudson.

- ft753 -- Prospect of the Temple, c. 2. p. 1051.
- ft754 -- Temple of Solomon portrayed, &c. p. 241.
- ft755 -- Vid. R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 51.
- ft756 -- **twm̄b** “et excelsis suis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft757 -- So Abendana takes this word to signify “in [their] death”; their carcasses being buried in their gardens, as Manasseh, 2 Kings xxi. 18.
- ft758 -- **μhynybw ynyb ryqhw** “ita ut paries [tantum esset] inter me et illos”, Piscator.
- ft759 -- **qyj** “sinus”, Montanus; “gremium”, Munster, Cocceius, Starckius. Ben Melech interprets it the middle of the altar.
- ft760 -- **htp̄ç** “labium ejus”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft761 -- **hrz[h]** “atrium auxilii”, Montanus.
- ft762 -- **l yarahm** “ab Hareil”, Starckius.
- ft763 -- Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 7.
- ft764 -- So Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 40. Vid. Misn. Middot, c. 3. sect. 1.
- ft765 -- So Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 43.
- ft766 -- There is a double reading of the words; the Cetib or textual reading is **wdy**, “its hand”; the Keri or marginal reading is **wydy**, “their own hands”.
- ft767 -- **μkym̄l ç** “eucharistica vestraz”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.
- ft768 -- Misna Middot, c. 4. sect. 2.
- ft769 -- **wb bçy aw̄h ayçn̄ ayçnh ta** “veruntamen ad principem quod attinet, princeps ipse inquam”, &c. Piscator; “quantum ad principem”; “princeps sedebit in ea”, Noldius, Ebr. Part. Concord. p. 120.
- ft770 -- **Æbl̄ μyç** “pone cor tuum”, V. L. Vatablus, Paguinus, Montanus; “pone ad cor tuum”, Starckius.
- ft771 -- **yrm̄ l a** “ad inobedientiam”, Cocceius, Starckius.

- ft772 -- **ʾw[l wçkml** “in offendiculum iniquitatis”, Pagninus, Montanus; “offendiculo ad iniquitatem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “offendiculo pravitatis”, Starckius.
- ft773 -- **μhyl [** “super eos”, Pagninus, Montanus; “super ipsos”, Starckius; “super ipsis”, Cocceius.
- ft774 -- Jarchi and Aben Ezra in Exod. xxv. 4.
- ft775 -- Antiqu. l. 4. c. 8. sect. 11.
- ft776 -- Misna Kilaim, c. 9. sect. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 12.
- ft777 -- “Lana segnissimi corporis excrementum est et prophanus vestitus, itaque lanea vestis videtur desidiam, et segnitiam indicare”, Apuleius.
- ft778 -- T. Bab. Zevachim, fol. 18. 2. & 19. 1.
- ft779 -- **[wyb wrgj y al** “non cingent seipsos modo instabili, nempe neglectim circumponendo cingulum nimis laxum”, Gussetius, p. 315. The Tigurine version is, “quae non adstringent arctius”.
- ft780 -- **hçwdg** “expulsam”, Montanus, Heb; “ejectam”, Piscator.
- ft781 -- **hl j nl μhl htyhw** “habebunt etiam hereditarium aliquid”, Tigurine version.
- ft782 -- **μrj l k** “omne anathema”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “omne devotum”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft783 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 45. 1.
- ft784 -- Ad Dardanum, tom. 3. fol. 21. I. K.
- ft785 -- Vid. R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 51.
- ft786 -- **tymb** “et excelsis suis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
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ft802 -- ^w[l wçkml “in offendiculum iniquitatis”, Pagninus, Montanus; “offendiculo ad iniquitatem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “offendiculo pravitatis”, Starckius.

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ft804 -- Jarchi and Aben Ezra in Exod. xxv. 4.

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- ft813 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 45. 1.
- ft814 -- Ad Dardanum, tom. 3. fol. 21. I. K.
- ft815 -- ynp l a “contra faciem”, V. L.
- ft816 -- Hilchot Melachim, c. 4. sect, 8.
- ft817 -- Deuteronomy Jure Naturae & Gentium, l. 6. c. 16.
- ft818 -- Maimon Hilchot Melachim, c. 4. sect. 10.
- ft819 -- hzj al l w hyhy ðal “de terra vel quod attinet ad terram, sive terrae (illud), erit in possessionem in Israel”, Starckius.
- ft820 -- µkytçwrg “delusiones vestras”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; “expulsiones vestras”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft821 -- hqçmm “de irriguo”, Montanus, Vatablus; “ex irriguis pascuis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.
- ft822 -- ayçnl “principi”, Castalio, Cocceius, Starckius; so Abendana,
- ft823 -- twl w[h hyhy ayçnh l [w “et super principem erunt holocausta”, V. L. Starckius; “nam principi incumbet [dare] holocausta”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft824 -- µyml çh ta “eucharistica”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.
- ft825 -- tajj “expiatoque”, Piscator; “expiabis”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft826 -- µtrpkw “ut expietis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “et expiabitis”, Cocceius, Starckius.

- ft827 -- **hwj tçh** “incurvaverit se”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus;
“incurvato se”, Piscator.
- ft828 -- **wdy ttm** “donum manus ejus”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft829 -- **µyd [wmbw** “et statis temporibus”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft830 -- **rqqb rqqb** “in mane, in mane”, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft831 -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 153. 1.
- ft832 -- **ym [wpxy al rça ^ [ml** “ideo ne dispergantur populus meus”,
Starckius.
- ft833 -- **µtkryb** “in lateribus ejus vel eorum, in extremo”, Starckius.
- ft834 -- **hj nmh**, “the minchah.”
- ft835 -- **twrj q twrxj** “atria caminata”, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus,
Cocceius; “fumosa”, Tigurine version, Castalio; “fumigata”, Starckius.
- ft836 -- Middot, c. 2. sect. 5.
- ft837 -- Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
- ft838 -- Hilchot Beth Habechira, c. 5. sect. 8.
- ft839 -- Prospect of the Temple, c. 18. p. 1092, 1093.
- ft840 -- **ynbçyw** “reduxit me”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius,
Starckius.
- ft841 -- Hist. 70. Interpret. p. 32, 33. Ed. Oxon. 1692,
- ft842 -- T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. Cippi Hebr. p. 10.
- ft843 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2.
- ft844 -- **µykpm** “manabant tanquam e phiala”, Junius & Tremellius;
“phialabant”, Junius; “destillabant”, Cocceius, Starckius.
- ft845 -- In Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 4.
- ft846 -- **hmab Pl a** “mille in cubito”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft847 -- **dam br ¶** “arbor multa admodum”, Cocceius, Starckius.

- ft848 -- **hnwmdqh hl yl gh l a** “in Galileam prinam”, Junius & Tremellius; “ad Galileam anteriorem”, Cocceius, Piscator, Starckius; “Galileam orientalem”, Munster; so some in Vatablus, Tigurine version; so the Targum.
- ft849 -- Tosaphta Succa in Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.; so in Ben Melec.
- ft850 -- **hmyj wabw**.
- ft851 -- **μyl j n** “duo torrentes”, Pagninus, Montanus; “geminus torrens”, Tigurine version, Cocceius; “fluvijs geminus”, Starckius.
- ft852 -- Palestina Illustrata, I. 2. p. 449. & I. 3. p. 763.
- ft853 -- Antiqu. I. 9. c. 1. sect. 2.
- ft854 -- Antiqu. I. 15. c. 6. sect. 2.
- ft855 -- Nat. Hist. I. 5. c. 17.
- ft856 -- **rkby** “afferet primitiva”, V. L. Vatablus; “primogenita”, Starckius. So Ben Melech.
- ft857 -- **hpwr tl** “ad contritionem, vel ad sanitatem contritionis”, Vatablus; “ad fractionem sanandam”, Pagninus. So Ben Melech.
- ft858 -- Geograph. I. 5. c. 19.
- ft859 -- Dictionary, in the word “Sibraim”.
- ft860 -- Vid. Reland Palestina Illustrata, I. 1. c. 22. p. 107.
- ft861 -- **dj a ^d** “Daniel una”, Cocceius, Starckius; “Danis tribus una”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; “pro Dane portio una”, Munster, Tigurine version, Piscator.
- ft862 -- Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. e Siphri; so Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, fol. 1. 1.
- ft863 -- **μj l l** “in panem”, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.
- ft864 -- **hmwr th l k** “omnis oblatio”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft865 -- **ynp l a** “ante facies”, Pagninus; “ante faciem”, Starckius.
- ft866 -- **ayçnl μyql j tm[l** “ex adverso portionum, [id vero] principis erit”, Tigurine version; “juxta portiones, principi erit”, Cocceius, Starckius.

ft867 -- **tzj am.**

ft868 -- Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 79.

ft869 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2.

ft870 -- Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2. & Succah, fol, 45. 8.

ft871 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 2.

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