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COMMENTARIES

EXPOSITION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

JEREMIAH

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 JEREMIAH

The title of the book in the Vulgate Latin version is, “the Prophecy of Jeremiah”; in the Syriac and Arabic versions, “the Prophecy of the Prophet Jeremiah”. According to a tradition of the Jews^{f1}, this book stands the first of the Prophets, the order of which is, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve. Kimchi makes mention of it in a preface to his comment on this book; and Dr. Lightfoot from hence concludes, that this is the reason why a passage in Zechariah is cited under the name of Jeremy, (~~470B~~ Matthew 27:9), because he standing first in the volume of the Prophets gave name to the whole; just as the book of Psalms, being the first of the Hagiographa, they are called the Psalms from it, (~~4244~~ Luke 24:44). The name of the writer of this book, Jeremiah, signifies, “the Lord shall exalt”, or “be exalted”; or, “exalting the Lord”; being composed of **μry**, “he shall exalt”, and **hy**, “Jehovah”, according to Hillerus^{f2}. Though others^{f3} take it to be a composition of **hy**, and **hmry**, “the Lord shall cast down”; as he did his enemies, and also himself, he being greatly afflicted; and which suits with the argument of his book, foretelling the casting away of the people of the Jews. His style of writing, according to the opinion of Jerom^{f4}, is more rustic than that of Isaiah and some other prophets, and which he attributes to his being born and brought up in a country village; and Abarbanel to his age, being a child when he began to prophesy. The duration of his prophesying was forty years and upwards. He began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah’s reign; in 3375 A.M. or before the era of Christ 629, according both to Bishop Usher^{f5} and Mr. Whiston^{f6}, and the Universal History^{f7}; and according to Mr. Bedford^{f8} 627. If any credit can be given to Epiphanius^{f9}, or to the writer that bears his name, he was stoned to death by the people at Taphnas in Egypt, and was buried where Pharaoh dwelt. Abulpharagius, an Arabic writer^{f10}, says, that he went to Egypt, where some of the Jews took him and put him into a well, and afterwards took him out and stoned him, so that he died, and he was buried in Egypt; and was from thence removed by Alexander, in his time, to Alexandria, and buried there. And both Tertullian^{f11} and Jerom^{f12} affirm that he was stoned by the people. This prophecy contains several discourses delivered to the people of the Jews; charging them with many sins they were guilty of; exhorting them to repentance; threatening them with the destruction of their city and temple, and with captivity in Babylon;

and comforting the saints, not only with a promise of deliverance from thence, but of spiritual redemption by the Messiah. And it also has in it several predictions of judgments upon other nations; and gives a particular account of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the carrying of the Jews captive into Babylon; which he lived to see, as the fulfilment of his prophecies.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 1

This chapter contains the title or inscription of the book; the call of the prophet to his office, and the encouragement he had to enter upon it. In the inscription the prophet is described by his name, by his descent, by the place of his birth, and the time of his prophesying, (^{2400b}Jeremiah 1:1-3), the appointment and ordination of him to his office, which was very early, and the signification of it to him, are in (^{2400e}Jeremiah 1:4,5), his excuse, on account of his childhood and weakness, (^{2400b}Jeremiah 1:6), the encouragement given him, notwithstanding this, from the mission and command he had from the Lord, and the promise of his presence with him, (^{2400f}Jeremiah 1:7,8), and not only is he encouraged by words, but also by signs; by the Lord's touching his mouth with his hand, as a symbol of putting his words into his mouth, and setting him over nations and kingdoms, to publish in a prophetic way their destruction, (^{2400d}Jeremiah 1:9,10), and by a vision of an almond tree, signifying the quick and hasty performance of the word of the Lord by him, (^{2401b}Jeremiah 1:11,12), and by another vision of a seething pot northwards, intimating the coming of the Chaldeans from the north against Jerusalem, and their taking it, and carrying the Jews captive because of their wickedness, which was a principal part of the message he was sent with, (^{2401b}Jeremiah 1:13-16) and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to him to take heart, and be of good courage, and not be dismayed; since he was made a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brasen wall, against the whole land of Judea, its kings, princes, priests, and people; who, though they should fight against him, should not prevail, because God was with him, (^{2401f}Jeremiah 1:17-19).

Ver. 1. *The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah*, etc.] This is the general title of the whole book, and includes all his discourses, sermons, and prophecies; and designs not his own words, but the words of the Lord, which were put into his mouth, and he delivered under divine inspiration. The Septuagint version renders it, "the word of God": and the Arabic version, "the word of the Lord": the Targum,

"the words of the prophecy of Jeremiah;"

who is described by his descent and parentage, “the son of Hilkiah”. The Arabic version calls him Selkiah. This was not Hilkiah the high priest, who in the days of Josiah found the book of the law, (^{<1221B>}2 Kings 22:8) as Kimchi’s father and Abarbinel think, and so Clemens of Alexandria^{f13}; since he is not said to be a high priest, or of the high priests, but

of the priests that were in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin; though the Targum paraphrases the words to the other sense,

“of the heads of the ward of priests, of the amarcalin, or governors which were in Jerusalem, a man that took his inheritance in Anathoth, in the land of the tribe of Benjamin;”

nor is Jeremiah mentioned among the posterity of Hilkiah the high priest in (^{<136B>}1 Chronicles 6:13,14), besides, Hilkiah, a priest of Anathoth, must be of the family of Ithamar; the last of which family that was high priest was Abiathar, who had fields in Anathoth, (^{<102B>}1 Kings 2:26), and so could be no other than a common priest; for Hilkiah the high priest was of the family of Phinehas; for, from the times of that Abiathar to the Babylonish captivity, there was no high priest but of that family. The Jews say that Jeremiah descended by his mother’s side from Rahab the harlot^{f14}.

Anathoth was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, as is here said, and belonged to the priests, (^{<621B>}Joshua 21:18), it lay north of Jerusalem about three miles from it, according to Jerom^{f15} and others; but, according to Josephus^{f16}, it was but twenty furlongs from it, that is, two and a half miles.

Ver. 2. *To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah*, etc.]

This was the beginning of the prophecy of Jeremiah, so that he prophesied long after Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, and Micah; for this king was

the son of Amon king of Judah, which Amon was the son of Manasseh; the Septuagint and Arabic versions wrongly call him Amos; and Jeremiah began to prophesy

in the thirteenth year of his reign: in the twenty first of Josiah’s age, for he began to reign when he was eight years old, and he reigned eighteen years after, for he reigned in all thirty one years; and it was five years after this that the book of the law was found by Hilkiah the high priest, (^{<1221B>}2 Kings 22:3).

Ver. 3. *And it came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah*, etc.] In the beginning of his reign, and in the fourth year of his

reign; (see ^{<1251>}Jeremiah 25:1 26:1 27:1 35:1 36:1), no mention is made of Jehoahaz, who reigned between Josiah and Jehoiakim, because his reign was short, but three months, (^{<1231>}2 Kings 23:31), and perhaps no word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in his time, though it did before and after:

unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah; so that Jeremiah must prophesy in the land of Judea upwards of forty years; eighteen under Josiah, (^{<1221>}2 Kings 22:11), three months under Jehoahaz, (^{<1231>}2 Kings 23:31) eleven years under Jehoiakim, (^{<1236>}2 Kings 23:36), three months under Jeconiah, (^{<1248>}2 Kings 24:8), and eleven years under Zedekiah, when the city was besieged and taken, (^{<1281>}2 Kings 25:2,3). Josiah had three sons as kings of Judah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, under all whom Jeremiah prophesied:

even unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month: the month Ab, which answers to part of July and part of August; and it was on the ninth or tenth day of this month that the city of Jerusalem was burnt, and the people carried captive, (^{<1238>}2 Kings 25:8,9 ^{<2671>}Jeremiah 52:12,13) the ninth of the said month is now kept by the Jews as a fast on that account.

Ver. 4. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Not in the days of Jehoiakim, but in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, (^{<2401>}Jeremiah 1:2). The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions read, “unto him”.

Ver. 5. *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee*, etc.] Not merely by his omniscience, so he knows all men before their conception and birth; but with such a knowledge as had special love and affection joined with it; in which sense the Lord knows them that are his, as he does not others, and predestinates them unto eternal life; and which is not only before their formation in the womb, but before the foundation of the world, even from all eternity. The forming of the human foetus is God’s act, and a curious piece of workmanship it is; (see ^{<4915>}Psalms 139:15,16).

And before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; not by infusing holiness into him, but by separating him in his eternal purposes and decrees to the office of a prophet before he was born, and even before the world began; just as the Apostle Paul was separated to the Gospel of God, (^{<6101>}Romans 1:1), for it follows,

and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations; not to the Israelites only, who Jarchi thinks are so called, because they now followed the usages and

customs of the nations; but to the Gentiles, against whom he was sent to prophesy, (^{<340>}Jeremiah 46:1) as Egyptians, Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Chaldeans. This ordination of him to be a prophet was not done in time, but in eternity, in the mind and thought of God; he was foreordained to this office before the foundation of the world, of which a declaration was made unto him when he was now called unto it; to which he makes answer.

Ver. 6. *Then said I, Ah, Lord God!* etc.] The word **hha**, “Ah”, or “Ahah”, is used in distress and grief, as Kimchi observes; and is expressive of mourning and complaint, as Jarchi notes; and shows that the prophet was troubled and uneasy at his call, and would gladly have been excused on the following account:

behold, I cannot speak; or, “I know not how to speak”^{f17}; properly and pertinently, politely and eloquently, especially before great personages, kings and princes, and the citizens of Jerusalem, being brought up in a rustic manner in the country. A like excuse Moses made, (^{<100>}Exodus 4:10). The Targum is, “I know not to prophesy: for I am a child”; meaning either in knowledge and understanding, or in years; not a mere child, but a “junior”, as the Septuagint version renders the word; or a “young man”, as the Arabic version; so Samuel and Zechariah were young men, when they first ministered in their office, (^{<000>}1 Samuel 3:1 ^{<300>}Zechariah 2:4). Abarbinel supposes that Jeremiah was now twelve or fifteen years of age; but it should seem rather that he was more, perhaps twenty years of age; since he seems to have prophesied to the men of Anathoth before he was sent to Jerusalem, (^{<240>}Jeremiah 11:21 12:5,6).

Ver. 7. *But the Lord said unto me, say not, I am a child*, etc.] This excuse will not be admitted:

for thou shall go to all that I shall send thee; either to “every place”, as the Targum paraphrases; or “to all persons to whom” he should be sent, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render the words; or “to all things for which” he should send him, as the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions. The sense is, that he should go everywhere, and to every person, and on every errand and message he should be sent unto and with:

and whatsoever I command thee, thou shall speak; out and openly, and keep back nothing through the fear of men; as follows:

Ver. 8. *Be not afraid of their faces*, etc.] Their stern looks, their frowning brows, and angry countenances, which would threaten him with destruction and death:

for I am with thee, to deliver thee, saith the Lord; out of their hands, when in the most imminent danger. The Targum paraphrases the words thus,

“my Word shall be thine help to deliver thee:”

which is true of Christ, the essential Word of God.

Ver. 9. *Then the Lord put forth his hand*, etc.] Who, according to Kimchi, was the Angel that appeared to the prophet, and spoke in the name of the Lord to him, and is called by his name; but rather it was the Son of God, the true Jehovah, who appeared in a human form he assumed for the present, and put forth his hand:

and touched my mouth; just as one of the seraphim touched the mouth and lips of the Prophet Isaiah with a live coal from the altar, (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 6:6,7), by this symbol the prophet was inducted into his office; and it was suggested to him that his mouth was now sanctified to the Lord’s use and service; and that what he should speak should not be his own words, but the words of the Lord; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“and the Lord sent the words of his prophecy, and ordered them in my mouth;”

to which agrees what follows:

and the Lord said unto me, behold, I have put my words in thy mouth; which was signified by the preceding symbol; wherefore he might with great freedom and boldness deliver them out to others.

Ver. 10. *See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms*, etc.] Not as a prince, but as a prophet over them, to prophesy things concerning them, whether good or evil, which should certainly come to pass as he predicted:

to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down; that is, to foretell that such a kingdom and nation should be rooted out, as a tree or plant that is plucked up by the roots; and that such an one should be pulled, and thrown down, and destroyed, as a building is. The whole may be understood of the destruction of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar, of their

temple, city, and nation; though the Targum and Jarchi interpret all this of the Gentiles only, and the following,

to build, and to plant, of the house of Israel; which may be applied to the building of the temple, and the planting of the Jews in their own land, after their return from captivity, which Jeremiah prophesied of. These last words are not in the Arabic version.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me*, etc.] At the same time as before:

saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? The Septuagint version leaves out the word “Jeremiah”:

and I said, I see a rod of an almond tree; a dry stick, without leaves or fruit upon it, and yet he knew it to be an almond tree stick; though some think it had leaves and fruit on it, by which it was known. The Targum is,

“and I said, a king hastening to do evil I see;”

meaning Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, hastening to bring destruction upon the Jews.

Ver. 12. *Then said the Lord unto me, thou hast well seen*, etc.] The thing seen is a very proper emblem of what I am about to do, and the quick dispatch that will be made therein:

for I will hasten my word to perform it; the words *yna dqç*, “shoked ani”, “I will hasten”, or “I am hastening”, are in allusion to *dqç*, “shoked”, the name of the almond tree in Hebrew; which is so called because it is quick and early, and, as it were, hastens to bring forth its flowers, leaves, and fruit; in like manner the Lord says he would hasten to perform what he had said or should say by him concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people, and every thing else he should give him in commission to say. Jarchi and Abendana make mention of an ancient Midrash, or exposition, to this sense; that from the time of the almond tree’s putting forth, until its fruit is ripe, are one and twenty days, according to the number of days which were between the seventeenth of Tammuz, in which the city was broken up, and the ninth of Ab, in which the temple was burnt; but though the almond tree is the first of trees, and is very early in putting forth, yet there is a greater time than this between its

putting forth and its fruit being ripe; for Pliny^{f18} says, that the almond tree first of all flowers in January, and its fruit is ripe in March.

Ver. 13. *And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time*, etc.] In the same vision:

saying, what seest thou? besides the almond tree rod; which perhaps was now removed out of sight, and another object appears:

and I said, I see a seething pot; a pot with fire under it, boiling and bubbling up:

and the face thereof was towards the north; either the mouth of the pot where it boiled up, which might be turned to the north in the vision; or that side of the pot, as Kimchi thinks, on which the liquor was poured out; it may be that side of it on which the fire was put to cause it to boil; and so denotes from what quarter the fire came, and was put under it, and the wind that blew it up. The Targum paraphrases the words thus,

“and I said, I see a king boiling as a pot, and the banner of his army, which was brought and came from the north.”

The explanation follows:

Ver. 14. *Then the Lord said unto me*, etc.] Explaining the above vision:

out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land; that is, out of Babylon, which lay north, as Jarchi says, and so the Talmud^{f19}; or north east, as Kimchi and Ben Melech, to the land of Israel; from hence came Nebuchadnezzar and his army, which are meant by “the evil” that should break forth, or “be opened”,^{f20} and loosed, which before were bound and hindered by the providence of God; (see ^{<f194>}Revelation 9:14) and come upon all the inhabitants of the land of Israel; and who are signified by the boiling pot to the north; or, however, by the fire under it, which came from thence; for rather by the pot is meant Jerusalem; and, by the boiling of it, its destruction by the Chaldeans; (see ^{<f108>}Ezekiel 11:3,7 24:3).

Ver. 15. *For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the Lord*, etc.] Which belonged unto and were under the jurisdiction of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and the “call” of them, as Kimchi well observes, is no other than putting it into their hearts to come:

and they shall come; being influenced and directed by the providence of God, who had a principal concern in this matter:

and they shall set everyone his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem; meaning, not only that they should pitch their military tents, and encamp about Jerusalem, and place themselves at the entering of the gates, in order to get in; but that they should sit down there in great safety and security, and be very successful, victorious, and triumphant:

and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah; not only besiege Jerusalem, and take that, but also all the rest of the cities of the land.

Ver. 16. *And I will utter my judgments against them*, etc.] Not against the kingdoms of the north, but against the people of the Jews. The sense is, that God would enter into judgment with this people, and pass sentence upon them, and execute it:

touching all their wickedness; or on account of all their sins and transgressions hereafter mentioned:

who have forsaken me. The Targum is, “who have forsaken my worship”; for to forsake the public worship of God, attendance on his word and ordinances, or to forsake the assembling of themselves together for such a purpose, is to forsake the Lord himself, the fountain of living waters; and this is to forsake their own mercies:

and have burnt incense to other gods; to the idols of the Gentile, as the Targum explains it; to Baal, to the queen of heaven, and to others:

and worshipped the works of their own hands: idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood, which their own hands formed and carved, and which argued great stupidity and ignorance.

Ver. 17. *Thou therefore gird up thy loins*, etc.] The loins both of his mind and body. The allusion is to the custom of the eastern countries in wearing long garments, who, when they went about business, girt them about them for quicker dispatch; and here it designs haste and expedition in doing the Lord’s work, as well as courage and resolution of mind:

and arise; and go from Anathoth to Jerusalem:

and speak unto them all that I command thee; (See Gill on “²⁰⁰⁷Jeremiah 1:7”),

be not dismayed at their faces; (See Gill on “²⁰⁰⁸Jeremiah 1:8”),

lest I confound thee before them; show resentment at him in some way or another, which would make him ashamed before them. The Septuagint and Arabic versions add, “for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord”, as in (²⁰⁰⁸Jeremiah 1:8).

Ver. 18. *For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city,* etc.] Or, “as” one; so read the Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; which is inexpungible, and cannot be taken:

and an iron pillar; which cannot be removed out of its place:

and brasen walls; which cannot be broken down. All these metaphors show the safety and security of the prophet, being surrounded by the power of God; his constancy, immovableness, and invincibleness in the work of the Lord, having such a spirit of power, fortitude, and of a sound mind, that nothing was able to move and shake him, or to deter him from the execution of his office; and that he should stand inflexible

against the whole land; of Judea, and all the inhabitants of it:

against the kings of Judah; in successive reigns, as Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, or Jechonias, and Zedekiah:

against the princes thereof; who desired he might be put to death, (²³⁰⁴Jeremiah 38:4):

against the priests thereof; who all of them dealt falsely, and were given to covetousness, (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 8:10):

and against the people of the land; who were grievously addicted to idolatry, and all manner of wickedness.

Ver. 19. *And they shall fight against thee,* etc.] The Targum adds,

“that they may hide the words of thy prophecy;”

hinder him from prophesying, stop his mouth, and even take away his life:

but they shall not prevail against thee; as to do either:

for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee; as he did; he hid him when they sought for him, and delivered him out of the dungeon and bonds into which he was cast by them; (See Gill on “~~24008~~ Jeremiah 1:8”).

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 2

This chapter contains the prophet's message from the Lord to the people of the Jews; in which they are reminded of their former favours, in order to aggravate their sins and transgressions they were chargeable with; to show their ingratitude and unkindness, and to bring them to a conviction and acknowledgment of their iniquities, without which punishment would be inflicted on them. The preface to this message is in (~~241D~~Jeremiah 2:1,2), and the discourse begins with an account of their former state and condition when they came out of Egypt; what kindness was shown them by the Lord, and what was returned to him by them; what they were to him, and how much regarded by him, (~~241D~~Jeremiah 2:2,3) and so far were they from being injured by him, that might cause them to depart from him, which they are desired to give attention to, that they were followed with various instances of goodness, which are particularly enumerated; and yet no notice was taken of them, neither by people, priests, pastors, and prophets, who were guilty of the grossest ignorance and wickedness, (~~241D~~Jeremiah 2:4-8), wherefore the Lord determines to plead with them and theirs; and charges them with such idolatry as was not to be found among the Gentiles, (~~240D~~Jeremiah 1:9-11) the heavens are called upon to be astonished at it; and the reason given for it, the ingratitude and folly of this people, (~~242D~~Jeremiah 2:12,13) in order to reclaim them, the Lord by the prophet proceeds to observe to them the corrections and chastisement they had already endured, being brought into bondage, their land wasted, cities burnt, and their glory taken from them; all which were owing to their revoltings and backslidings, and by which they might see what an evil and bitter thing sin is in its effects, (~~242D~~Jeremiah 2:14-19) and again reminds them of former favours; how that he loosed them from their yoke and bonds, when they promised to transgress no more, and yet did more and more; how he had raised them from a right seed, and planted them a noble vine, and yet they were sadly degenerated, and were guilty of such crimes as were not to be removed by anything done by them, (~~242D~~Jeremiah 2:20-22), and notwithstanding all this, they had the impudence to deny that they were tainted with idolatry, when they had been so guilty of it in the valley

of Hinnom, and elsewhere; and were comparable to the lustful dromedary and wild ass, and so fond of strange gods, that they thirsted after them, and were resolved to follow them, (²⁴¹²³Jeremiah 2:23-25) and yet the time would come when all ranks of men among them would be ashamed of their worship of stocks and stones, and in the time of their trouble call upon the Lord to save them, when they would be sent to their gods, who were as numerous as their cities, (²⁴¹²⁵Jeremiah 2:26-28) wherefore it was in vain to plead their innocence, when they were all so guilty, and had received correction without amendment, and had even slain the prophets of the Lord, (²⁴¹²⁹Jeremiah 2:29,30) and then the Lord again upbraids them with their ingratitude to him, who had been so good and kind to them; with their forgetfulness of him, illustrated by a maid's not forgetting her ornaments, and a bride her attire; with their artful methods to entice others to idolatry, and with their shedding of innocent blood; and yet, after all this, they asserted their innocence, and affirmed they had never sinned, (²⁴¹³¹Jeremiah 2:31-35), for all which sentence is pronounced against them, and punishment is threatened them, (²⁴¹³⁶Jeremiah 2:36,37).

Ver. 1. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, saying.*] Here begins the book, and Jeremiah's first sermon; and the following contains the message he was sent with, to which the preceding chapter is only a preface or introduction. The Targum calls it,

“the word of the prophecy from before the Lord.”

Ver. 2. *Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem,* etc.] Of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea. The prophet seems now to have been at Anathoth, and therefore is bid to go from thence to Jerusalem, and there prophesy before the people in it, as the Targum paraphrases it:

saying, thus saith the Lord, I remember thee; the Lord never forgets his people, though they sometimes think he does; it cannot be for they are engraven on the palms of his hands, yea, are set as a seal on his heart; nor does he forget his covenant with them, nor favours and blessings promised them: or, “I remember for thee”; or, “to thee”^{f21}: things in thy favour, and which will be to thy advantage:

the kindness of thy youth; either the lovingkindness of the Lord, which he had shown unto them; and the benefits, as the fruits thereof, which he had bestowed upon them in former times, when they were brought out of Egypt, and into the wilderness, which was the infancy both of their civil

and church state; (see ^{<2810>}Hosea 11:1) and when they received many favours from the Lord, (^{<2810>}Jeremiah 31:2) or the kindness of the people of Israel to the Lord, which was influenced and drawn forth by his love to them; though this can only be understood of some few of them, since the greater part tempted him, grieved, and provoked him:

the love of thine espousals; for the covenant God made with that people, when he brought them out of Egypt, was in the form of a marriage contract; he became their husband, and they became his spouse and bride; and which is an aggravation of their violation of it, (^{<2810>}Jeremiah 31:32) and this love, as before, may be understood either of the love of God to them, or of their love to him. The Targum interprets the former clause of the divine goodness to them, and this of their love to him, paraphrasing the whole thus,

“I remember unto you the blessings of ancient days, and the love of your fathers, who believed in my word:”

when thou wentest after me; the Lord going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; even the angel of God’s presence, who was their leader, guide, and preserver:

in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown; where they passed through many difficulties, and lived upon the providence of God, which, in a wonderful manner, supported them with the necessaries of life, which otherwise they could not have had. The Targum is,

“and they walked after my two messengers, after Moses and Aaron, in the wilderness forty years without food, in a land that was not sown.”

The whole of this may be applied to the case of God’s people at first conversion, when they are as newly born babes, and become young men in Christ; at which time they are openly espoused to him, having been secretly betrothed in covenant before; but now, through the efficacy of the Spirit attending the word, they are made willing to give up themselves to the Lord, and are espoused to one husband, Christ, (^{<2810>}2 Corinthians 11:2) at which time also great kindness and love is expressed both by the Lord to them, by quickening them who before were dead; by bringing them out of a most miserable condition; by speaking comfortably to them; by manifesting and applying his pardoning grace; and by openly taking them into his family: and also by them to him again; for the grace of love is then

implanted, which, as it is hearty and sincere, is very ardent and fervent; which shows itself by parting with and bearing all for Christ; and by a concern for his company and presence; and by a regard to his people, Gospel, ways, and worship; particularly by following him in his ordinances with great zeal, fervency, and constancy, even though attended with many difficulties and discouragements; and though the way may seem to flesh and blood very unpleasant and unpromising; all which is remembered by the Lord when forgotten by them; and when their love is become cold to him, he not only remembers them, and his love to them, which is always the same, but also their love to him.

Ver. 3. *Israel was holiness unto the Lord*, etc.] When first brought out of Egypt into the wilderness, by the Lord's choice and separation of them to be a holy people to him above all others; by covenant with him, and profession of him; and by his giving them holy laws, and placing a sanctuary among them; and by their high priest, who represented them in the most holy place; and had on the front of his mitre written,

holiness unto the Lord; so the spiritual Israel are chosen in Christ to be holy, and he is made sanctification to them; they are sanctified in him, and by his Spirit; they are called with a holy calling, and unto holiness; and, under the influence of grace, live holy lives and conversations, which the grace of God teaches, and young converts are remarkable for; their consciences being just awakened, and their hearts tender:

and the firstfruits of his increase; Israel was the first nation that God separated for himself; and this being the firstfruits, shows that he would separate others also, and take out of the Gentiles a people for his name, which he has since done; and the elect of God among the Israelites were the firstfruits of his chosen ones elsewhere; it were some of them that first believed in Christ, and received the firstfruits of the Spirit; and all converted ones are a kind of firstfruits of his creatures; the grace they receive at conversion is the firstfruits of a later increase of it, and even of eternal glory:

all that devour him shall offend; or, "all that eat him shall be guilty"^{f22}; and be condemned and punished, who eat up the Lord's people, as they eat bread; (see ~~19504~~ Psalm 53:4), these shall not go unpunished; for his people are as the apple of his eye, and whoever touches and hurts them fall under the divine displeasure, and will be looked upon as criminals and offenders, and will be judged and condemned as such. The allusion is to the eating of

the firstfruits, which only belonged to the priests; nor might any of the increase be eaten until the firstfruits were brought to them, (⁴²³⁰Leviticus 23:10,14,20). This is expressed in the Chaldee paraphrase of the text,

“whosoever eats of them (the firstfruits) is guilty of death; for as the beginning of the harvest, the sheaf of oblation, whoever eats of it before the priests, the sons of Aaron, have offered of it upon the altar, shall be guilty or condemned; so all that spoil the house of Israel shall be guilty or condemned;”

so Jarchi and Kimchi:

evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord; that is, the evil of punishment, either in this world, or in that which is to come, or in both.

Ver. 4. *Hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.*] The Lord, by the prophet, having observed his great kindness to this people, what they were unto him, and what a regard he had for them, proceeds to upbraid them with their ingratitude, and requires an attention to what he was about to say; all are called upon, because, all were guilty. This respects the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the several families in them. The ten tribes had been long carried captive.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, what iniquity have your fathers found in me,* etc.] What injustice or injury has been done them? there is no unrighteousness in God, nor can any be done by him; or what unfaithfulness, or want of truth and integrity in performing promises, had they found in him? he never suffers his faithfulness to fail, or any of the good things he has promised. So the Targum,

“what falsehood have your fathers found in my word?”

none at all; God is a covenant keeping God:

that they are gone far from me; from my fear, as the Chaldee paraphrase; from the word and worship, and ways of God:

and have walked after vanity; after idols, the vanities of the Gentiles, (³⁴⁴²Jeremiah 14:22):

and are become vain? in their imaginations and in their actions, in their knowledge and in their practice, worshipping idols, as well as guilty of many other sins.

Ver. 6. *Neither said they, where is the Lord?* etc.] They did not ask after him, nor seek his face and favour, nor worship him, nor took any notice of the blessings he bestowed upon them:

that brought us up out of the land of Egypt? by means of Moses the deliverer, with a mighty hand, and outstretched arm; for, though Moses was the instrument, God was the efficient cause of the deliverance; the favour was his, and the glory of it ought to have been given to him:

that led us through the wilderness; of “Shur”, or of “Sin”, the desert of Arabia, (^(LXXII)Exodus 15:22 16:1) and a dreadful and terrible one it was:

through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death; where were scorpions, fiery serpents, drought, and no water, and so very dangerous as well as uncomfortable travelling; and yet through all this they were led, and wonderfully supplied and preserved;

through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt; there was no passenger in it, nor inhabitants on it, so that there were none to relieve them; whence it appears, that all their supply, support, and preservation, were from the Lord. The Jews^{f23} interpret this of the first man Adam, after this manner,

“all land, concerning which the first man decreed that it should be inhabited, it is inhabited; and all land, concerning which he did not decree it should be inhabited, it is not inhabited; and such they suggest was this wilderness;”

(see ^(LXXV)Deuteronomy 8:15).

Ver. 7. *And I brought you into a plentiful country,* etc.] “Into the land of Carmel”, as in the Hebrew text; that is,

“into the land of Israel, which was planted as Carmel,”

as the Targum paraphrases it; with wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, and olives; a land flowing with milk and honey, (^(LXXIII)Deuteronomy 8:8), so Ben Melech:

to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; of vineyards and oliveyards, which they had not planted, and for which they had never laboured, (³¹⁴¹Joshua 24:13):

but when ye entered ye defiled my land; which the Lord had chosen above all lands, where he would have a temple built for his worship, and where he would cause his Shechinah or glorious Majesty to dwell; but this they defiled by their sins and transgressions, and particularly by their idolatry, as follows:

that made mine heritage an abomination; by devoting it to the worship of idols, as the Targum paraphrases it.

Ver. 8. *The priests said not, where is the Lord?* etc.] Whose business it was to draw nigh to God, and offer the sacrifices of the people, and inquire of God for them; whose lips should keep knowledge, and at whose mouth the law should be sought, they being the messengers of the Lord of hosts, (³¹⁴²Malachi 2:7):

and they that handle the law knew me not; the sanhedrim, according to Jarchi; or the lawyers and scribes, the Rabbins and doctors of the law, whose business it was to read and explain it; these did not understand it, nor the mind of God in it; and much less did they know him in a spiritual and evangelical manner; or as he is in Christ, and revealed in the Gospel:

the pastors also transgressed against me; kings, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi interpret it, who were pastors or shepherds in a civil sense; whose business it was to feed the people as the shepherd does his flock; that is, to guide and govern them by wholesome laws, by the laws of God; but, instead of this, they rebelled against the Lord, and transgressed his commands:

and the prophets prophesied by Baal; in his name; pretending to be inspired by that idol, and to receive the spirit of prophecy from him:

and walked after things that do not profit; the gods of the Gentiles, which could not supply them with the least temporal blessing, and much less give them spiritual and eternal ones; (see ³¹⁴³Jeremiah 14:22). This is to be understood of false prophets, as Ben Melech.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord*, etc.] Either verbally, by reasoning with them, and reproving them for their ignorance,

stupidity, and idolatry; or by deeds, inflicting punishment upon them; so the Targum,

“therefore I will take vengeance on you, or punish you, saith the Lord:”

and with your children's children will I plead; who imitate their parents, and do the same evil things as they, which the Lord knew they would; and was particularly true of the Jews in the times of Christ, for which reason wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

Ver. 10. *For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see*, etc.] Or, “to the isles of Chittim”^{f24}; so called from Kittim the son of Javan, (⁰¹⁰⁰Genesis 10:4) who, as Josephus says^{f25}, possessed the island of Chethima, now called Cyprus; and, from that, all islands, and most maritime places, are, by the Hebrews, called Chittim, he observes: it may regard all the islands in the Aegean and Mediterranean seas:

and send unto Kedar; which was in Arabia, and lay to the east, as Chittim to the west; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“send to the provinces of the Arabians:”

and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing; as what is inquired about in the following verse, a change of deities. All this is to be understood of the contemplation of the mind, and not of any corporeal journey to be taken, to inquire into this matter.

Ver. 11. *Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods?* etc.] Though they are not by nature gods which they worship, only nominal and fictitious deities, yet they did not change them for others; but when they once embraced the worship of them, continued therein; so did the Chittim, the inhabitants of the isles, who though they traded to distant countries, from place to place; and so the Kedarenes, who dwelt in tents, and fed cattle, and moved from one desert to another, and from one pasture to another, as Jarchi observes; yet they carried their gods with them, and did not exchange them for new ones where they came. The Jewish writers say^{f26}, that the Kedarenes worshipped water, and the Chittim fire; and though they knew that water would quench fire, yet the latter would not change their gods. Kimchi and Abendana relate it just the reverse, and say the Kedarenes worshipped fire, and the Chittim water, which is most likely; and so it is said elsewhere^{f27}.

But my people have changed their glory; the true God, who is glorious in himself, and whom they should have glorified, and have counted it their highest honour and glory that they knew him, and were the worshippers of him; yet they changed him, their glory, into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass, (^{<246D>}Psalm 106:20), wherefore it is justly added,

for that which doth not profit; meaning Baal, and such like idols; see the note on (^{<241B>}Jeremiah 2:8).

Ver. 12. *Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this*, etc.] Meaning either the angels in heaven, or the heavens themselves, by a personification:

and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; all which may be signified by storms and tempests, by thunder and lightning, and by the sun's withdrawing its light. This is said to aggravate the wickedness committed, as if the heavens blushed and were ashamed, and were confounded and amazed at it; and as if, on account of it, the Jews deserved not the benefit of the heavens, and the orbs in them.

Ver. 13. *For my people have committed two evils*, etc.] Not but that they had committed more, but there were two principal ones they were guilty of, hereafter mentioned; and it was an aggravation of these crimes, that they were the professing people of God who had committed them: and it may be observed, that such sin; they are not without it, nor the commission of it; and may be left to fall into great sins, and yet remain his people; covenant interest cannot be dissolved; this should be considered not as an encouragement to sin, but as a relief under a sense of sin:

they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters; this is said of Christ, (^{<204E>}Song of Solomon 4:15 ^{<2417B>}Jeremiah 17:13,4), grace in him is compared to "water", it being cooling and refreshing, cleansing and fructifying; and to living water, because it quickens dead sinners, revives drooping saints, supports and maintains spiritual life, and issues in eternal life; and because it is perpetual and ever flowing; and to a "fountain", denoting that the original of it is in Christ, and the great abundance of it which is in him; it is as water in a fountain, in us as in streams: now to forsake this fountain is the first of these evils; which is done when the people of God are remiss in the exercise of faith on Christ; grow cold in their affections to him, and neglect his word and ordinances.

And hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water; this is the other evil; and such are the world, and the things in it, when cleaved

unto, and rest and satisfaction are taken in them; the inventions and ordinances of men, when followed and attended to; moral duties, and evangelical services, when depended on; and even spiritual frames, when these are lived upon, and put in the room of Christ; yea, acts of faith, when they are rested in, and the object not so much regarded as should be: moreover, what may principally be intended are, in the first place, forsaking the worship of God, as the Targum interprets it, the assembling of themselves together to attend his service and ordinances, which is to forsake their own mercies; and, in the next place, following after idols, as the same paraphrase explains it, which have no divinity in them, and can yield no help and relief, or give any comfort, or afford any supply in time of distress and need. It is egregious folly to leave a fountain for a cistern, and especially a broken one: in a fountain the water is living, and always running, and ever springing up; not so in a cistern, and in a broken cistern there is none at all.

Ver. 14. *Is Israel a servant?* etc.] That he does not abide in the house, in his own land, but is carried captive, becomes subject to others, and is used as a slave; so the Targum,

“as a servant;”

is he not the Lord’s first born? are not the people of Israel called the children of the living God? how come they then to be treated not as children, as free men, but as servants? this cannot be owing to any breach of covenant or promise on God’s part, or to the failure of the blessing of national adoption bestowed on them; but to some sin or sins of theirs, which have brought them into this miserable condition:

is he a home born slave? or born in the house, of the handmaid, and so in the power of the master of the family in whose house he was born, (⁽¹²⁰⁴⁾Exodus 21:4) or the sense is, either Israel is a servant,

or a son of the family^{f28}, as some render the words; not the former, being not only the son of a free woman, but Jehovah’s firstborn; if the latter,

why is he spoiled? why is he delivered up to the spoilers? as the Targum; why should he be given up into the hands of the Babylonians, and become their prey? is it usual for fathers to suffer their children, or those born in their house, to be so used? some reason must be given for it.

Ver. 15. *The young lions roared upon him, and yelled,* etc.] Or, “gave out their voice”^{f29}; meaning the kings of the nations, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi explain it; and are to be understood of the kings of Assyria and Babylon, and particularly of Nebuchadnezzar; (see ^{<2817>}Jeremiah 50:17) compared to lions for their strength and cruelty; their “roaring” and “yelling design” the bringing forth of their armies against Israel, the noise of the battle, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, and the voice of the warrior:

and they made his land waste; all this is said as past, when it was yet to come, because of the certainty of it, and the sure accomplishment of these prophecies; for this respects the future desolation of the land of Israel at the Babylonish captivity:

his cities are burnt without inhabitant; not only Jerusalem was burnt with fire, (^{<2813>}Jeremiah 52:13), but other cities in the land of Israel, so that they were not inhabited: or, “they were desolate or destroyed”^{f30} as the Septuagint version, so that none could dwell in them; and so the Targum,

“her cities are desolate, without inhabitant.”

Kimchi’s father explains the word by **wj mX**, “budded”, or brought forth herbs or plants; for desolate places bring up plants; where there is no inhabitant, grass grows.

Ver. 16. *Also the children of Noph and Tahapanes,* etc.] These were cities in Egypt. Noph is the same with Moph in (^{<2806>}Hosea 9:6) and which we there rightly render Memphis; as Noph is here by the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and was formerly, as Pliny^{f31} says, the palace of the kings of Egypt. It is the same that is now called Alcairo, or Grand Cairo. According to Herodotus^{f32}, it was built by Menes, the first king of Egypt; and who also makes mention of a city of Egypt, called Momemphis^{f33}. Tahapanes is the same with Hanes in (^{<2804>}Isaiah 30:4), and here, in the Arabic version, is called Daphnes; and is thought by some to be the same with Daphnae Pelusiae, a city in Egypt. This Tahapanes was the metropolis of Egypt, and the seat of their kings; mention is made of Pharaoh’s house in it, in (^{<2489>}Jeremiah 43:9), now the inhabitants of these, called the children of them, and who are put for the people of Egypt in general, were the allies of the Jews, and in whom they trusted for help, when attacked by their enemies, (^{<2802>}Isaiah 30:2-4 31:1) and yet

even these have broken the crown of thy head; which is interpreted, by the Targum, of slaying their mighty men, and spoiling their goods; perhaps it had its accomplishment when Pharaohnecho king of Egypt came out against the king of Assyria, and Josiah king of Judah went out to meet him, and was slain by him at Megiddo; and his son Jehoahaz he put in bonds, and carried him to Egypt, and put his brother upon the throne, and took tribute of gold and silver of him, (^{<1273>}2 Kings 23:29-35).

Ver. 17. *Hast thou not procured this unto thyself*, etc.] All this desolation and destruction, both from the Egyptians and the Babylonians; their sin was the cause of it, their idolatry and forsaking the Lord their God, as follows: and so the Targum,

“is not this vengeance taken upon thee?”

that is, by the Lord, for their sins and transgressions; he suffered these nations to make them desolate on that account: to which agrees the Septuagint version, “hath not he done these things unto thee?” for what the Egyptians and Babylonians did were done by the will of the Lord, who suffered them for their correction: and the Arabic version renders it, “have not I done these things unto thee?” and the Syriac as a prophecy, as indeed so is the whole, “lo, so it shall be done to thee”; as is predicted in the foregoing verses, and that for the following reason:

in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God; as in (^{<2423>}Jeremiah 2:13), (See Gill on “^{<2423>}Jeremiah 2:13”), that is, as the Targum interprets it, the worship of the Lord thy God, his service, his statutes, and his ordinances; and followed after idols, and the worship of them; which is aggravated by the circumstance of time in which this was done:

when he led thee by the way? who showed thee the right way, and thou walkedst not in it, as the Targum; the way in which they should have gone, the way of their duty, and his commandments; and which would have been pleasant and profitable to them, and secured them from ruin and destruction.

Ver. 18. *And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt*, etc.] By worshipping of idols, in imitation of them; or by sending ambassadors thither for help, when they had their Lord, their God, so nigh, had they not forsaken him; nor had Josiah any business to go out against Pharaohnecho, (^{<4821>}2 Chronicles 35:21) and, contrary to the express word of God by the

Prophet Jeremy, did the Jews which remained in Judea go into Egypt, (~~3429~~Jeremiah 42:19 43:1-7).

To drink the waters of Sihor? which is the river Nile, as Jarchi interprets it. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it “the waters of Geon”, or “Gihon”: and this also is the same with the Nile, as Josephus^{f34} affirms, who says,

“Geon, which runs through Egypt, is the same which the Greeks call Nile.”

So Jerom^{f35} from Eusebius,

“Geon is a river, which with the Egyptians is called Nile.”

The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “troubled water”; and such were the waters of the Nile, which had its name of Sihor from the blackness of it; and hence, by the Greeks^{f36}, was called Melas; and by the Latines^{f37}, Melo. Hence, as Braunius^{f38} observes, it was represented by a black stone, as other rivers by a white one; for which reason the black colour was very grateful to the Egyptians; and for the same reason Osiris, which is the very Nile itself, was reckoned black; and the ox Apis they worshipped was a black one, at least part of it, and was covered with black linen cloth; and its priests were also clothed in black, hence called Chemarim, (~~3805~~Hosea 10:5 ~~3004~~Zephaniah 1:4).

Or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria; to go after their idolatrous practices, or to send to them for help; for this was the usual method of the Jews; when the Assyrians oppressed them, then they sent to Egypt for help; and when the Egyptians were upon them, then they applied to the Assyrians; and in both cases acted wrong, for they ought to have sought the Lord their God only:

to drink the waters of the river? of the river Euphrates. The sense is, that they preferred the waters of the Nile and of Euphrates, or the gods of the Egyptians and Assyrians, or the help of these people, before the Lord, the fountain of living waters, and his worship and powerful help. The Targum paraphrases this last clause thus,

“why do ye make covenant with the Assyrian, to carry you captive beyond the river Euphrates?”

Ver. 19. *Thine own wickedness shall correct thee*, etc.] That is, either their wickedness in going to Egypt and Assyria, and the ill success they had in so doing might be an instruction to them to act otherwise, and a correction of their sin and folly; or that their wickedness was a reason, and a very just one, why they were chastened and corrected of the Lord:

and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; or be the cause why they were reprov'd of God; or their ill success in turning their backs on him, and going to the creature for help, was a severe rebuke of their sin and madness. The Targum is,

“I have brought afflictions upon thee, and thou hast not refrained from thy wickedness; and, because thou art not turned to the law, vengeance is taken on thee.”

Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter; or observe and take notice what evil and bitter things sin, particularly the forsaking of the Lord and his worship, brings upon persons; for not sin itself is meant, though that is exceeding sinful, and is a root of bitterness, however sweet it may be to the taste of a sinner, and produces bitter effects; but the punishment of sin is meant, or corrections and reproofs for it; which are evil things, as calamities, and captivity, and the like; and which are very ungrateful and disagreeable to flesh and blood; and yet men, going on in a course of sin, and forsaking the Lord, as it follows, are the cause of these things:

that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God; (See Gill on “²⁰¹³Jeremiah 2:13”), this is the source of all the evil and bitterness experienced by them:

and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts; this was the reason of their forsaking the Lord, his ways and worship, because they had no reverence of him; his fear was not before their eyes, nor on their hearts; and both were the cause of evil coming upon them; so the Targum paraphrases the words,

“and know and see, for I have brought evil and bitterness upon thee, O Jerusalem, because thou hast forsaken the worship of the Lord thy God, and hast not put my fear before thine eyes, saith the Lord, the God of hosts.”

Ver. 20. *For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands*, etc.] The yoke of the people, as the Targum expresses it, that was upon their

necks, and the bands in which they were bound by them; referring to the deliverance of them of old from Egyptian bondage by the hands of Moses, and out of their several captivities among their neighbours by the means of the judges, and in their time; though the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “of old thou hast broken my yoke, and burst my bands”; or “thy yoke”, and “thy bands”, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; the yoke of the law that the Lord put upon them, and the bands of statutes and ordinances which he enjoined them; but the former sense is best:

and thou saidst, I will not transgress; here is a double reading; the Cetib or writing is **dwb[a**, “I will not serve”; which is followed by the Vulgate Latin, which so renders it; and by the Septuagint version, “I will not serve thee”; and which is the sense of the Arabic version, “I will not subject myself”, that is, to the law and will of God; and so the Syriac version, though to a quite different sense, “I will serve no other god any more”: which agrees with the Keri or reading, which is **rwb[a**, “I will not transgress”; and this is confirmed by the Targum, which paraphrases the words thus,

“and ye said, we will not add any more to transgress thy word;”

and by Jarchi and Kimchi, who interpret it of transgressing the words and commands of God; both have one and the same sense. For whether it be read, “I will not serve”; the meaning is, as Kimchi observes, “I will not serve idols”; or no other god, as the Syriac version: or whether, “I will not transgress”; that is, the command of the Lord, by serving other gods. Hillerus^{f39} reconciles the writing and reading after this manner, rendering **dwb[a al** , “I will not serve”, and **rwb[a al** , “I will not pass”, to servitude; though, in another place^{f40} “I will not pass over”, that is, the rivers of Tigris and Euphrates with the captives; and refers to (^{3300B}Micah 1:11 ^{340D}Isaiah 47:2), but doubtless reference is had to the promise of obedience and service, which the Israelites made at Mount Sinai quickly after their deliverance out of Egypt, (^{029B}Exodus 19:8 24:7), but this promise they did not keep: “when”, or “for”, or “but”, or “although”^{f41},

upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou wanderest, playing the harlot; that is, committing spiritual whoredom or idolatry with idols, set on high hills and mountains, and under green trees, groves, and shady places; going from one idol to another, as harlots go from one stew to another; or as whoremongers go from harlot to harlot.

Ver. 21. *Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed,* etc.] It is usual to compare the people of the Jews to a vineyard, and to vines; and their settlement in the land of Canaan to the planting of vines in a vineyard; (see ²¹¹¹Isaiah 5:1-7 ²¹⁵⁷Exodus 15:17 ⁴⁸⁰⁸Psalms 80:8-15). Kimchi says this is spoken concerning Abraham; no doubt respect is had to the Jewish fathers, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, Joshua, and Caleb, and the like; who, having the true and right seed of grace in them, became like choice and noble vines, and brought forth much fruit, and were deserving of imitation by their posterity:

how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? like a vine that grows in the woods, and brings forth wild grapes; so these, their sons, degenerating in practice from their fathers, became corrupt in themselves, and unprofitable to God. The Targum of the whole is,

“I set you before me as the plant of a choice vine, all of you doing truth; but how are you changed before me in your corrupt works? ye have declined from my worship, ye are become as a vine in which there is no profit.”

Ver. 22. *For though thou wash thee with nitre,* etc.] The word **rtn**, “nitre”, is only used in this place and in (²¹⁵¹Proverbs 25:20) and it is hard to say what it is. Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, that some say it is what is called “alum”; and others that it is a dust with which they wash the head, and cleanse everything; and so Jarchi says it is a kind of earth used in cleaning garments; and “nitre” is mentioned by the Misnic doctors^{f42} among those things which are used for the washing of garments, and taking spots out of them; though about what it is they are not agreed; and it seems the nitre of the ancients is unknown to us^{f43}; and saltpetre is put in the room of it; and some render the word here “saltpetre”; and Pliny^{f44} observes, that nitre does not much differ from salt, and ascribes to it a virtue of eating out filth, and removing it; so Aristotle^{f45} reports of the lake Ascania; that its water is of such a nitrous quality, that garments, being put into it, need no other washing. Nitre has its name from **rtn**, “to loose”, because it looses the filth, and cleanses from it:

and take thee much soap. The Septuagint render it, “herb”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “the herb borith”; which is the Hebrew word here used; and about the sense of which there is some difficulty. Kimchi and

Ben Melech say some take it to be the same with what is called “soap”; so Jarchi; and others, that it is an herb with which they wash, the same that is called fullers’ herb; but whether it is soap, or fullers’ herb, or fullers’ earth, as others, it is certain it is something fullers used in cleaning garments, as appear from (^{3RD}Malachi 3:2), where the same word is used, and fullers made mention of as using what is signified by it. It has its name from *hrb*, which signifies to “cleanse” and “purify”. The sense is, let this backsliding and degenerate people take what methods they will to cleanse themselves from their sins, as by their ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, which was the usual method they had recourse to, to purify themselves, and in which they rested:

yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God; or, “will retain its spots”,^{f46} these remain; the filth is not washed away; the iniquity is not hid and covered; it appears very plain and manifest;

yea, shines like gold; or, “is gilded”,^{f47}; as the word used signifies. It is of too deep a die to be removed by such external things; nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse from sin, take away its filth, removes its guilt, and cover it out of the sight of God, so that it can be seen no more. The Targum is,

“for if you think to be cleansed from your sins, as they cleanse with nitre, or make white with “borith”, or soap; lo, as the mark of a spot which is not clean, so are your sins multiplied before me, saith the Lord God.”

Ver. 23. *How canst thou say, I am not polluted*, etc.] No man can say this; for all are defiled with sin; but this was the cast and complexion of these people in all ages; they were a generation of men that were pure in their own eyes, but were not cleansed from their filthiness; they fancied that their ceremonial washings and sacrifices cleansed them from moral impurities, when those only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; still their iniquity remained marked before the Lord; they acted the part of the adulterous woman in (^{3RD}Proverbs 30:20) to whom they are compared in the context; and, therefore, as wondering at their impudence, they having a whore’s forehead, this question is put, how and with what face they could affirm this, and what follows:

I have not gone after Baalim? or, “the Baalim”; the idols of the people, as the Targum interprets it; for there were many Baals, as Baalzephon, Baalpeor, Baalzebub, and others:

see thy way in the valley; where idols were set up and worshipped; or through which the way lay, as Kimchi observes, to the hills and mountains where idolatry was frequently committed; perhaps no particular valley is meant, but any in which idols were worshipped, or which they passed through to the worshipping of them; though the Targum interprets it of the valley in which they dwelt, over against Baalpeor, so Jarchi and Abarbinel, when they worshipped that idol; and seems to design the valley of Shittim, (⁴²³⁰Numbers 25:1,2), but rather, if any particular valley is intended, the valley of Hinnom seems to bid fair for it; and to this it may be the Septuagint version has respect, rendering it *εν τω πολυανδριω*, “in the sepulchre of the multitude”; multitudes being burnt and buried here:

know what thou hast done; in the valley, especially in the valley of Hinnom, where they caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech:

thou art a swift dromedary. The Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it a young camel; and so the word in the Arabic language signifies; and the epithet “swift” better agrees with that than with the dromedary. Curtius^{f48} makes mention of dromedary camels of great swiftness; but it may be this is to be understood, not of its swiftness in running, but of its impetuous lust, as Calvin observes; and, indeed, each of these creatures are very libidinous; and therefore these people are compared to them; (see Gill on ³⁰⁰⁰Micah 1:13”), it follows:

traversing her ways; running about here and there after the male, burning with lust, sometimes one way, and sometimes another; and so these people sometimes run after one idol, and sometimes another, and followed a multitude of them. The Targum renders it, “which corrupts or depraves her ways”. Deuteronomy Dieu observes, that the word *Ærc̄*, in the Ethiopic language, signifies “the evening”; and so may intend walking in the evening, in the dark, rather than in the light; which, as it is the way of dromedaries, and almost of all beasts, so of harlots, to whom these people are likened; and he further observes, that, in the Arabic language, it signifies to make common, which agrees with adulterous persons, as these were in a spiritual sense. The word is only used in this place, and is deduced from, or has some relation to, the word *Æwr̄c̄*, which signifies a

“shoelatchet”, (^{ⲑⲓⲛⲁⲓ}Genesis 14:23) as Jarchi and Kimchi observe; and may denote, as the shoe is bound and fastened with the latchet, the binding of her ways to her heart, as the former suggests, the strengthening and confirming of her in her evil ways, and her constant persisting therein; but the first sense of running here and there through lust is best; and is approved by Bynaeus^{f49} and by Buxtorf^{f50}.

Ver. 24. *A wild ass used to the wilderness*, etc.] That is, one that has been brought up in the wilderness, and has been accustomed to live, and run, and range about there; as men in general are compared to this creature for its ignorance, stupidity, folly, stubbornness, and unteachableness, (^{ⲑⲓⲛⲁⲓ}Job 11:12), so the Jewish people are represented as like unto it, for its wantonness and lust:

that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; draws it in at her nostrils, and snuffs it up; or opens her mouth, and takes it in with her breath; drinks it in, and swallows it up at her pleasure: or, “with the desire of her soul”^{f51}; it being grateful and delightful to her. Some read this clause in connection with *htnat*, rendered “in her occasion”; and differently translate it. The Targum takes it to have the signification of *μynt*, “dragons”; or whales; and renders it,

“drinking the wind as a dragon;”

and so Jarchi, who compares it with (^{ⲑⲓⲛⲁⲓ}Jeremiah 14:6) “they snuffed up the wind like dragons”; and so the Syriac version, “thou hast drawn up the wind like a wild dog”; others render it, “gathering the wind of her occasion”; or, “of her meeting”^{f52}; taking it in, and snuffing it up, as she occasionally met with it in running. The Vulgate Latin version is, “she drew the wind of her love”; it is reported of the wild ass, that it can smell its mate afar off, and, by the wind it snuffs, knows where it is; for which purpose it runs up the hills and mountains to get the scent, which, when it has, its lust is so violent that there is no stopping of it till it comes to the place where its mate is: wherefore it follows,

in her occasion who can turn her away? when this violent fit is upon her, there is no turning her away from pursuing the enjoyment of it; which is expressive of the eager desire of the Jews after the worshipping of idols, how bent upon it, and not to be reclaimed from it:

all they that seek her will not weary themselves; knowing that they can not overtake her, or stop her in her career, or hinder her gratification of her lust. This may be understood either of those who sought to commit spiritual adultery or idolatry with the Jews, they need not weary themselves, being easy to be found by them; or of the prophets that sought to reclaim them, who, perceiving how stubborn, and untractable, and irreclaimable they were, would not weary themselves with their admonitions and reproofs, seeing they were in vain:

in her month they shall find her; not that this creature sleeps one whole month in a year, as Jarchi dreams, when it may be easily taken; but the sense is, that when it is with young, and in the last month, and so is heavy with its burden, it may easily be found and taken; so when the people of Israel should have filled up the measure of their iniquity, and the judgment of God was fallen and lay heavy upon them; then those that sought to return them from their evil ways might find them, and hope to succeed in reclaiming them, and bringing them to repentance; agreeably the Septuagint render it, “in her humiliation”; when chastised and humbled by the Lord for her sins. This is not to be understood of the month of Ab, in which Jerusalem was destroyed, both by Nebuchadnezzar and Titus; in which month the Jews are sure to be found confessing their sins, and humbling themselves, as Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Ben Melech interpret it; nor of the new moon, as others; at everyone of which, those who sought to join with them in idolatrous practices might be sure to find them at them.

Ver. 25. *Withhold thy foot from being unshod*, etc.] That it may not be unshod, be naked and bare. The sense is, either, as some, do not take long journeys into foreign countries for help, as into Assyria and Egypt, whither they used to go barefoot; or wore out their shoes by their long journeys, and so returned without; or refrain from idolatry, as Jarchi interprets it, that thou mayest not go naked into captivity; or this is an euphemism, as others think, forbidding adulterous actions, showing the naked foot, the putting off of the shoes, in order to lie upon the bed, and prostitute herself to her lovers; and is to be understood of idolatry:

and thy throat from thirst; after wine, which excites lust; abstain from eager and burning lust after adulterous, that is, idolatrous practices; so the Targum,

“refrain thy feet from being joined with the people, and thy mouth from worshipping the idols of the people.”

The words are paraphrased in the Talmud^{f53} thus,

“withhold thyself from sinning, that thy foot may not become naked; (the gloss is, “when thou goest into captivity”) refrain thy tongue from idle words, that thy throat may not thirst:”

this was said by the Lord, or by the prophets of the Lord sent unto them, to which the following is an answer:

but thou saidst, there is no hope; of ever being prevailed upon to relinquish those idolatrous practices, or of being received into the favour of God after such provocations: no; I will never refrain from them; I will not be persuaded to leave them:

for I have loved strangers; the strange gods of the nations:

and after them will I go; and worship them; so the Targum,

“I love to be joined to the people, and after the Worship of their idols will I go.”

Ver. 26. *As the thief is ashamed when he is found*, etc.] Taken in the fact, or convicted of it; that is, as the Targum explains it, one that has been accounted faithful, and is found a thief; for, otherwise, those who have lost their character, and are notorious for their thefts and robberies, are not ashamed when they are found out, taken, and convicted:

so is the house of Israel ashamed: of their idolatry, or ought to be; or “shall be”, as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it; though not now, yet hereafter, sooner or later:

they, their kings, their princes, and their priests and their prophets; all being guilty; kings setting ill examples, and the people following them; the priests being priests of Baal, and the prophets false ones.

Ver. 27. *Saying to a stock*, etc.] “To a tree”^{f54}; to a piece of wood; that is, to an image made of it; so the Targum,

“they say to an image of wood;”

what follows:

thou art my father; ascribing that to the idol which belongs to God, who was their Father that made them, and upheld them, was the author of their beings, and the God of their mercies:

and to a stone; an image of stone:

thou hast brought me forth: into being; affirming it to be his former and maker; so the Targum,

“to that which is made of stone, thou hast created me:”

for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face; they turned their faces to images of wood and stone, and worshipped them; and they turned their backs upon the Lord, his worship and ordinances, and apostatized from him; which the Targum thus expresses,

“for they turned their backs on my worship, and did not put my fear before their faces:”

but in the time of their trouble; when any calamity befalls them, as famine, pestilence, sword, captivity, and the like:

they will say, arise, and save us; not that they will say so to their idols, but they will say so to the true God; for notwithstanding they worshipped idols in time of prosperity, forgetting God their Saviour; yet in adversity they are brought to their senses, and find that none but God can save them, and therefore apply to him; to which agrees the Targum,

“and in the time that evil comes upon them, they deny their idols, and confess before me, and say, have mercy on us, and save us.”

Ver. 28. *But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee?* etc.] This is, or would be, the Lord’s answer to them, what is become of your gods? why do not you apply to them for help in time of trouble? the gods that you have chosen for yourselves and worshipped; the gods, not that made you, but whom you yourselves have made:

let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble; call upon them to arise, those statues of wood and stone, those lifeless and senseless images; let them rise off their seats, and move out of their places, if they can, and see whether they can save in a time of trouble and distress; for there is enough of them, if numbers will do:

for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah; in imitation of the Heathens, who had not only in every country, but in every city and town, a different god, the patron and tutelar deity of the place; (see ^{<177>}2 Kings 17:29-31). The Septuagint and Arabic versions “add,

according to the number of the ways, or streets, of Jerusalem”, they sacrificed to Baal; (see ²⁴¹¹³Jeremiah 11:13).

Ver. 29. *Wherefore will ye plead with me?* etc.] Strive and contend, chide, murmur, and complain, when evil came upon them, as if the Lord dealt hardly with them, and as if they had never sinned against him; when their case would not bear to be brought into judgment and examined openly; what would they get by that but shame and disgrace?

ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord; high and low, rich and poor, great and small; men of all ranks, degrees, and character; kings, priests and prophets; and therefore ought not to contend with God, and charge him with injustice or unkindness, but themselves with folly and wickedness.

Ver. 30. *In vain have I smitten your children,* etc.] Or, “for vanity”,^{f55}; for vain speaking, for making vain oaths and vows; so it is explained in the Talmud^{f56}; but the sense is, that the rod of chastisement was used in vain; the afflictions that came upon them had no effect on them to amend and reform them; they were never the better for them:

they received no correction; or instruction by them; (see ²⁴¹¹³Jeremiah 5:3),

your own sword hath devoured your prophets; as Isaiah, Zechariah, and Uriah, who were sent to them to reprove and correct them, but they were so far from receiving their correction, that they put them to death; though Kimchi mentions it as the sense of his father, and which he approves of, that this is to be understood, not of the true prophets of the Lord, but of false prophets; wherefore it is said, “your prophets”; and they had no prophets but false prophets, whose prophecy was the cause of the destruction of souls, and this brought ruin upon the prophets themselves; and this sense of the words Jerom gives into; it follows:

like a destroying lion; that is, the sword of the Lord, according to the latter sense; the judgments of God, by which the people fall, and their false prophets with them, were like a lion that destroys and devours all that come near it. The Septuagint and Arabic versions add,

and ye were not afraid; which confirms what was before said, that chastisement and correction were in vain.

Ver. 31. *O generation, see ye the word of the Lord*, etc.] Take notice of it, consider it; or, hear it, as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions. Jarchi and Kimchi think^{f57} the pot of manna was brought out, and shown them, to be looked at by them, for the conviction of them, and confirmation of what follows:

have I been a wilderness unto Israel? no: the Israelites were plentifully supplied by him when in the wilderness, and since they were brought into a land flowing with milk and honey; so that they stood in need of nothing; they had a constant supply of all good things:

or a land of darkness? of misery, distress, and poverty; where no light of joy, comfort, and prosperity, is; a land that never sees the light, or enjoys the benefit of the sun, and so is barren and unfruitful; “a land of thorns”, as the Septuagint version; or, “a desert and uncultivated land”, as the Targum, and Syriac and Arabic versions. It may be rendered, “a land of the darkness of God”^{f58}; that is, of the greatest darkness, of thick and gross darkness, alluding to that in Egypt; as the flame of God, and mountains of God, (²⁰⁸⁶Song of Solomon 8:6 ¹⁹⁸⁶Psalms 36:6), as Ben Melech and Kimchi observe:

wherefore say my people, we are lords; and can reign without thee; or we have kings and princes, and have no need of thee, so Kimchi; but the word used seems to have another meaning, and to require another sense. The Targum is, “we are removed”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “we have gone back”; to which agrees the Jewish Midrash^{f59}, mentioned by Jarchi, and confirmed with a passage out of the Misna^{f60}, “we are separated from thee”; we have departed from thee, turned our backs on thee, have forsaken thee, and left thy ways and worship; and to do so was very ungrateful, when the Lord had so richly supplied them, that they had not lacked any good thing; and this sense agrees with what follows:

we will come no more unto thee? some render it, “we have determined”^{f61}; as having the same sense with the Arabic word, which signifies to “will” or determine anything; and then the meaning is, we are determined, we are resolved to come no more to thee, to attend thy worship and service any more; and so the Targum,

“we will not return any more to thy worship.”

Ver. 32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments*, etc.] Which she has provided for her wedding day, and is then to wear, and which may be the next; such

as ear rings, bracelets, and jewels, which are never out of her mind, and can scarce sleep for thinking of them, how richly she shall be adorned with them; wherefore it follows:

or a bride her attire? or, “her bindings”^{f62}; her knots about her head or breast. The word is rendered “head bands” in (^{אֲבָרֹתַי} Isaiah 3:20) and here, by the Septuagint version, “her stomacher”; set with sparkling precious stones; (see ^{אֲבָרֹתַי} Isaiah 61:10), these things her heart being set upon, and priding herself with, cannot be forgotten by her, at least not long:

yet, my people have forgotten me days without number; which shows great stupidity and ingratitude; the Lord not being so much to them, from whom they had received so many favours, as the ornaments of a maid, and the attire of a bride, are to them.

Ver. 33. *Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love?* etc.] To seek the love, and gain the affections and esteem, of the idolatrous nations; as a lascivious woman dresses herself out in the best manner to excite the lust and move the affections of her lovers; and as Jezebel, who painted her face, and tired her head, (^{אֲבָרֹתַי} 2 Kings 9:30) or dressed it in the best manner, where the same word is used as here; so the Targum,

“why dost thou make thy way beautiful, to procure loves (or lovers) to be joined to the people?”

or the sense is, why art thou so diligent and industrious to make thy way, which is exceeding bad, look a good one, by sacrifices and ceremonies, oblations and ablutions, in order to seek and obtain my love and favour, which is all in vain? it is not to be gained by such methods:

therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways; the wicked idolatrous nations, to whom they joined themselves; these they taught their ways of sacrificing, their rites, ceremonies, and superstitions; or, as Jarchi interprets it, thou hast taught thyself the worst way among them all; that is, thou hast used thyself to it: there is a double reading in this clause. The Cetib, or writing, is **yt dml**, “I have taught”; as if they were the words of God, saying, “wherefore I have taught”; or, “will teach”; that is, by punishing thee;

that thy ways are evil; or, as Kimchi explains it,

“I have taught thee by thy ways that they are evil, and evil shall come unto thee because of them.”

The Keri, or reading, is **tdml** , “thou hast taught”; which is confirmed by the Targum; and is followed by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and other versions. It is by some rendered, “seeing thou hast taught others thy evil ways”^{f63}; not content to sin themselves, but taught others to do so, and yet would be thought good.

Ver. 34. *Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents*, etc.] Either of the innocent infants of poor persons, who were sacrificed to Moloch; or of the poor prophets of the Lord, whom they slew, because they faithfully reprov'd them for their sins; and the blood of those being found in their skirts is expressive of the publicness and notoriety of their sin, and also of the large quantity of blood shed, inasmuch as the skirts of their garments were filled with it, as if they had trod and walked in blood; (see ^{231B} Isaiah 63:3).

I have not found it by secret search; or, “by digging”^{f64}; there was no need to dig for it; it lay above ground; it was upon their skirts, public enough: or, “in ditches”, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin^{f65} versions; as when murders are privately and secretly committed; but these were done openly. Some read the words, “thou didst not find them with a digging instrument”^{f66}; so Jarchi interprets the words,

“you did not find them with a digging instrument, or in digging, when you slew them;”

you did not find them prepared as thieves to break up your houses, or digging down your walls, and breaking through into your houses, then you would have been justified by the law in slaying them, (^{127D} Exodus 22:2), but this was not the case:

but upon all these; upon all their skirts, and not in ditches, or under ground; or, “for all these”; thou hast so done; not for their sins, for theft, or any other; but for their faithful reproofs and rebukes; so Jarchi, for all these words with which they reprov'd thee; or for all these, the idols on whose account, in the worship of them, the blood of the innocents was shed.

Ver. 35. *Yet thou sayest, because I am innocent*, etc.] Or, “that I am innocent”; though guilty of such flagrant and notorious crimes, acting like

the adulterous woman, (^{אמ}Proverbs 30:20) to whom the Jews are all along compared in this chapter; which shows the hardness of their hearts, and their impudence in sinning:

surely his anger shall turn from me; the anger of God, since innocent; or, “let his anger be turned from me”, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; pleading for the removing of judgments upon the foot of innocency, which is pretended:

behold, I will plead with thee; enter into judgment with thee, and examine the case closely and thoroughly:

because thou sayest, I have not sinned; it would have been much better to have acknowledged sin, and pleaded for mercy, than to insist upon innocence, when the proof was so evident; nothing can be got by entering into judgment with God, upon such a foundation; and to sin, and deny it, is an aggravation of it: the denial of sin is a double sin, as the wise man says, whom Kimchi cites.

Ver. 36. *Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?* etc.] Or, “by changing thy way”^{if67}; sometimes going one way, and sometimes another; sometimes to Egypt, and then to Assyria; seeking sometimes to the one for help, and sometimes to the other; at one time serving the gods of the one, in order to curry favour with them, and then the gods of the other, like a lascivious woman that gads about from place to place to increase her lovers, and satisfy her lust. The Vulgate Latin version is, “how exceeding vile art thou become, changing thy ways”; and so Jarchi says, the word **yl zt** signifies “contempt”, or “vileness”: deriving it from **l wz**, or **l l z**, to be “vile” or “contemptible”; and to this sense are the Septuagint and Arabic versions; but Kimchi derives it from **l za**, to go; to which our version and others agree:

thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt; as they were in the times of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, when Pharaohnecho king of Egypt took the former, and put him in bands, and carried him into Egypt; and set the latter upon the throne, and took tribute of him, for which the land was taxed, (^{אמ}2 Kings 23:33-35)

as thou wast ashamed of Assyria; in the times of Ahaz, who sent to the king of Assyria for help, when Judah was smitten by the Edomites, and

invaded by the Philistines; but when he came to him, he distressed him, and strengthened and helped him not, (~~44316~~2 Chronicles 28:16-21).

Ver. 37. *Yea, thou shalt go forth from him*, etc.] From the Egyptian, without any help, and with shame; or, “from this”^{f68}; that is, from this place, from Jerusalem, and from the land of Judea, into captivity; notwithstanding all the promised and expected help from Egypt, (~~12407~~2 Kings 24:7,10):

and thine hands upon thine head; plucking and disheveling the hair, as women in distress; so Tamar, when abused by her brother, laid her hand on her head, and went out crying, (~~10139~~2 Samuel 13:19):

for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences; those in whom they trusted, as the Egyptians; so that they should be of no service to them; or them, because of their trust and confidence in men, when it ought to have been placed above in himself:

and thou shalt not prosper in them; or because of them, as Kimchi; but shalt go into captivity.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 3

In this chapter the sins of the people of Israel and Judah are exposed; particularly their idolatry, signified by playing the harlot; which is aggravated by the number of lovers or idols they had worshipped; by the many places where they had committed it; by their impudence in doing it; and by the bad consequence of it, showers of rain being withheld from them on that account, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:1-3) and the grace of God towards them is abundantly declared by frequent calls unto them to repent and turn to him, and this after putting them away, which is not usual, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:1,8), the Lord expostulates with them, and puts words into their mouths, what they should say to him, even after they had spoken and done as evil things as they could, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:4,5) the sin of Judah is particularly aggravated, by having seen what Israel, or the ten tribes, had done; their impenitence, notwithstanding the divine call; their going into captivity for their sin; and yet all this had no effect on Judah, to restrain them from the like sins, and to engage them to repentance; so that, of the two, the men of Judah were most to blame, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:6-11), wherefore the prophet is bid to go towards the north, where Babylon lay, and Israel were carried captive, and call upon them to return to the Lord, and proclaim his grace and mercy to them, only insisting upon an acknowledgment of their sins, their idolatry and disobedience, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:12,13) and next the call to them to return is repeated; to which they are encouraged by observing the relations, they stood in to him, which continued, by promising to bring a remnant of them to Zion, and give them pastors approved of by him, and profitable to them, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:14,15) which respect Gospel times, and the latter day, when the ceremonial law would be abrogated, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:16), the Gentiles called, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:17) and an entire agreement between Judah and Israel, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:18) and yet the Lord expresses a concern how he should reckon them as his children, and treat them as such, who had behaved so ill towards him; but his grace gets over the difficulties; finds out a way, by putting it into their mouths to call him their Father, and not turn away from him, (^{2410E}Jeremiah 3:19) and this, notwithstanding their great treachery to him, perversion of their ways, and forgetfulness of the

Lord, (^{248D}Jeremiah 3:20,21), and they are again exhorted to repent and turn, with a promise of healing their backslidings, which has such an effect upon them, as to engage them to come to him, (^{248D}Jeremiah 3:22) acknowledging their salvation is only in him, and not in their idols; and that sin was the cause of all their calamities; and that shame and confusion of face belonged unto them on that account, (^{248D}Jeremiah 3:23-25).

Ver. 1. *They say, if a man put away his wife*, etc.] Or, “saying”^{f69}; wherefore some connect those words with the last verse of the preceding chapter, as if they were a continuation of what the Lord had been there saying, that he would reject their confidences; so Kimchi; but they seem rather to begin a new section, or a paragraph, with what were commonly said among men, or in the law, and as the sense of that; that if a man divorced his wife upon any occasion,

and she go from him; departs from his house, and is separated from bed and board with him:

and become another man’s, be married to another, as she might according to the law:

shall he return unto her again? take her to be his wife again; her latter husband not liking her, or being dead? no, he will not; he might not according to the law in (^{482D}Deuteronomy 24:4) and if there was no law respecting this, it can hardly be thought that he would, it being so contrary to nature, and to the order of civil society:

shall not that land be greatly polluted? either Judea, or any other, where such usages should obtain; for this, according to the law, was causing the land to sin, filling it with it, and making it liable to punishment for it; this being an abomination before the Lord. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it, “shall not that woman be defiled?” she is so by the latter husband; and that is a reason why she is not to be received by the former again, (^{482D}Deuteronomy 24:4):

but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; or served many idols; the number of their gods having been according to the number of their cities, (^{242D}Jeremiah 2:28):

yet return again to me, saith the Lord; by repentance, and doing their first works, worshipping and serving him as formerly; so the Targum,

“return now from this time to my worship, saith the Lord.”

The Vulgate Latin version adds, “and I will receive thee”; this is an instance of great grace in the Lord, and which is not to be found among men.

Ver. 2. *Lift up thine eyes unto the high places*, etc.] Where idols were set and worshipped; either places naturally high, as hills and mountains, which were chosen for this service; or high places, artificially made and thrown up for this purpose; (see ^{<1270>}2 Kings 17:9,10,11 21:3 23:5 ^{<1120>}Jeremiah 2:20), Jarchi interprets the word μυρσ of “rivulets of water”; and so the Targum, where also idolatry was committed:

and see where thou hast not been lien with; see if there is a hill or mountain, or any high place, where thou hast not committed idolatry; the thing was so notorious, and the facts and instances so many, there was no denying it; every hill and mountain witnessed to their idolatry; to which agrees the Targum,

“see where thou hast not joined thyself to worship idols:”

in the ways hast thou sat for them; for the idolaters, waiting for them, to join with them in their idolatries; as harlots used to sit by the wayside to meet with their lovers, to be picked up by them, or to offer themselves to them as prostitutes, (^{<0384>}Genesis 38:14,15) which shows that these people were not drawn into idolatry by the temptations and solicitations of others: but they put themselves in the way of it, and solicited it, and others to join with them in it:

as the Arabian in the wilderness; who dwelt in tents in the wilderness, and sat by the wayside to trade with those that passed by; or else lay in wait in desert and by places to rob all that passed by them; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it,

in the ways thou didst sit, expecting them as a thief in the wilderness; the Arabians being noted for thieves and robbers. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it,

as a crow, or raven, of the desert; the same word signifying a “raven” and an “Arabian”: (see ^{<1170>}1 Kings 17:4):

and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness; the land of Judea, where idolatry was so openly and frequently

committed, which brought a load of guilt upon it, and exposed it to the wrath and judgments of God; so the Targum,

“thou hast made the land guilty with thine idols and with thy wickedness.”

Ver. 3. *Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain,* etc.] There were two seasons of the year when rain in common fell upon the land of Israel, called the former and the latter rain, and both are designed here. The former by **מַבְּרֵר**, “showers”, so called from the multitude of drops in them: these showers, or the former rain, used to fall in the month Marchesvan, which answers to part of our October; it was in autumn, at the fall of the year, at seedtime, when great quantity of rain usually fell, to prepare the earth for sowing, and watering the seed sown; whence that month was sometimes called Bul, as Kimchi observes, from “mabbul”, a flood. The latter rain fell in Nisan, which answers to our March; it was in the spring, a little before harvest, which swelled the grain, made the skin the thinner, and the flower the finer. This is called **צְוָרִי מ**: now, because of the idolatry of these people, those rains were withheld from them, as they were in the times of Ahab, (**1 Kings 17:1**), which brought a famine upon them; and was a manifest token of the divine displeasure, and what was threatened them in case they sinned against the Lord, (**Deuteronomy 28:23,24**):

and thou hadst a whore's forehead; was impudent and unconcerned, repented not of sin, or blushed for it, though such judgments were upon them; hence the Rabbins^{f70} say rains are not withheld but for impudence, according, to this Scripture:

thou refusedst to be ashamed; to be made ashamed by the admonitions of the prophets, or by the judgments of God; (see **Jeremiah 5:3**).

Ver. 4. *Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me,* etc.] These words are either a confirmation and proof of that impudence with which these people are charged; for had they not been impudent, or had not a forehead like a whorish woman; or were they truly ashamed, they would have cried to the Lord henceforward; called upon him; claimed their relation to him; and owned his favours in time past: or, if they had not been impudent, they would not have dared from this time to have called God their Father and their guide, when they had so wickedly sinned against him; so that this is a charge of hypocrisy and deceit, calling God their Father and guide, when

they were at the same time worshipping idols: or rather they are expressive of the wondrous grace and goodness of God towards this people, that had so highly offended him, yet he expostulates with them, puts words into their mouths to return unto him with, saying:

my father; I have sinned against thee, and am not worthy of the relation, yet receive me as a returning prodigal:

thou art the guide of my youth; or, “*hast been*”: I acknowledge the favours I have received in time past, which is an aggravation of my sin; reject me not, but receive me graciously into thy favour; (see ^{334D}Hosea 14:2), so the Targum interprets the words as a prayer,

“wilt thou not from this time pray before me, saying, thou art my Lord, my Redeemer, which art of old?”

or else they point to them their duty, what they ought to do from henceforward; that seeing the Lord had withheld from them the former and latter rain for their idolatry, it became them to return to him by repentance; and to call upon him, who had been their Father and their guide in time past, to have mercy on them, and avert his judgments from them.

Ver. 5. *Will he reserve his anger for ever?* etc.] These words may be considered as a continuation of the speech put into their mouths to make to the Lord and plead with him, as well as what follows:

will he keep it to the end? that is, his anger: no; he will not: this is not according to the nature of God; he retains not his anger for ever, (^{337B}Micah 7:18), though, according to some versions, this is to be understood of the sins of these people being reserved and kept forever, as their impudence and obstinacy; so the Syriac and Arabic versions; and to which agrees the Targum,

“is it possible that thy sins should be kept for thee for ever, or the stroke (of punishment) be strengthened upon thee to the end?”

so Kimchi,

“says the prophet, if thou dost this (call him my father, etc.) will God reserve thine iniquity for thee for ever, or keep thy sin unto the end? he will not do so; but when thou returnest unto him, he will return unto thee, and do thee good; but thou hast not done so.”

The sense is much the same:

behold, thou hast spoken, and done evil things as thou couldst; which were enough to cause the Lord to reserve and keep his anger for ever. There is a double reading here; the Cetib, or writing, is **ytrbd**, “I have spoken”; the prophet had spoken to them to return; or the Lord by the prophet had spoken to them, and put the above words into their mouths, and told them what they should say when they returned to the Lord; “but thou hast done evil things”^{f71}; notwithstanding such declarations of grace, and dost continue to do them:

and thou hast prevailed^{f72}; as the last clause may be rendered; that I cannot turn away mine anger from thee, but must reserve it, and keep it for ever. The Keri, or reading, is **trbd**, “thou hast spoken”; thou hast said thou wilt do evil things, and thou hast done them as thou hast said, and hast prevailed; thou hast sinned with all thy might and main, and hast spoken and done as evil things as possibly could be done. Some choose to render the words thus, “if thou hadst spoken”; the words that were put into their mouths before mentioned; “though thou hast done evil things, yet thou wouldest have prevailed”^{f73}; that is, with God, to have turned away his anger from thee.

Ver. 6. *The Lord said also unto me, in the days of Josiah the king, etc.*] For in his time Jeremiah began to prophesy, even in the thirteenth year of his reign, (^{240D}Jeremiah 1:2):

hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? the ten tribes; that is, hast thou not heard? or dost thou not know the idolatry of the ten tribes, which was the cause of their captivity? as Kimchi explains it; for the facts, or the idolatrous actions of the ten tribes, were not done in Josiah’s and Jeremiah’s time; for they were carried captive in the sixth year of Hezekiah, ninety years or more before Jeremiah began to prophesy, and their idolatry was before their captivity, and therefore could not be properly seen by him; only it had been heard of by him, it was known by him, it was notorious enough, being well attested:

she is gone upon every high mountain, and under every green tree; that is, she did so, when in her own land, before she was carried captive, as Jarchi observes; for this respects not what she did in Josiah’s and Jeremiah’s time, or when in captivity, but before, which was the reason of it:

and there hath played the harlot: or committed idolatry, which was usually done in such places; so the Targum,

“and worshipped idols of wood.”

Ver. 7. *And I said, after she had done these things*, etc.] All these idolatries, in the several places mentioned, after she had repeated them over and over; the Lord sent to them by the Prophets Hosea, Amos, Micah, and others, who prophesied before the captivity of the ten tribes, and entreated them, saying,

turn unto me: to my worship, as the Targum; from their idols, to him the living God; they were not without admonitions, exhortations, and declarations of grace, and so were without excuse:

but she returned not; to fear and serve the Lord, but remained in idolatry, obstinate and inflexible:

and her treacherous sister Judah saw it; her treachery and breach of covenant, as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions add, for explanation sake; Judah, or the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and who were allied to the ten tribes by birth and by religion, and equally treacherous to God, the husband of them both, saw all the idolatry of Israel, and the aggravations of it, and what followed upon it, namely, their captivity in Babylon, yet did not learn and take warning hereby.

Ver. 8. *And I saw, when for all the causes, whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery*, etc.] Not only Judah saw, but God, who sees all things, saw the idolatry of the ten tribes which apostatized from him, and all the springs, causes, reasons, and occasions of it, and its consequences; and also the treachery, hardness, and idolatry of Judah:

I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; as men did, when they put away their wives, as they might lawfully do in case of adultery; and here being that which answered to it, spiritual adultery or idolatry, the Lord, who was married to this people, put them away from him, and caused them to be carried captive out of their own land into another, (²2 Kings 17:6) which is meant by the bill of divorce; so the Targum,

“I caused them to go into captivity, as those that give a bill of divorce (to their wives) and dismiss them:”

yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not; to commit idolatry and offend the Lord, nor stood in awe of his righteous judgments; had no reverence of God, nor fear of punishment; so hardened and daring was she: but went and played the harlot; committed idolatry, as the ten tribes did, taking no warning by what befell them.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass, through the lightness of her whoredom*, etc.] Or the “swiftness”¹⁷⁴ of it; when it was once set on foot, it ran through the land presently one taking it from and following the example of another; or it became a light thing with her to commit idolatry; it was looked upon as a small thing, a trivial offence at most: so the Targum,

“it came to pass that her idols were light in her eyes;”

not lightly esteemed of, but it was a light thing to commit idolatry with them; interpreting the word as the Masora, which it follows: and to the same sense the Septuagint version, “her fornication was for nothing”; it stood for nothing, it was not reckoned as a sin: the Arabic version is, “her fornication was with nothing”; with an idol, which is nothing in the world, (~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 8:4), some choose to render it, “because of the voice or fame of her whoredom”¹⁷⁵, or idolatry; it sounded forth, and the fame, or rather infamy of it, went out through the whole land: wherefore it follows,

that she defiled the land; polluted it with sin, involved it in guilt, and exposed it to punishment:

and committed adultery with stones and with stocks; that is, with images made of stone and wood, which they served and worshipped as gods; and is the adultery or idolatry they are charged with, and by which the land was defiled. The Targum is,

“she erred or committed idolatry with the worshippers of stone and wood.”

This, by what follows, seems to be understood not of Judah, but of Israel.

Ver. 10. *And yet for all this*, etc.] Though the two tribes saw the lightness and filthiness of the sin Israel was guilty of, and how the land was defiled with it, the stupidity of it, and the punishment inflicted on account of it:

her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord; there was a show of reformation in Josiah’s time, but it was but a show; there was no true, hearty cordial

repentance for the sin of idolatry, only a feigned one; there was an outward removal of it, and reformation from it, but inwardly the desires of the heart were to it; the good king, with some few others, were hearty in it, but the greater part played the hypocrite; the following reigns proved the truth of this.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto me*, etc.] To the Prophet Jeremiah, as in (^{<24186>}Jeremiah 3:6) and at or about the same time:

the backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah; that is, was comparatively more righteous; of the two she appeared the most righteous; though neither of them could vindicate their conduct, or justify themselves before God; (see ^{<21814>}Luke 18:14). Judah was most to blame, because that after Israel committed idolatry, and was carried captive, she took no warning by it, but fell into the same sin; and in Manasseh's time committed greater idolatries, and more wickedness, than ever Israel did; and more than even the Amorites themselves, and other Heathen nations, had done, (^{<12116>}2 Kings 21:6-11) and though a reformation was made in Josiah's time, it was only feignedly, it was not cordial and hearty; and therefore she is all along here charged with perfidy and treachery.

Ver. 12. *Go and proclaim these words towards the north*, etc.] With his face thitherwards, towards Babylon, which lay north of Judea, and was the metropolis of Assyria, where the ten tribes were carried captive; and though they were dispersed in the cities of Media and Persia, which lay eastward, yet Babylon being the head of the empire, respect is had to that; not that the prophet was to go thither to them, or to prophesy in the land of the north, as the Targum paraphrases the words: for the word "go", as Jarchi observes, is only expressive of a command on the part of God; and of readiness, as Kimchi says, on the part of the prophet to obey, but not of local motion; he was to read these words, as the latter of these suggests, in Jerusalem, before the elders of Judah, with a respect to Israel, as if they were before him; and the design of this was to show that the Lord was gracious and merciful, and ready to receive backsliders; and to stimulate Judah to repentance, and to turn unto the Lord:

and say, return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord not return from the land of their captivity, though that they shall return in the last day Kimchi thinks is here intimated; and Jarchi says some of them did return, in the

eighteenth year of Josiah; but return from their idols to the living God: and for their encouragement it is added,

and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; or, “my face”^{f76}; by frowning upon them, expressing displicency with them, and anger towards them; the meaning is, that he would not continue his resentments, or cause his anger to fall upon them any more, or at least not for ever, as Kimchi interprets it; he had caused his anger to fall upon them like a mighty storm of rain, by carrying them captive; but now he intimates, should they repent and return, he would remove his anger from them, and not cause it to return any more:

for I am merciful, saith the Lord; so he proclaimed himself before Moses, (^{<4346>}Exodus 34:6) and of this they had had often instances and proofs:

and I will not keep anger for ever; or, “thy sins”, as the Targum; I will not mark and observe them, or reserve them for punishment, but will mercifully forgive them; (See Gill on “^{<4185>}Jeremiah 3:5”).

Ver. 13. *Only acknowledge thine iniquity*, etc.] Or, “know”^{f77} it; unless a man knows his sin, and is convicted of it, he will never repent of it, or turn from it; and when he is made sensible of it, and sorry for it, he ought to acknowledge and confess it before God, against whom he has sinned; this is what is insisted upon, and all that is insisted upon; and it is the least that can be done, and is what every sensible sinner will do, who upon it may expect the discovery of pardoning grace and mercy, (^{<4315>}Psalms 32:5 51:3,4 ^{<4183>}Proverbs 28:13 ^{<4100>}1 John 1:9):

that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God; against his law, his declared mind and will, and notwithstanding he is the Lord thy God; against a God of love, grace, and mercy, who had loaded them with his benefits, and followed them with his goodness; all which aggravates the sin they had been guilty of:

and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree; a phrase expressive of whoredom; it is an euphemism, the same with μυλ gr qwçyp, as Jarchi observes, “the opening of the feet”, to everyone that passes by, to be lain with, (^{<4365>}Ezekiel 16:25) and is to be understood of the multiplied idolatries of Israel; and that as harlots run about here and there, and prostitute themselves to whomsoever they meet with, so they worshipped the strange gods of the Heathens everywhere, in all their cities,

upon every mountain and hill, and under every green tree; (see ⁽²¹⁷⁾Jeremiah 2:20,28) so the Targum,

“and thou hast corrupted thy way, thou hast joined thyself to the people that worship idols under every green tree:”

and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord: the voice of his command in the law, which forbids idolatry; and his voice by his prophets, which reprov'd them for it, and exhorted them to repentance; but they regarded neither.

Ver. 14. *Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord,* etc.] All of them were children by national adoption, and some by special grace, and yet “backsliders”, O monstrous ingratitude! “backsliders”, and yet “children”, still the relation continues, O marvellous grace! God’s own children may backslide, and often do; either in heart, when love waxes cold, faith declines, zeal wanting; when they get into a carnal sleepy frame of spirit, and have not that quick sense of sin, and of duty, as heretofore: or in practice, when private prayer is restrained; public worship is neglected; get into bad company, and fall into gross sins; all which is owing to the prevalence of indwelling sin, the force of Satan’s temptations, and the enticing snares of the world; but God will not leave them, he calls unto them again and again to turn unto him by repentance, and to doing their first works; which calls, at length, through powerful grace, become effectual; (see ⁽²¹⁸⁾Jeremiah 3:22) and the arguments used to engage to it follow,

for I am married unto you; in a civil sense as a nation, (⁽²¹⁹⁾Jeremiah 31:32), and in a spiritual sense to a remnant of them; Christ is the bridegroom, the church is the bride, which he has secretly betrothed to himself in eternity; openly in time, at the conversion of everyone of them; and will more publicly at the last day, when all are gathered in and prepared for him. This relation, as it is a very near one, so it is very astonishing, considering the disparity between the two parties, and it always continues; love, the bond of it, never alters; the covenant, in which this transaction is carried on, is ever sure; and Christ always behaves agreeably to it; wherefore it is base ingratitude to backslide; and reason there is sufficient why his backsliding spouse should return to him. The Septuagint version is, “because I will rule over you.” agreeable to which is Jarchi’s note,

“because I am your Lord, and it is not for my glory, (or honour) to leave you in the hand of enemies.”

Kimchi’s father interprets the word used by **ytxq**, “I loath you”, or I am weary of you; the reverse of which is the Targum,

“for I am well pleased with you;”

and so the Syriac version, “I delight in you”; which carries in it a much more engaging argument to return, and agrees with what follows:

and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family: or tribe, or country; for sometimes a whole country is called a family, as in (²⁰¹⁵Jeremiah 1:15 ³¹⁴⁷Zechariah 14:17,18) and here it must design more than a city; for otherwise there are many families in a city; the meaning is, according to Kimchi, that though there may be but one Jew in a city of the Gentiles, or two only in a nation, the Lord would take them from thence; and, according to others, that though one or two, or a few, here and there one of the backsliders, should return to him by true repentance, he would receive them graciously; the smallness of their number would be no objection to him; which is a sense not to be despised: but the phrase seems to denote the distinguishing grace of God to his people; which appears in the choice of them in his Son; the redemption of them by him; and the sanctification of them by his Spirit; and very few are the objects of his grace, as it were one of a city, and two of a tribe; however, they shall none of them be lost, notwithstanding their backslidings, to which they are bent: for it is added,

and I will bring you to Zion; to the church of God here, a Gospel church state, whither to come is the great privilege of the saints, (³¹²²Hebrews 12:22) and to the Zion above, the heavenly state, where all the chosen and ransomed, and sanctified ones, shall come, with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, (²³⁵⁰Isaiah 35:10) and all as the fruit of distinguishing and efficacious grace.

Ver. 15. *And I will give you pastors according to mine heart,* etc.] Which is to be understood not of political rulers and governors, but ministers of the word; who are “pastors” or “shepherds” under Christ the great Shepherd, and are “gifts” of his to the churches, and “according to his heart”; or “conformable to his mind”, as the Arabic version; whom he calls, qualifies, puts into the ministry, and sends forth; whom he holds in his right

hand, and keeps as the apple of his eye; who do his will, as the Targum, and feed men according to his heart: and as this prophecy belongs to Gospel times, as appears both by what goes before and by what follows, the apostles of Christ and first ministers of the Gospel are chiefly designed; though it might have some accomplishment in Nehemiah and Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, at and after the Jews return from Babylon; but a more complete one in the times mentioned: so Kimchi says, these are they that shall be with the King Messiah, according to (^{<3885>}Micah 5:5):

which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding; with things worthy to be known and understood; with the solid and substantial truths of the Gospel, and by faithfully administering the ordinances of it; and in all directing to Christ the bread of life: or, “shall rule you”^{>f78} not in an arbitrary way, according to their own wills, but according to the laws of Christ: these words, with knowledge and understanding, may either intend the matter with which these pastors should feed the church; which is what tends to spiritual knowledge and understanding, and an increase thereof; and which is blessed of God to such a purpose, though they themselves cannot give it: or else the manner in which they should feed or rule; that is, wisely and “prudently”, as the Arabic version renders it: they feed wisely and prudently when they rightly divide the word of truth, and give to every one their portion of meat in due season; and feed them in proportion to their age and capacity, give milk to babes, and meat to strong men: and they rule with wisdom and prudence when they govern according to the laws of Christ, and take care that they are put in execution; and do all things decently and in order; and, as David, feed the flock according to the integrity of their hearts, and guide them by the skilfulness of their hands, (^{<4982>}Psalms 78:72).

Ver. 16. *And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land*, etc.] That is, when the number of the disciples and followers of Christ, and true believers in him, shall be multiplied and increased in the land of Judea, and in the Gentile world also, under the ministry of the above said pastors, apostles, and ministers of the Gospel, who should be succeeded everywhere, as they were; (see ^{<440E>}Acts 6:1,2,7):

in those days, saith the Lord of hosts, they shall say no more, the ark of the covenant of the Lord; because the antitype of it would be come, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word that is made flesh and dwelt among men; and in whom the Shechinah, or divine Majesty, dwells in a more glorious

manner than it did over the ark, for in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and the ark may be put for the whole ceremonial law, which was abolished at the death of Christ, and to be used and spoken of no more; and whereas it was, for a good while after the abrogation of it, a matter of debate and contention, and was not wholly under the church's feet until about the times of Constantine, when there was a great multiplication and increase of Christians throughout the Roman empire, the prophecy may be thought to belong to those times, at least there was then a greater accomplishment of it; (see ~~611~~ Revelation 12:1):

neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it; as it should not be spoken of, so it should not be thought of any more than if it had never been:

neither shall they visit it; to inquire of the Lord, before it, about what they wanted to be informed of, as they used to do, (~~612~~ Judges 20:23,27,28):

neither shall that be done any more; or, “made any more”^{f79} the Jews^{f80} say, the ark was wanting in the second temple, and was never afterwards remade: all the expressions denote the utter abolition of legal rites and ceremonies, never to be revived more. The Targum paraphrases the last clause,

“neither shall they make war with it any more;”

and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it as if it was a prophecy of such a time of profound peace, that there would be no need of bringing out the ark as formerly; this use of it would be quite forgotten; but this was not the principal use of the ark, and very rarely was it ever used in this way.

Ver. 17. *At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord*, etc.] That is, the Gospel church, the heavenly Jerusalem, the Jerusalem above, that is free, and the mother of us all; which is Christ's kingdom, where he has his throne and subjects, and where he sits and reigns as King of saints; and where they yield a cheerful and ready subjection to him, signified by calling the church his throne:

and all the nations shall be gathered unto it: which shows that Jerusalem, literally understood, cannot be meant, but the church of Christ; to which the Gentiles, being converted, should join themselves in great numbers in all nations, as they have done; and which will be more largely accomplished and verified in the latter day, (~~211~~ Isaiah 2:2,3 60:3-5)

to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; to name his name, to trust in his name, to call upon it, and to worship him in Jerusalem, in his church, and among his people; and so the Targum,

“and all nations shall give themselves to worship in it the name of the Lord, in Jerusalem:”

neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart; for the Gospel being preached to all nations, according to Christ’s commission, by the pastors he promises, and that being blessed to the turning of the Gentiles from their idols to serve the living God, they shall no more worship the gods they chose for themselves, and their evil hearts devised.

Ver. 18. *In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel*, etc.] Which had its accomplishment when some of the ten tribes, scattered among the nations whither the Gospel came, as well as in the land of Judea, being converted under it, joined together in a Gospel church state, and walked together in all the commandments and ordinances of Christ: and it may also denote the agreement of all Christian confessors, as Judah signifies, and of all Israelites indeed, in worship, whether Jews or Gentiles; becoming through Christ members of one body, fellow heirs and partakers of the same grace, promises, and privileges; and which harmony will still be more manifest in the latter day, (²³¹¹⁰⁷ Isaiah 11:7-9,13 ²³¹⁰⁴ Jeremiah 50:4,5 ²³¹¹¹⁵ Hosea 1:11):

and they shall come together out of the land of the north; out of these northern kingdoms of ours, and other parts of Europe, where they chiefly are; this will be when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, and the Jews are converted and joined to Christian churches: the allusion is to the return of the Jews from Babylon, which lay north of Judea:

to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers; for when the Jews are converted they shall return to their own land, which God gave for an inheritance to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to their seed after them.

Ver. 19. *But I said*, etc.] Within himself, in the thoughts of his heart, when he took up a resolution concerning their conversion, open adoption, and return to their own land, as a symbol of the eternal inheritance:

how shall I put thee among the children? among the children of God, who are so by special adopting grace, which is a high and honourable privilege, greater than to be the sons and daughters of the greatest potentate on earth; who as they are high birth, being born of God, so they are brought up, and fed, and clothed as the children of the King of kings; they have great nearness to and freedom with God their Father; they are heirs with God and joint heirs with Christ, and shall ever remain in this relation. There is a secret and an open putting of the sons of men among the children of God. The secret putting of them among the children is by God the Father, when he predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Christ; when he promised in covenant he would be their Father, and they should be his sons and daughters; and as an act of his own will, secretly, in his own breast, adopted them into his family, his will to adopt being the adoption of them; hence they are called the children of God, previous to their redemption and sanctification, (^{<R013>}Hebrews 2:13,14 ^{<R115>}John 11:52 ^{<R016>}Galatians 4:6). Moreover, our Lord Jesus Christ was concerned in this affair by espousing these persons to himself in covenant, whereby his Father became their Father, and his God their God; and by assuming their nature, whereby they became his brethren, and so the children of God; and by redeeming them, whereby way is made for their actual reception of the adoption of children; when they are openly put among them in the effectual calling, in which the Holy Spirit is concerned, who regenerates them, works faith in them, and witnesses their adoption to them, from whence he is called the Spirit of adoption; regeneration and faith are the evidences of adoption, (^{<R012>}John 1:12,13 ^{<R016>}Galatians 3:26) and the Spirit the witness, (^{<R015>}Romans 8:15,16). Now, as all things were seen in one view by the Lord from eternity, as well when he secretly as openly puts them among the children, it may well be thought there were difficulties, at least seeming ones, in the way of it; or, however, such as make it wonderful and marvellous that any of the sons of Adam should be put among the children of God; seeing they that are, sinned in Adam as the rest, fell with him in his transgression into a state of condemnation and death; are corrupt in their first birth, defiled in soul and body, and cast out like the wretched infant, to the loathing of their persons; are as the children of the Ethiopians, black with original and actual sins; are children of disobedience, traitors and rebels against God, and children of wrath, even as others. And though these words may have a principal respect to the Jews, who dealt treacherously with God, in departing from his pure worship, rejecting the Messiah, and continuing in their obstinacy and infidelity, having a “loammi”

upon them, and notwithstanding shall be called the children of the living God, (~~300~~Hosea 1:9,10), yet may be applied to any of the sons and daughters of men, whether Jews or Gentiles, that are put among the children of God.

And give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of the nations? the allusion, doubtless, is to the land of Israel, which was a goodly and desirable land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and was the heritage or inheritance of the children of Israel, but not of the hosts of nations; wherefore heaven and eternal happiness is ultimately meant, the better country Christian pilgrims are seeking after, and the desired haven Christian sailors make unto: this is a “pleasant land”; pleasantly situated on high, where are great plenty of provisions, solid substance, enduring riches, the greatest liberty and choices, privileges, and the best of inhabitants and company, Father, Son, and Spirit, angels and glorified saints: this is

a goodly heritage or “inheritance”; not only a house not made with hands, a city that has foundations, but a kingdom and glory, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fades not away, reserved in the heavens: and it may be said to be

of the hosts of nations; for, though it is but one inheritance, vast numbers will share in it, and possess it; even an innumerable company of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, which are chosen, redeemed, and called out of them: and this is in, the “gift” of God; he regenerates to a lively hope of it, makes meet for it, and of his own good pleasure bestows it; and marvellous it is that he should give it to the persons before described; the putting of them among the children of God, and giving them such an inheritance, are entirely owing to his sovereign grace and goodness, which only can answer the question put, concerning these things.

And I said, thou shalt call me my father; not merely saying these words, but expressing them with affection and faith, under the witnessings of the Spirit of God; and declaring the relation by deeds, by honouring and obeying him, and being a follower of him in his ways and worship: and shalt not turn away from me; either from calling him Father, through the prevalence of unbelief; or from his service and worship, through the power of corruptions, backsliding and revolting from him, with which they are often charged in this chapter; so the Targum,

“shalt not turn from my worship.”

Ver. 20. *Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband*, etc.] Or, “her friend”^{f81}; who loves her, takes care of her, and provides for her, and goes after another man, and cohabits with him; which is a violation of the marriage covenant, and acting a base and treacherous part unto him to whom she is married

so have you dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord; who was their Father, friend, and husband; who loved them and distinguished them from all other people, by a variety of blessings and privileges; and yet they departed from his commandments and ordinances, and held the traditions of the elders, and taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and rejected the Messiah, and still continue in their disbelief of him, and hatred to him; and therefore it need not be wondered at that he should make any difficulty about their adoption and inheritance; and a marvellous thing it must be to take such persons, and put them openly among his children, and give them a right and meetness for the goodly inheritance.

Ver. 21. *A voice was heard upon the high places*, etc.] And so might be heard afar off; it shows that the repentance and confession of the Jews, when convinced and converted, will be very public, and made upon those places where they have committed their sins; (see ^{<3420>}Jeremiah 2:20 3:16), for this and the following verses declare the humiliation, repentance, and conversion of the Jews, and the manner in which they shall be brought to it, and be openly put among the children:

weeping and supplications of the children of Israel; not so much lamenting their calamities, as mourning over their sins, supplicating the pardon of them, and freely and ingenuously confessing them:

for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God; or, “because they have”^{f82}, etc. this they shall be sensible of, that they have perverted the right ways of the Lord by their traditions, and have forgotten the worship of the Lord, as the Targum paraphrases it; yea, the Lord himself, their covenant God and kind benefactor, and lightly esteemed of the true Messiah, the Rock of their salvation. The consideration of which will cause them to weep and mourn; which they will do when the Spirit of grace and supplication is poured out upon them; and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, (^{<3820>}Zechariah 12:10). Some interpret this as the cause of their calamities, and not as the subject matter of their mourning; but the latter seems best to agree with what follows,

which shows by what means they were brought to repentance, and were converted.

Ver. 22. *Return, ye backsliding children*, etc.] This is the call of the Jews to repentance in the latter day; (See Gill on “~~2434~~Jeremiah 3:14”).

and I will heal your backslidings; that is, I will forgive your sins. Sins are the diseases of the soul, and the wounds made in it; and pardoning them is healing them. So the Targum,

“I will forgive you when ye return;”

(see ~~1947B~~Psalm 103:3), this is done by the application of the blood of Christ, the only physician, and whose blood is the balm that heals every wound; and this springs from the love of God, and his free favour to his people, even the riches of his grace and abounding mercy through Christ; and is the great motive and inducement, and what gives the greatest encouragement to return unto the Lord, (~~2840E~~Hosea 14:1-4 ~~2557E~~Isaiah 55:7).

Behold, we come unto thee; the Targum represents this as what the Jews pretended always to say, and did say, in a hypocritical manner, with which they are upbraided,

“lo, at all times ye say, we return to thy worship, save us;”

and Jarchi is of opinion that these are words the prophet put into their mouths, and taught them to say, and to confess in this manner: but they are rather their own words, arising from a true sense of sin, under the influence of divine grace, and encouraged with the hope and assurance of pardon; declaring that as they were called upon to return, so they did return, and now were come to God by repentance, with confession and acknowledgment of sin, and by prayer and supplication for pardon and by the exercise of faith upon him for it; and also were come into his house to wait upon him, and worship him in his ordinances:

for thou art the Lord our God; not merely as the God of nature and providence, or in a natural way, but in a way of special grace, of which they now will have an application by the Spirit of God.

Ver. 23. *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains*, etc.] From any natural defence, by hills and mountains encompassing; or from idols worshipped on hills and mountains. So the Targum,

“truly in vain we worship upon the hills, and for no profit are we gathered upon the mountains;”

and to this purpose Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; or from the multitude of the people, the kingdoms of the world, and the nations of the earth, from whom the Jews have in vain expected salvation and deliverance:

truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel; or, “in the Word of the Lord our God”, as the Targum; in Christ, the essential Word of God, is the salvation of all the chosen people, both Jews and Gentiles; it was put into his hands by his Father, and it is wrought out by him; and it resides in him, and it is to be had in him, and in him only, (^{<4012>}Acts 4:12), who is God the Lord, and therefore was able to effect it, and to give it; and hence these repenting ones, discarding all other saviours, apply to him for it.

Ver. 24. *For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth*, etc.] That is, sin, which is the cause of shame, and of which sinners ought to be ashamed, and will be sooner or later; so the Targum renders it, “the confusion of sins”; and the Jewish writers generally interpret it of idolatry, and of the idol Baal, as Kimchi and others, called “shame”, or that “shameful thing”, (^{<3113>}Jeremiah 11:13 ^{<3090>}Hosea 9:10), this idol, because of the multitude of the sacrifices offered to it, consumed what their fathers laboured for, ever since they had known them; or, for their worshipping of this idol, such judgments came upon them as consumed all they got by hard labour; or rather it may regard their shameful sin of rejecting the Messiah, and crucifying him; which they will be ashamed of at the time of their conversion, when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and on account of which they suffer the many calamities they now do:

their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters; whatever evils have befallen them in their persons, families, and estates, they will confess are owing to sin they have committed, of which they will now be ashamed; hence it follows:

Ver. 25. *We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us*, etc.] As persons overwhelmed with a sense of sin, and so pressed with the guilt of it on their consciences, that they can neither stand up, nor look up, but throw themselves on the ground, and cover their faces, being ashamed of what they have done:

for we have sinned against the Lord our God; as by breaking the law of God, so by despising the Gospel; rejecting the ordinances of it; disbelieving the Messiah, and speaking reproachfully of him and his people:

we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day; in a long series of years, from the time that Christ was upon earth, to the day of their conversion, in the latter times of the Gospel dispensation:

and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God; the voice of his forerunner, John the Baptist, of the Messiah himself, and of his apostles, and of his ministers, since; so the Targum,

“and have not obeyed the Word of the Lord our God.”

Christ the essential Word.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 4

This chapter begins with several exhortations to repentance; first to Israel, or the ten tribes, to return to the Lord with their whole hearts, and put away their abominations, and serve him in sincerity and uprightness of soul; with promises of rest and safety to themselves; and that it would have a happy influence on the Gentiles, and issue in their conversion; who would hereupon bless themselves in the Lord, and glory in him, (^{2400E}Jeremiah 4:1,2), and next to the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, to show a concern for renewing and sanctifying grace, signified by various metaphors, lest they should be consumed with the fire of divine wrath, (^{2400B}Jeremiah 4:3,4) and then the destruction of that land and city is foretold and described, partly by what was introductory to it, and the proclamation of it, signified by blowing the trumpet, and setting up the standard, (^{2400E}Jeremiah 4:5,6,15,19,20), by an account of the destroyers, their cruelty, swiftness, and diligence, (^{2400E}Jeremiah 4:7,13,16,17), and of the destruction itself, compared to a violent wind, (^{2400E}Jeremiah 4:11,12), by the effect it should have upon the inhabitants of all sorts, high and low, (^{2400B}Jeremiah 4:8,9), and had upon the prophet himself, (^{2400E}Jeremiah 4:10,19,21), and by the cause and ground of it, the sins of the people, which they are called upon to repent of, (^{2400A}Jeremiah 4:14,17,18,22) and by a vision the prophet had of the dreadful desolation of the land, (^{2400C}Jeremiah 4:23-29) and by the vain and false hopes the people would have of their recovery, and the great anxiety and distress they would be in, (^{2400B}Jeremiah 4:30,31).

Ver. 1. *If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord,* etc.] To which they had been encouraged, and as they had promised they would, and said they did, (^{2400A}Jeremiah 3:14,22):

return unto me; with thy whole heart, and not feignedly and hypocritically, as Judah did, (^{2400E}Jeremiah 3:10). Some render the words (and the accents require they should be rendered so) “if thou wilt return to me, O Israel, saith the Lord, thou shalt return”^{f83}; that is, to thine own land, being now in captivity; or, “thou shalt rest”^{f84}; or “have rest”; so Kimchi interprets the last word; (see ^{2400E}Jeremiah 30:10), and these words may very well be

considered as the words of Christ, and as spoken by him, when he entered upon his ministry, who began it with calling the people of the Jews to repentance, and promising to give them rest; and all such who return to God by repentance, and come to Christ by faith, find spiritual rest for their souls now, and shall have an eternal rest hereafter, (^{<4047>}Matthew 4:17 11:28,29):

and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight; not only their sins, but their self-righteousness, and dependence upon it; the rites and ceremonies of the old law abolished by Christ, together with the traditions of the elders, by which they made void the commandments of God; all which were abominations in the sight of the Lord, (^{<2013>}Isaiah 1:13 29:13 65:5 66:3),

then shalt thou not remove; from thine own land again when restored, or further off, into more distant countries, for they were now in captivity; or rather the words may be rendered, not as a promise, but as a continuation of what is before said,

and not move to and fro^{f85}; or be unstable and wavering, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, and precept of men; but be established in the faith of the Gospel, and steadfast and immovable in every good work. The Targum is: ``if thou wilt return, O Israel, to my worship, saith the Lord, thy return shall be received before thy decree is sealed; and if thou wilt take away thine abominations from before me, thou shalt not be moved;’’

or wander about.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth*, etc.] Or by the living Lord, by him and him only; not by the creatures, but by the God of truth. This is sometimes put for the whole worship and service of God, (^{<0663>}Deuteronomy 6:13) and for a confession of Christ, and profession of faith in him, (^{<2453>}Isaiah 45:23), compared with (^{<5411>}Romans 14:11) and which ought to be done,

in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment; in sincerity, integrity, and uprightness of soul; in spirit and in, truth; in righteousness and true holiness:

and the nations shall bless themselves in him, not in Israel, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it; but in the Lord, even in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed

with all spiritual blessings; with which being blessed, they call and count themselves happy, being pardoned through the blood of Christ, justified by his righteousness, and having peace, life, and salvation by him, (^{<0128>}Genesis 22:18):

and in him shall they glory; not in themselves, nor in any creature, or creature enjoyment; but in the Lord, and in what he is to them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; in whom all the seed of Israel, being justified, glory; (see ^{<403>}1 Corinthians 1:30,31 ^{<2365>}Isaiah 45:25). The sense of the words seems to be, that upon the Gospel being preached by Christ and his apostles to the Israelites, and some of them being converted, and their abominations put away, and they cleaving to the Lord, and to his worship; the Gentiles should have the Gospel sent to them, and receive it, and place all their blessedness in Christ, and glory in him.

Ver. 3. *For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem*, etc.] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were at the time of this prophecy in their own land; and so are distinguished from Israel the ten tribes, who were in captivity; unless the same persons should be meant, who were called by these several names, the people of the Jews; and it was in Judea that our Lord appeared in the flesh, and to the inhabitants thereof he ministered, he was the minister of the circumcision; and so to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, whom he called to repentance, and would have gathered, (^{<4237>}Matthew 23:37):

break up your fallow ground; this is ground that lies untilled, not ploughed, nor sown, on which nothing grows but the produce of nature, as weeds, thorns, briars, etc. is common to men and beasts, and is trodden upon, and, so is hard and unsusceptible of seed; which, if it accidentally falls upon it, makes no impression on it, and is not received by it; and the breaking of it up is by the plough. The “fallow ground” fitly represents the hearts of unregenerate men, which are unopened to the word, and unbroken by it; nor have they the seed of divine grace sown in them; but are destitute of faith, hope, love, fear, and the like; there is nothing grows there but the weeds of sin and corruption; and are like a common beaten road; are the common track of sin, where lusts pass to and fro, and dwell; and so are hardened and obdurate, as hard as a stone, yea, harder than the nether millstone; and who, though they may occasionally be under the word, it makes no impression on them; it has no place in them, but is like the seed

that falls by the wayside, (⁴¹³⁴Matthew 13:4,19), unless divine power attends it; for the Gospel is the plough, and ministers are the ploughmen; but it is the Lord alone that makes it effectual to the breaking up the fallow ground of men's hearts, (⁴¹³²Luke 9:62 ²³¹⁶Isaiah 61:5 ⁴¹³¹1 Corinthians 3:6,7,8,9), but when the Lord puts his hand to the plough it enters within, and opens the heart; it is quick, powerful, and sharp; it cuts deep, and makes long and large furrows, even strong convictions of sin; it throws a man's inside outward, as the plough does the earth; and lays all the wicked of his heart open to him; and roots up the pride, the vanity, and boasting of the creature, and other lusts; and so makes way for the seed of divine grace to be sown there:

and sow not among thorns; or, “that ye may not sow among thorns”^{f86}; for, unless the fallow ground is broken up, it will be no other than sowing among thorns; and unless the hearts of men are opened by the power and grace of God, they will not attend to the things that are spoken; preaching and eating the word will be like sowing among thorns; cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, the pleasures of life, and the lusts thereof, which are comparable to thorns, because pricking, perplexing, and distressing, and because vain and unprofitable, choke the word, and make it unfruitful; (see ⁴¹³⁷Matthew 13:7,22), now this exhortation in the text does not suppose power in man to break up and open his heart; but to show his want of renewing grace; the necessity of it; and the danger he is in without it; and to awaken in him a concern for it; (see ²³⁸¹Ezekiel 18:31 36:26). The words may be applied to backsliding professors, since backsliding Israel and Judah are the persons addressed; and this may be done with great propriety and pertinence to the simile; for fallow ground is that which has been broke up and sown, and laid fallow. It is usual to till and sow two years, and lay fallow a third: and backsliding Christians look very much like fallow ground; so faithless, so lukewarm, and indifferent; so inattentive to the word, and unconcerned under it; so barren and unfruitful, as if they had never had any faith, or love, or good work in them; so that they need to be renewed in the spirit of their minds; to have a new face of things put upon them: and to have a clean heart, and a right spirit, created in them. The Targum is,

“make to yourselves good works, and seek not salvation in sins.”

Ver. 4. *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord*, etc.] Or, “be ye circumcised”, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it. This is to be

understood of the circumcision of the heart, as Kimchi observes; and as appears from the following words:

and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; this is the true spiritual circumcision; and they that are possessed of it are the circumcision, the only truly circumcised persons; and they are such who have been pricked to the heart, and thoroughly convinced of sin; who have had the hardness of their hearts removed, and the impurity of it laid open to them; which they have beheld with shame and loathing, and have felt an inward pain on account of it; and who have been enabled to deny themselves, to renounce their own righteousness, and put off the body of the sins of the flesh: and though men are exhorted to do this themselves, yet elsewhere the Lord promises to do it for them, (^{<6316>}Deuteronomy 30:6), and indeed it is purely his own work; or otherwise it could not be called, as it is, “circumcision without hands”, and “whose praise is not of man, but of God”, (^{<5121>}Colossians 2:11 ^{<6122>}Romans 2:29), and the reason of this exhortation, as before, is to convince those Jews, who were circumcised in the flesh, and rested and gloried in that, that their hearts were not circumcised, and that there was a necessity of it, and they in danger for want of it; as follows:

lest my fury come forth like fire; to which the wrath of God is sometimes compared, (Na 1:6) and is sometimes signified by a furnace and lake of fire, even his eternal wrath and vengeance:

and burn that none can quench it; such is the fire of divine wrath; it is unquenchable; it is everlasting, (^{<4106>}Mark 9:43,44 ^{<4112>}Matthew 3:12 25:41):

because of the evil of your doings; which are so provoking to the eyes of his glory; the sins of men are the fuel to the fire of his wrath, and cause it to burn to the lowest hell, without the least degree of mercy. The Targum is,

“turn to the worship of the Lord, and take away the wickedness of your hearts, lest my fury burn as fire, and consume without mercy, because of the evil of your doings.”

Ver. 5. *Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem, and say*, etc.] Exhortations to repentance being without effect in general, though they might have an influence on some few particular persons, the Lord directs the prophet to lay before the people a view of their destruction as near at hand; who calls upon some persons as a sort of heralds, to publish and

declare in the land of Judea, and in Jerusalem the metropolis of it, what follows:

blow ye the trumpet in the land; as an alarm of an approaching enemy, and of an invasion by him, and of danger from him; and this was to be done, not in order to gather together, and put themselves in a posture of defence, to meet the enemy, and give him battle; but to get together, that were in the fields, and in country villages, and hide themselves from him:

cry, gather together, and say; or cry with a full mouth, with a loud voice, that all might hear; which shows imminent danger:

assemble yourselves and let us go into the defenced cities; such as Jerusalem, and others, where they might think themselves safe and secure; (see ⁴²⁴⁶Matthew 24:16).

Ver. 6. *Set up the standard toward Zion*, etc.] Not on the tower of Zion, as Kimchi interprets it; but on some high place, pointing to Zion, and directing the country people to flee thither for safety; for the setting up of the standard here is not for enlisting of soldiers in order to fight, but as a sign of danger, and a direction where to flee from it:

retire; gather yourselves together in order to flee, as the word ^{f87} is rendered in (²³⁰¹Isaiah 10:31), though some render it, “be ye strengthened”^{f88}; take heart, and play the man; but this does not seem so agreeable to the context:

stay not; or, “stand not”; stand not in the place ye are in, but move from it in all haste, because of present danger:

for I will bring evil from the north; from Babylon, as Kimchi interprets it; which lay north to the land of Israel; and so designs the captivity Judah should be brought into there:

and a great destruction or, “breach”^{f89}; which the Babylonians should make on the inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem.

Ver. 7. *The lion is come up from his thicket*, etc.] Meaning Nebuchadnezzar^{f90}, from Babylon, who is compared to a lion for his strength, fierceness, and cruelty; (see ²⁵⁰⁷Jeremiah 50:17) so the Roman emperor is called a lion, (⁵⁰¹⁷2 Timothy 4:17), agreeably to this the Targum paraphrases it,

“a king is gone from his fortress;”

or tower; and the Syriac version,

“a certain most powerful king is about to go up as a lion out of his wood:”

and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he who had conquered and destroyed other nations not a few, and these mighty and strong; and therefore the Jews could not expect but to be destroyed by him. This tyrant was a type of antichrist, whose name is Apollyon, a destroyer of the nations of the earth, (⁴⁰¹Revelation 9:11 9:18)

he is gone forth from his place, to make thy land desolate; from Babylon, where his royal palace was, in order to lay waste the land of Judea; and he is represented as being come out, and on the road with this view, to strike the inhabitants of Judea with the greater terror, and to hasten their flight, their destruction being determined and certain:

and thy cities shall be laid waste without an inhabitant; they shall become so utterly desolate, that there should be none dwelling in them, partly by reason of the multitudes of the slain, and partly by reason of multitudes that should flee; and should be laid waste to such a degree, that they should be covered with grass growing upon them; which is the signification of the word^{f91} here used, according to R. Joseph Kimchi.

Ver. 8. *For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl*, etc.] That is, because of this destruction threatened, which was so near at hand, and so sure and certain:

for the fierce anger of the Lord is not turned back from us. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it “from you” and some render it “from it”^{f92}; from his purpose and design to destroy the Jews. Jarchi interprets this of Josiah, and his times, who, though he turned to the Lord with all his heart, yet the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his wrath and anger against Judah, (¹²³⁵2 Kings 23:25,26).

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the Lord*, etc.] When Nebuchadnezzar should be come up from Babylon into the land of Judea, and lay waste the cities thereof, and besiege Jerusalem:

that the heart of the king shall perish; meaning Zedekiah king of Judah, who should be in the utmost fright and consternation, not knowing what to do, being devoid both of wisdom and courage; (see ~~2404~~ Jeremiah 39:4):

and the heart of the princes; who being seized with the same panic, and at their wits' end, would not be able to give any advice and counsel to the king; so that the people would have no help from the king and his nobles, in whom they put their confidence:

and the priests shall be astonished; which Kimchi interprets of the priests of the high places, the idolatrous priests, whose service would now cease, and whose idols would not save them:

and the prophets shall wonder; which he also interprets of the false prophets; as does the Targum; who prophesied peace, and now they shall see it was a lie they prophesied, since sudden destruction now comes upon them.

Ver. 10. *Then said I, ah, Lord God!* etc.] Expressing great sorrow and concern: this “ah” is by way of lamentation. The Targum interprets it as a petition,

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

surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem: what the false prophets did, that God is said to do, because he suffered them to deceive the people; (see ~~1221~~ 1 Kings 22:20-23). The Targum ascribes the deception to the false prophets, and not to God,

“surely behold the false prophets deceive this people, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem;”

or this may be ironically said, because the false prophets pretended to speak in the name of the Lord; wherefore Jeremiah says, “surely thou hast greatly deceived”, etc. “saying, ye shall have peace”; as the false prophets did, (~~2064~~ Jeremiah 6:14):

whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul; takes away the life, many are slain by it; so the Targum,

“and now behold the sword killeth among the people;”

great slaughter is made by it. L'Empereur^{f93} observes that the word here used signifies, in the Arabic language, to educate or bring up; and then the sense is,

“ah, Lord, thou hast brought up this people with great tenderness, and promised them all manner of happiness; but now thou thunderest out threatenings of calamities of all sorts, and death itself; and assigned a place for the sword to enter into their very souls;”

so the Arabic word <Arabic> used in the version of (~~4212~~ Acts 22:2 ~~5046~~ 1 Timothy 4:6).

Ver. 11. *At that time shall it be said to this people, and to Jerusalem,* etc.] The inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem, the people of the Jews; or “concerning”^{f94} them, as Jarchi interprets it:

a dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people. The Targum is,

“as the south wind upon the heads of floods of water in the wilderness, so is the way of the congregation of my people;”

but rather the north wind is designed, since that is a dry one, and the south wind a moist one; and the rather, since this wind intends Nebuchadnezzar and his army, which should come from Babylon, from the north. Some render it, “a neat clean wind”^{f95}; which strips the trees, lays bare rocks and mountains, carries away the earth and dust before it, and makes the stones look white and clean: it denotes a very strong, rushing, stormy, and boisterous wind. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “a burning one”; and it represents the force and power with which the enemy should come, without any opposition or resistance to him; for a wind on high places, hills, and mountains, and which comes through deserts and wildernesses, has nothing to hinder it, as Kimchi observes; whereas, when it blows in habitable places, there are houses, walls, hedges, and fences, which resist it; and it is observed, that in the way from Babylon to Judea, which the prophet calls “the daughter of my people”, were many desert places. The Septuagint version is, “the spirit of error in the desert, the way of the daughter of my people”; which the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to follow; the former rendering it, “as the wind that wanders through the paths of the desert, so is the way of the daughter of my people”; and the

latter thus, “there is a spirit of error in the desert, in the way of the daughter of my people”;

not to purity, nor to holiness, as it with the Septuagint renders the next clause: “not to fan, nor to cleanse”; of which use a more moderate wind is in winnowing and cleansing the corn from chaff, and light and useless grain.

Ver. 12. *Even a full wind from those places shall come unto me*, etc.] That is, a strong one, very vehement; or, “a wind which is fuller than these”, as the Syriac version renders it; which is stronger than those winds which are fit for fanning and winnowing the chaff from the wheat. Jarchi interprets it, a wind full of those punishments which God had threatened, and determined to bring upon this people, and would not turn from, nor repent of: and the phrase “shall come unto me” regards not the prophet, nor the people of the Jews, whom he represented, but the Lord himself; and shows that the wind is at his command, and when he calls, it comes unto him, and obeys his will, (⁴⁹³⁰⁸Psalm 148:8) and that all afflictions, judgments, and punishments for sin, are from him:

now also will I give sentence against them; not the prophet, but the Lord, who would now call them to his bar, try their cause, reprove them for their sins, pronounce sentence against them, and execute it. The Targum is,

“because they have wandered after the false prophets, who prophesied to them in a spirit of falsehood; therefore the armies of the people, higher than those, as the wind shall come against them; even now by my word I will bring them, and pronounce the vengeance of my judgments on them.”

Ver. 13. *Behold, he shall come up as clouds*, etc.] Meaning the lion, Nebuchadnezzar, (²⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 4:7),

“the king with his army (as the Targum paraphrases it); he shall come up against them as a cloud that ascendeth and covers the earth.”

“come up against them as a cloud that ascendeth and covers the earth.”

The metaphor denotes the swiftness of his coming, and the multitudes he should come with, and that darkness and distress he should bring with him upon the people of the Jews:

and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind; for swiftness, power, and violence: chariots for war are intended; (see ~~238~~ Isaiah 5:28):

his horses are swifter than eagles: the swiftest of birds. The same thing is designed as by the other metaphors; the swiftness and suddenness of the Jews' destruction:

woe unto us, for we are spoiled; their destruction was inevitable, there was no escaping it; and therefore their case was woeful and miserable.

Ver. 14. *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness*, etc.] These are the words of the prophet, or of God by the prophet, showing the cause of all their ruin and destruction, the wickedness of their hearts; and they are expressed in such form and language, as to be accommodated to the case of any unregenerate sinner: every man's heart is wicked, desperately wicked, even wickedness itself; everything in it is wicked; the thoughts, and the imagination of the thoughts of the heart, the mind, the understanding, the will, the conscience, and the affections; and everything that is wicked is in that: it is the womb in which all sin is conceived; the shop and forge in which it is wrought; it is the habitation of every unclean lust; the seeds and principles of all sin are in it; it is the fountain spring and source of all evil; of all evil thoughts, words, and actions; all come out of it, and have their rise in it: and this wickedness is of a defiling nature, and has left a pollution on it; and what comes out of it defiles the man, that he stands in need of washing; which cannot be done to purpose by ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, by moral acts of righteousness, by humiliation and tears, nor by submission to Gospel ordinances; nor indeed is this to be done by man at all, any other way than by faith dealing with the blood of Christ, by which only the heart is purified: for this is God's work, as appears from his promises to cleanse his people from all sins; from their prayers to him, to create in them clean hearts, to wash them thoroughly from their iniquity, and cleanse them from their sin; from the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, and the washing of regeneration ascribed to him; and from the end and efficacy of the bloodshed of Christ, to cleanse from sin, and purge the conscience from dead works; and the design of such exhortations as these is to convince men of the wickedness and pollution of their hearts, of the necessity of being washed from it, and of their own inability to do it of

themselves; and to lead them to the fountain of Christ's blood, to wash in for sin and for uncleanness:

that thou mayest be saved; not only with a temporal salvation, which may be here primarily meant; but with a spiritual and eternal one; for without purification of the heart there is no salvation: this is the meetness for the undefiled inheritance; without the washing of regeneration, there is no seeing nor entering into the kingdom of God; and unless we are washed by Christ, and in his blood, we can have no part nor portion with him in the heavenly glory; none shall ascend the holy hill, or dwell in the holy place, but such who have clean hands, and a pure heart; without this there is no seeing of God, nor having communion with him; this is the way in which he saves men, (³⁰⁸⁵Titus 3:5):

how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? or, “wilt thou suffer them to lodge within thee?”¹⁹⁶ if the question is of right, the answer is, they ought not to lodge one night, one hour, one moment; but if it is of fact, the answer is, they will have a place in the heart as long as we are in this tabernacle; but the words are spoken by way of complaint and reproof: the thoughts of men's hearts are vain, are taken up about vain and foolish things; and these not only pass to and fro, but have a lodging in the heart; and particularly vain are the thoughts of those who think themselves pure, and that their hearts are good, and trust in them; or that they can wash themselves from their wickedness; and that an outward reformation of life and manners is sufficient; and who think they can be saved without the washing of regeneration, and the blood of Christ. The Targum is,

“cleanse thine heart from doing evil, O Jerusalem, that ye may be saved; how long shall they endure and be stable who do violence, which is in the midst of thee?”

Ver. 15. *For a voice declareth from Dan*, etc.] The coming of the enemy, as Kimchi explains it, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Chaldeans; a messenger was come from Dan, which was on the border of the land of Israel to the north, on which side Babylon lay, and from whence the evil was to come predicted; who declared the enemy was approaching, just entering the land; not that this was now the case in fact, but this is represented in a prophetic manner, as what would be, in order to arouse and awaken the Jews to a sense of their sin and danger; (see ²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 8:10)

and publisheth affliction from Mount Ephraim: which lay on the border of the tribe of Benjamin, and nearer to Jerusalem; and this publication represents the enemy as advancing nearer, and being just at hand. The word for “affliction” signifies “iniquity”^{f97}; and it denotes, that the affliction spoken of, which is the destruction of the Jews, and their captivity in Babylon, were occasioned by their sins. Some think that Daniel and Ephraim are mentioned, because of the calves that were worshipped in Dan, and in Bethel, which was in the tribe of Ephraim. The Targum favours this, which paraphrases the words thus,

“for the voice of the prophets that prophesied against them that go into captivity, because they worshipped the calf, which is at Dan; and they that bring evil tidings, shall come upon them, because they served the image which Micah set up in the mount of the house of Ephraim;”

and the Vulgate Latin version is,

“the voice of him that declares from Dan, and that makes known the idol from Mount Ephraim.”

Ver. 16. *Make ye mention to the nations,* etc.] This, according to Kimchi, is the sum and substance of the voice from Dan. It seems to be a summons to the nations to gather together to join the king of Babylon in his enterprise against Jerusalem; (see ^{124B}2 Kings 24:2):

publish against Jerusalem; what follows:

that watchers come from afar country; from Babylon, which is said to be a far country, (^{230B}Isaiah 39:3), these are the soldiers of the king of Babylon; they are called Notzerim; which word agrees with the latter part of Nebuchadnezzar’s name; to which some^{f98} think there is some reference, showing that his army is meant. It should be rendered “besiegers”, as it is by some^{f99}; for these were not Nebuchadnezzar’s bodyguard, but his whole army, who were come up to besiege Jerusalem; and they are compared to watchers and keepers of a field in the next verse, where another word is used. The Targum is,

“the army of a rapacious people, like the grape gatherers, come from a far country:”

and give out their voice against the cities of Judah; threaten the ruin of them; blow the trumpet, the alarm of war; give the orders to besiege; and, being sure of victory, triumph before the attack is made.

Ver. 17. *As keepers of a field, are they against her round about*, etc.] As those that are set to watch a field, in which are fruit and corn of any sort, that thieves and robbers, and wild beasts, may not enter to waste and destroy, and are placed on all sides for that purpose; so the Chaldeans were round about Jerusalem, that none could make their escape out of it; (see ^{<12714>}2 Kings 25:4):

because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the Lord; it was not without reason that the Lord suffered the Chaldeans to come against Jerusalem, besiege, and take it; the inhabitants of it had rebelled against him, their King and their God; and therefore he delivers them up into the hands of another lord, and a cruel one; they had provoked him to anger with their sins, and caused him to stir up his wrath against them in this way: rebellion against a prince, or against a parent, is a provoking sin; (see ^{<19153>}1 Samuel 15:23 ^{<23102>}Isaiah 1:2).

Ver. 18. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee*, etc.] The way in which they walked, which was an evil one; and the actions which they committed; their idolatries, backslidings, and rebellions, before spoken of in this and the preceding chapter, were the cause of this siege, and those calamities coming upon them; they had none to blame but themselves; it was their own sinful ways and works which brought this ruin and destruction on them:

this is thy wickedness; the fruit of thy wickedness; or, “this thy calamity”; that is, is owing to these things; so the word is rendered in (^{<3416>}Psalm 141:5):

because it is bitter; not sin, as in (^{<2419>}Jeremiah 2:19), but the punishment of it; the calamity before mentioned; which was hard and heavy, and grievous to be borne, and yet very just; it was by way of retaliation; “they had bitterly provoked the Lord”, as the word may be rendered in the preceding verse; and now he sends them a bitter calamity, and a heavy judgment:

because it reacheth unto thine heart; into the midst of them, and utterly destroyed them. The two last clauses may be rendered, “though it is bitter, though it reacheth unto thine heart”^{f100}; though it is such a sore distress,

and such an utter destruction, yet it was to be ascribed to nothing else but their own sins and transgressions.

Ver. 19. *My bowels, my bowels*, etc.] These are either the words of the people, unto whose heart the calamity reached, as in the preceding verse; or rather of the prophet, who either, from a sympathizing heart, expresses himself in this manner; or puts on an appearance of mourning and distress, in order to awaken his people to a sense of their condition. The repetition of the word is after the manner of persons in pain and uneasiness, as, “my head, my head”, (^{Q1419}2 Kings 4:19):

I am pained at my very heart; as a woman in labour. In the Hebrew text it is, “as the walls of my heart”^{f101}; meaning either his bowels, as before; or the “praecordia”, the parts about the heart, which are as walls unto it; his grief had reached these walls, and was penetrating through them to his heart, and there was danger of breaking that:

my heart makes a noise in me; palpitates, beats and throbs, being filled with fears and dread, with sorrow and concern, at what was coming on; it represents an aching heart, all in disorder and confusion:

I cannot hold my peace; or be silent; must speak, and vent grief:

because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war; Kimchi observes, he does not say “my ears”, but “my soul”; for as yet he had not heard with his ears the sound of the trumpet; for the enemy was not yet come, but his soul heard by prophecy: here is a Keri and a Cetib, a reading and a writing; it is written yt [mç, “I have heard”; it is read t [mç, “thou hast heard”, which is followed by the Targum: the sense is the same, it is the hearing of the soul. The prophet, by these expressions, represents the destruction as very near, very certain, and very distressing. The trumpet was sounded on different accounts, as Isidore^{f102} observes; sometimes to begin a battle; sometimes to pursue those that fled; and sometimes for a retreat.

Ver. 20. *Destruction upon destruction is cried*; etc.] Or, “breach upon breach”^{f103}; as soon as one affliction is over, another comes on; and upon the news of one calamity, tidings are brought of another, as in Job’s case: it signifies, that distress and troubles would come thick and fast, and that there would be no end of them, until there was an utter destruction, as this phrase signifies, and the following words show. Kimchi interprets it of the

destruction of the ten tribes which came first, and of the destruction of Judah that came now.

For the whole land is spoiled, or “wasted”^{f104}; that is, the land of Judea:

suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment: meaning either the armies of his people, which dwelt in tents, and were destroyed at once; or the cities, towns, and habitations of his countrymen, which he compares to tents, as being easily beat down or overthrown; and so the Targum interprets it of cities; and the prophet seems to intimate that this destruction would reach to Anathoth, where his tent; cottage, and curtains were. So sudden destruction some times comes, when men are crying Peace, peace, (^{418B}1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Ver. 21. *How long shall I see the standard*, etc.] “Ensign” or “banner” displayed; either by the watchmen placed on high hills or towers, who, when they see the enemy approaching, lift up their ensign or banner, and blow with their trumpets, to give the people warning and notice of it, and to call them to battle, and that they might prepare for the same, as Kimchi observes; or else by the Chaldean army, which came with colours flying, trumpets blowing, and set in array for battle, which was very terrible, as an army with banners is, (^{218A}Song of Solomon 6:4,10):

and hear the sound of the trumpet? either of the watchmen giving notice of danger, and summoning to battle, or of the enemy preparing to attack; (see ^{644B}1 Corinthians 14:8).

Ver. 22. *For my people is foolish*, etc.] This, as Kimchi says, is the answer of the Lord to the prophet; for not the prophet says this, but the Lord to the prophet, giving a reason why this sore destruction came upon the people of the Jews, and so reconciling his mind to the providence; seeing those whom he had chosen to be his people, above all people upon the face of the earth, and who professed themselves to be his people, had acted such a foolish part as they had done, in backsliding from him, revolting from his ways and worship, rebelling against him, and in committing such gross idolatries as they had been guilty of. So a people may be a professing people, and yet a foolish one; there are foolish professors of religion; such who take up a profession foolishly, without an experience of the grace of God; without any true faith in Christ; without having on the wedding garment of his righteousness; without laying it upon a good foundation; and without considering the cost and charge of a profession, and the

difficulties and troubles attending it; and such are they who foolishly trust in it, when they have taken it up; and hold it foolishly, very remissly, and in a wavering manner; and who walk not agreeably to it, and at last foolishly drop it:

they have not known me; men may be the people of God by profession, and yet not know him; not know him so as to glorify him; not know him as their God, truly and experimentally; not know him in Christ, and have communion with him through him; not know the Lord Christ himself, the worth, glory, and excellency of him; their need of him; of his blood to cleanse them from sin; of his righteousness to justify them; of his sacrifice to atone for them; and of his fulness to supply their need; nor know the way of life, peace, and salvation by him, or at most only notionally, not experimentally; whereas the only true wisdom is to know Christ, and God in him; this is real and solid knowledge; it is science truly so called; it is delightful and satisfactory; it is useful and profitable, and is what issues in eternal life; and let men know what they will else, if they know not the Lord, they are “sottish children”; they are children indeed in understanding; and though they may be the children of God by profession, they are not the true and genuine children of God, since they know neither the Father nor the Son:

and they have no understanding; though they are not without a natural understanding, or an understanding of things natural and civil, yet they have no spiritual understanding, or an understanding of spiritual things; and at best only in a speculative, and not in an experimental way and manner:

they are wise to do evil; cunning inventors of evil things, crafty schemers that way, may be full of all wicked subtlety, and expert at over reaching and defrauding their brethren; when professors of religion especially ought to be wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil,
(~~469~~Romans 16:19):

but to do good they have no knowledge; to do good, or to do a good thing well, is to do it according to the revealed will of God, from a principle of love to him, in the exercise of faith upon him, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God; to do good in this sense, and in such a way and manner, carnal men and carnal professors have no knowledge, no practical knowledge; they have no inclination to it, but the reverse; nor do they, nor can they, perform it: if they had a knowledge how to do it, or a power to perform it, there would have been, in one age or

another, some, more or fewer, that would have done it; but there is none of all Adam's descendants that does good, no, not one, (^{<680B>}Romans 3:9-12), the grace of God is absolutely necessary to the right doing of a good work, and the knowledge of it.

Ver. 23. *I beheld the earth*, etc.] The land of Judea, not the whole world; and this the prophet says, either in spirit, as Jerom; or in prophecy, as Kimchi; or in a visionary way; for these are not the words of God continued, as Cocceius, but of the prophet; who, by a prophetic spirit, describes the dreadful destruction of the Jewish nation, as follows:

and, lo, it was without form, and void; as the first earth or chaos was, before it was brought into form and order; the same words, "tohu" and "bohu", are used here, as in (^{<000E>}Genesis 1:2), the land of Judea now was, in the prophet's view of it, like the first earth, when darkness covered it; no grass sprung out of it, not a tree to be seen in it, and neither man nor beast as yet upon it, but all an undigested mass, and in the utmost wild disorder and confusion; and this may denote not only the natural, but the political, and ecclesiastical, disorder of the Jewish nation and state:

and the heavens, and they had no light; that were over the land of Judea; "their lights did not shine,"

as the Targum paraphrases it; that is, the sun, moon, and stars, which were darkened by the smoke of the burning of Jerusalem; or which withdrew their light, as blushing at, and being ashamed of, the iniquities of his people, and who were unworthy of enjoying the light of them; and which this phrase may denote.

Ver. 24. *I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled*, etc.] At the presence of God, at the tokens of his displeasure, and at his awful vengeance in the destruction of the Jews, as they are sometimes said to do, (^{<580B>}Psalms 68:8 114:6,7 ^{<580B>}Habakkuk 3:6,10):

and all the hills moved lightly; so Kimchi's father says the word used has the signification of lightness; though Jarchi, from Menachem, explains it, they were plucked up, and thrown out of their place; and some render it, were pulled down and destroyed, so the Targum. Mountains and hills are most stable, and not easily moved, wherefore this is said, to aggravate the desolation and destruction.

Ver. 25. *And I beheld, and, lo, there was no man*, etc.] No people dwelling in it, as the Targum; the land was without inhabitants, they were either killed with the sword, or taken and carried captive into Babylon, or fled into Egypt and other countries:

and all the birds of the heavens were fled; at the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war; at the blackness of the heavens, filled with smoke; at the barrenness of the earth, there being no seed sown; and the earth, as at the first creation, having no herb, nor trees bearing fruit, and so no food for birds; and therefore they went elsewhere, both wild and tame.

Ver. 26. *I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness*, etc.] Or, “I beheld, and, lo, Carmel was a wilderness”; which was a particular part of the land of Israel, and was very fertile, and abounded in pastures and fruit trees, and yet this, as the rest, became desolate as a wilderness; (see ²³²⁵Isaiah 32:15 35:2) though it may be put for the whole land, which was very fruitful; and so the Targum,

“I saw, and, lo, the land of Israel, which was planted as Carmel, was turned to be as a wilderness:”

and all the cities thereof; not of Carmel only, but of the whole land:

were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger; for though this was done by the Chaldeans, yet it was by the will and appointment of God, and as a token of his fierce anger against the people of the Jews, for their sins and transgressions. Jarchi cites a Midrash Agadah, or an allegorical exposition of this place, which interprets the “mountains”, the Jewish fathers; the “hills”, the mothers, and their merits; “no man”, the worthiness of Moses, who was meeker than any man; and “Carmel”, Elijah; without any manner of foundation.

Ver. 27. *For thus hath the Lord said*, etc.] What follows is an explanation and confirmation of the above vision the prophet had:

the whole land shall be desolate; as he had seen; it should not be manured, ploughed, and sown, or bring forth fruit; and should be without inhabitants, at least have very few:

yet I will not make a full end; there should be some inhabitants, who, with those that should hereafter return from captivity, would repeople it, rebuild the temple, and restore it to its pristine form and order, both as to things

natural, civil, and ecclesiastical; but though a full end of them, as a church and people, was not to be made now by the Chaldeans, yet it would be; as it has been done by the Romans, in the times of Vespasian and Hadrian.

Ver. 28. *For this shall the earth mourn*, etc.] That is, for the full end that will be made hereafter, though not now; the earth may be said to mourn when the inhabitants of it do; or when it is destroyed, and is become desolate, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, explain it; when it is uncultivated and uninhabited:

and the heavens above be black; with thick clouds, and storms, and tempests; in allusion to mourners, that are clothed with black: these figures, of the earth's mourning, and the heavens being clothed in black, denote the horribleness of that dispensation, when there would be an utter destruction of the Jewish nation, church, and polity, of which Daniel prophesies, (^{<2>}Daniel 9:27):

because I have spoken it; in my word, as the Targum; in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, by Moses and the prophets:

I have purposed it; or I have thought of it, in my counsel, as the Targum; it was a thing deliberately devised and determined, and therefore can never be frustrated, or made void:

and will not repent; of what was purposed and predicted:

neither will I turn back from it; revoke, or retract it; it shall surely come to pass: the Jews, upon their return from the Babylonish captivity, and afterwards, might flatter themselves that a full end would not be made of them, because it was not then done; and therefore these several strong expressions are used, to confirm and assure them of it; for the word of God cannot fail, his counsel shall stand; he is not a man, that he should lie or repent; he will do all his pleasure.

Ver. 29. *The whole city shall flee*, etc.] Or, "every city"; for not Jerusalem only is meant, but every city, or the inhabitants of every city; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

"all the inhabitants of the land,"

who would be put into a panic, and flee: "for" or

at the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; of which the army of the enemy would greatly consist: it intimates that the inhabitants of Judea would not stand a battle; but at hearing the sound of the trampling of the horses, and the clattering of the bows and arrows, that the men upon them had, they would flee at once:

they shall go into the thickets, and climb upon the rocks; that is, either the horsemen and bowmen, who would pursue the inhabitants into those places: or rather the inhabitants themselves, who would flee thither to hide themselves from their enemies; namely, get into woods and forests, and among the thick trees, and cover themselves; and upon the highest mountains and rocks, and into the holes and caverns of them, and secure themselves from the enemy; (see ^{<1246>}Matthew 24:16), the word for “thickets” signifies “clouds”^{f105}; and Kimchi interprets it of places as high as the clouds, as the tops of some mountains are, so that going up to them is like entering into the clouds; and which are sometimes covered with thick trees, and look like clouds; but the Targum explains it of woods or forests:

every city shall be forsaken; of its inhabitants:

and not a man dwell therein; as the prophet had seen in his vision, (^{<3025>}Jeremiah 4:25), this was to be when a full end was made, not by the Babylonians, but by the Romans.

Ver. 30. *And when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do?* etc.] Or, “O thou spoiled”^{f106}, wasted, and undone creature, how wilt thou help thyself? by what means dost thou think thou canst be delivered? it suggests that her ruin was inevitable; that she could not be recovered from it by herself, or any other:

though thou clothest thyself with crimson; and so look like some rich and noble person; hoping thereby to find mercy, and to have quarter given and kindness shown:

though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold; as a person of high and princely dignity: or rather all this is to be understood of the manner of harlots, who dress rich and grand, in order to allure men; since it follows,

though thou rendest thy face with painting; or, eyes^{f107}; which painting dilates as Jezebel did, (^{<1233>}2 Kings 9:30),

in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; so as to be loved and admired: far from it:

thy lovers will despise thee; as an old harlot is despised by her former gallants, notwithstanding all her dressing and painting; yea, their love is often turned into hatred and abhorrence, as would be the case here,

they will seek thy life; to take it away; so far would there be from being any ground of expectations of help and deliverance from them.

Ver. 31. *For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail*, etc.] So the distress of the Jews, at the time of their destruction, is compared to the sorrows of a woman in travail; and a word, that signifies that is used to express it, (^{f108}Matthew 24:8):

and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child; whose time is more difficult, her pains sharper, her anguish greater, and, having less experience, the more impatient:

the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself; her unhappy condition, and miserable circumstances:

that spreadeth her hands; as persons in distress do, and particularly women in travail: saying,

woe is me now, for my soul is wearied because of murderers: these abounded: under the second temple, and was the reason, the Jews say:^{f108}, of the sanhedrim removing from their usual place in the temple; and why they ceased from the beheading of the red heifer^{f109}.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 5

This chapter contains a further account of the destruction of the Jews by the Chaldeans, and the causes of it, the sins of the people, as want of justice and truth; being so corrupt, that a just and faithful man was not to be found among them; could there, the city would have been pardoned for his sake, (^{<24R1>}Jeremiah 5:1), their swearing falsely by the name of the Lord, (^{<24R2>}Jeremiah 5:2), their incorrigibility by chastisements, which was the case not only of the lower, but higher rank of people, (^{<24R3>}Jeremiah 5:3-5), wherefore the enemy, who for his cruelty is compared to a lion, a wolf, and a leopard, is threatened to be let in among them, (^{<24R4>}Jeremiah 5:6), then other sins are mentioned as the cause of it, as idolatry and adultery, (^{<24R5>}Jeremiah 5:7-9) hence the enemy has a commission to scale their walls, take away their battlements, though not to make a full end, the Lord disowning them for his, (^{<24R6>}Jeremiah 5:10), because of their perfidy against him, their belying of him, contradicting what he had said, and despising the word sent by his prophets, (^{<24R7>}Jeremiah 5:11-13), wherefore it is threatened, that his word like fire should devour them; and that a distant, mighty, and ancient nation, of a foreign speech, should invade them; who, like an open sepulchre, would devour them, and eat up the increase of their fields, vineyards, flocks, and herds, and impoverish their cities, yet not make a full end of them, (^{<24R8>}Jeremiah 5:14-18), and in just retaliation should they serve strangers in a foreign country, who had served strange gods in their own, (^{<24R9>}Jeremiah 5:19) then a declaration is published, and an expostulation is made with them, who are represented as foolish, ignorant, and blind, that they would fear the Lord; which is pressed by arguments taken from the power of God, in restraining the sea, which had no effect upon them; and from the goodness of God, in giving the former and latter rain, and the appointed weeks of the harvest, which their sins turned away and withheld from them, (^{<24R10>}Jeremiah 5:20-25), and then other sins are mentioned as the cause of God's visiting them in a way of vengeance, as the defrauding of men in trade, and the oppression of the fatherless and the poor in judgment; and false prophesying, to the advantage of the priests, and the king of the people, (^{<24R11>}Jeremiah 5:26-31).

Ver. 1. *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,* etc.] These are the words of the Lord, not to the prophet only, but to any other, who thought fit to look into the reasons of the Lord's dealing in a way of judgment with the people of the Jews; these he would have go through the whole city of Jerusalem, every street of it, and that backwards and forwards, not once only, but over and over again:

and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof; where there is commonly the greatest concourse of people; here he would have them look out diligently, observe and take cognizance of the persons they should meet with in such places:

if ye can find a man; that is, as the Targum adds, whose works are good, and as it is afterwards explained; for as yet the city was not desolate, so as that there was no man dwelling in it, as it was foretold it should be, (²⁴⁰²⁵Jeremiah 4:25,29). It is reported^{f110} of Diogenes, the Cynic philosopher, that he lighted up a candle in the daytime, and went through the streets with it; and, being asked the reason of it, said, I seek a man; that is, a man of virtue, honour, and honesty; by which he would be understood, that such were very rare: and so it follows,

if there be any that executeth judgment; in the public courts of judicature; or in private, between man and man:

that seeketh the truth; of doctrine and worship, that seeks to speak it, and maintain it; who is true to his word, and faithful to his promises; but was not one such to be found? were there not the Prophet Jeremiah, and Baruch, and some others? the answer of Kimchi's father is, that such were not to be found in the streets and broad places, where the direction is to seek, because such were hidden in their own houses for fear of wicked men; others think that the meaning is, that there were none to be found to make up the hedge, or stand in the gap for the land, and to intercede for them, as in (³²²⁰Ezekiel 22:30), and others are of opinion that the Lord speaks of men in public offices, as judges, priests, and prophets, who were grown so corrupt, as that a good man was not to be found among them: but it seems rather to design the body of the people, and the sense to be, that an upright faithful man was rare to be found; and that, could there be found but a few of that sort, the Lord would spare the city for their sake, as in the case of Sodom, (⁰¹⁸³²Genesis 18:32) and so it follows,

and I will pardon it; the city of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it; so the Targum, Septuagint, and Arabic versions render it, “them”.

Ver. 2. *And though they say, the Lord liveth*, etc.] It might be said, that there were multitudes that made mention of the name of the Lord, that professed it, and swore by it; which sometimes is put for the worship and service of God, (^(LXXII)Deuteronomy 10:20) and therefore it could not be so difficult a matter to find a man of integrity and uprightness among them; this is answered by allowing there were persons that did do so: but then it must be observed,

that surely they swear falsely; they abused the name of God, and were guilty of perjury: or the sense is, they were only nominal professors, hypocritical worshippers; in words professed to know God, but in works denied him; had a form of religion and godliness, but without the power of it.

Ver. 3. *O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?* etc.] That is, thou hast no regard to such deceitful men, such hypocritical worshippers and formal professors, but to true and upright men: God looks not at outward appearances, but to the heart; he can see through all masks and vizards, there is no deceiving of him; he desires truth in the inward parts, and his eyes are on that; he has respect to men that have the truth of grace, the root of the matter in them, oil in their vessels, together with the lamps of an outward profession: his eyes are on such as have a true inward sense of sin, a genuine repentance for it, and that make a sincere, hearty, and ingenuous confession of it; to this man he looks, that is poor, and of a contrite spirit; he is nigh to such, and dwells with them; when he has no regard to the sad countenances and disfigured faces of Pharisees; to the tears of a profane Esau, or to the external humiliations and concessions of a wicked Pharaoh: his eyes are upon the internal graces of his own Spirit; to love, that is in deed and in truth; to hope, that is without dissimulation, and to faith unfeigned: and so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it, “thine eyes are unto faith”; or, respect faith^{f111}; the faith of Christians, as Jerom interprets it. Faith is a grace well pleasing to God, and everything that is done in faith is so, and nothing else; it is a grace that gives glory to God, and on which he has put much honour, in making it the receiver of all the blessings of grace, and connecting salvation with it; he has so great a regard for it, that whatever it asks it has of him. In short, the sense is, that the eyes of the Lord, of his love, favour, good will,

and delight, are upon such whose hearts are upright towards him; who draw nigh to him in truth, worship him in spirit and in truth, and are hearty to his cause and interest, and faithful to his word and ordinances; who are lovers of truth; of Christ, who is the truth itself; and of his Gospel, the word of truth, and the doctrines of it; (see ^{<0667>}1 Samuel 16:7 ^{<4469>}2 Chronicles 16:9).

Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; that is, the Lord had courted and chastised them with afflictive providences; he had brought his judgments upon them, and had smitten them with the sword, or famine, or pestilence, or some such sore calamity, and yet it had not brought them to a sense of their sin, and to a godly sorrow for it:

thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; God had by his judgments consumed or swept away many of them, yet the rest did not take warning thereby, but went on in their sins; or they were brought near to consumption, as Kimchi interprets it; nevertheless remained obstinate and incorrigible, refused to receive any correction or instruction by such providences:

they have made their faces harder than a rock; becoming more impudent in sinning, not blushing at, or being ashamed for it, and unmoved by judgments and chastising providence:

they have refused to return; to the Lord, and to his worship, from which they revolted; or by repentance, and unto faith and truth, from which they had swerved.

Ver. 4. *Then I said, surely these are poor, they are foolish,* etc.] The prophet, observing that reproofs and corrections in providence had no effect upon the people, he thought within himself that surely the reason must be, because these people are poor, and in low circumstances in the world, and are so busy in their worldly employments to get bread for their families, that they were not at leisure to attend unto divine things; nor of capacity to receive instruction and correction by providences; therefore it is they were so foolish, stupid, and infatuated:

for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God; either the way which God takes in the salvation of the sons of men, and in justifying of them, which is revealed in his word; or that which he prescribes them to walk in, in his law, even the way of truth and righteousness, and for failure of which he judges and condemns them; but

of these things they were ignorant; (see ^{<4748>}John 7:48,49), not that this is observed in excuse for them, but in order to introduce what follows; and to show that this depravity, stupidity, and ignorance, obtained among all sort of people, high and low, rich and poor.

Ver. 5. *I will get me unto the great men, and speak unto them*, etc.] The princes, nobles, and judges, the elders of the people, the scribes and doctors of the law:

for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God; it might be reasonably expected that they had, having had a good education, and being at leisure from worldly business to attend to the law, and the knowledge of it, and whatsoever God had revealed in his word, both in a way of doctrine and duty:

but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds; the yoke of the law, and the bonds of his precepts, with which they were bound; these they broke off from them, and would not be obliged and restrained by them, but transgressed and rejected them.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them*, etc.] Meaning King Nebuchadnezzar out of Babylon, a place full of people, and so comparable to a forest, as the king is to a lion, for his strength, fierceness, and cruelty; and who came from thence, besieged and took Jerusalem; and who not only slew their young men with the sword, but also the king's sons, and the princes and nobles of Judah, (^{<4437>}2 Chronicles 36:17 ^{<4510>}Jeremiah 52:10 4:7)

and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them; which, having sought for its prey all the day, or not daring to go out for any, is hungry, raging and furious, and tears and destroys whatever it meets with; (see ^{<3488>}Zephaniah 3:3), so the Targum and Kimchi understand it of such a wolf; but Jarchi and Ben Melech interpret it, "a wolf of the desert", or deserts; as the word ^{f112} will bear to be rendered; one that frequents desert places, and rages about in the wilderness; as the king of Babylon with his army did among the wilderness of the people of the nations about him, and at length spoiled Judea, and laid it desolate:

a leopard shall watch over their cities; the same enemies, who are compared to watchers, and to keepers of a field, (^{<2416>}Jeremiah 4:16,17). Kimchi interprets the lion of a king, that being the king among beasts; the

wolf, of his army; and the leopard, of the princes of the army; and so the Targum,

“wherefore a king with his army shall come up against them, as a lion out of the forest; and the people, who are strong as the wolves of the evening, shall slay them; and the rulers, who are mighty as the leopard, shall make a prey of them, watching over their cities;”

but Jarchi applies them to the several monarchies; by the lion, he understands the kingdom of Babylon; by the wolf, the kingdom of the Medes; and by the leopard, the kingdom of Greece; and so Jerom:

everyone that goes out thence; from any of the cities of Judea, watched by the enemy:

shall be torn in pieces; by those beasts of prey. Jarchi adds, by the Persians; the reason of all which follows, and shows it to be a righteous judgment of God upon them:

because their transgressions are many: their rebellions against God, their violations of his righteous law, were not a few, but many; God had bore long with them, and they had abused his patience and longsuffering; and therefore now he determines to punish them by such instruments:

and their backslidings are increased; though he had so often, and so kindly and tenderly, invited them to return unto him, (²⁴¹²Jeremiah 3:12,14,22).

Ver. 7. *How shall I pardon thee for this?* etc.] Because of their manifold transgressions, and multiplied backslidings; or “wherefore, or for what, shall I pardon thee?”^{f113} as the Targum; can any reason be given why I should? what goodness is there in thee, or done by thee, that I should do this unto thee? The particle *ya*, according to Kimchi, is a word of exclamation; and, according to Jarchi, of admiration; and may be rendered, “oh! for this shall I pardon?” how can it be? R. Menachem; in Jarchi, takes it to be the same with *ya*, “not”; and to be rendered, not for this will I pardon; and so is an affirmation, and fixed resolution not to pardon, and that for the following reasons:

thy children have forsaken me; my worship, as the Targum interprets it; that is, the children of Jerusalem, the inhabitants of it, the common people, as distinguished from their fathers, the civil and ecclesiastical rulers; (see

~~1257~~Matthew 23:37), though not to the exclusion of them; for they were guilty of the same sin in forsaking the word, worship, and ordinances of God:

and sworn by them that are no gods; by the name of idols, as the Targum; or, “by those things which are not god”, as Noldius^{f114} renders the words; who rightly observes, that there were other things besides idols that they swore by, as the heaven and earth, temple, altar, etc. with which the Arabic version agrees; when an oath ought only to be taken in the name of the living God; or, “swore without God”; without making mention of the name of the true God:

when I had fed them to the full; with the good things of life; gave them all things richly to enjoy; the best provisions, and fulness of them; so that they had all that heart could wish for. There is in the Hebrew text a beautiful play on words^{f115}, between the word used for swearing in the former clause, and this for feeding here:

they then committed adultery; either idolatry, which is spiritual adultery; or adultery literally taken; as it seems from the following verse. This is the consequence of their being fully fed; and that is an aggravation of this their sin against God and their neighbour; (see ~~1523~~Deuteronomy 32:13-16):

and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses; either in the temples of idols, or in the stews or brothel houses, where harlots prostituted themselves; their going thither in troops, or in great numbers, shows both how universal and how public this sin was, and how impudent and barefaced they were in the commission of it.

Ver. 8. *They were as fed horses in the morning*, etc.] Adulterers are compared to horses, because they are very salacious and lustful creatures; wherefore the Septuagint renders the word: “horses are become mad after the females”; or, “as horses mad after the females are they become”; and especially to such as are well kept and are fat, and who, having much food given them in the night, and being full in the morning, go forth neighing, as Kimchi observes; and are the more salacious in the morning, by being so well fed all night, as those persons were, as is expressed in the preceding verse; though some render the word $\mu\gamma\kappa\sigma\mu$, translated “in the morning”, (for which sense of it (see ~~2804~~Hosea 6:4)) “drawing out”^{f116}; that is, the genital member, as lascivious horses do. The word is difficult of

interpretation. The Targum calls them field or wood horses; horses that run in fields and woods, and are very vicious and wanton;

everyone neighed after his neighbour's wife; coveted and lusted after her, signified his lustful desires, and sought an opportunity to defile her. Neighing is a sign of lust, and keeps up the metaphor of the horse.

Ver. 9. *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord*, etc.] For such adulteries and lasciviousness, and that in a way of punishment. The Targum adds,

“to bring evil upon them;”

the evil of punishment for the evil of sin:

and shall not my soul be avenged upon such a nation as this? which cannot delight in sin, but hates it; and therefore must punish for it; vindictive and punitive justice is essential to God; as sin is contrary to his nature, it is agreeable to it to punish for it; he cannot but do it; and he does avenge all sin, either on the sinner himself, or on his surety.

Ver. 10. *Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy*, etc.] These are the words of the prophet, or of the Lord by the prophet, to the Chaldeans, ordering them to ascend the walls of Jerusalem, and break them down, as they did, even all the walls of it round about, (^{<3637>}Jeremiah 52:7,14), there can be nothing done without the Lord's will; and there is no evil in a city but what is done, or ordered, or suffered to be done by him, (^{<3016>}Amos 3:6):

but make not a full end; meaning not of the walls, for a full end was made of them, they were broken down all around; but of the people; there were a remnant to be preserved from the sword, and to be carried captive, and to be returned into their own land again, after a term of years:

take away her battlements; which must mean not the battlements of their houses, or of the temple; but of their walls, the fortifications that run out like branches without the wall^{f117}. Kimchi interprets them the teeth of the wall; the Septuagint version renders the word, “the under props”; and the Syriac and Arabic versions, “the foundations of it”. The word properly signifies the branches of a vine; wherefore Jarchi takes the word for walls, in the preceding clause, to signify the rows of a vineyard; and the Jews are sometimes compared to a vineyard; and here the Chaldeans are called upon

to enter into it, to come upon the rows of the vines in it, and take away its branches:

for they are not the Lord's; either the walls and the battlements are not the Lord's, he disowns them, and will not guard them, and protect them, any more; or rather the people are not the Lord's, he has written a "loammi" upon them; they are not the people of God, nor the branches of Christ the true Vine. The Septuagint, Syriac and Arabic versions, read the words without the negative, "leave her under props", or "her foundations, because they are the Lord's". The Targum is,

"go upon her cities, and destroy, and make not a full end; destroy her palaces, for the Lord has no pleasure in them."

Ver. 11. *For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me*, etc.] This is a reason why such orders are given to the army of the Chaldeans to ascend the walls of Jerusalem and destroy them; namely, the perfidy both of the ten tribes, signified by the house of Israel; so Abarbinel; and of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, signified by the house of Judah; which was very great, and attended with aggravated circumstances; instances of it follow. The Targum is,

"they have dealt very falsely with my word:"

saieth the Lord; for this was not the charge of the prophet against them, but of the Lord himself. This can only be understood of such of the ten tribes as remained in Judea, for the body of that people had been carried captive many years ago; whose sins Judah imitated, and, being also the posterity of Israel, may be so called.

Ver. 12. *They have belied the Lord, and said, it is not he*, etc.] Or, "denied the Lord"^{f118}, as some render the words, saying that there was no God; which, though they might not deliver in express words, yet inasmuch as they denied his providence, and disbelieved his word by his prophets, it was tacitly denying that there was a God, or that the Lord was God. The meaning of the phrase "not he" may be, he takes no notice of what is done by us; he does not concern himself with our affairs; nor has he given any such orders to our enemies, as above; nor said these things by the prophets which are pretended:

neither shall evil come upon us; they speak of:

neither shall we see sword nor famine; war and sieges, and famine, the consequence of them.

Ver. 13. *And the prophets shall become wind*, etc.] Their prophecies shall vanish into air; they shall become of no effect; they shall never be accomplished:

and the word is not in them; not the word of the Lord; he never spoke by them; they speak of themselves; they never were inspired or commissioned by him to say what they do: thus shall it be done unto them; the same evils they say shall befall us shall come upon them; they shall perish by the sword or famine; we have reason to believe that our predictions are as good as theirs, and will be fulfilled: or, “thus let it be done to them”^{f119}; as they have prophesied shall be done to us; and so are an imprecation. The Targum interprets the whole of the false prophets, as if they were the words of the Lord concerning them, which is,

“but the false prophets shall be for nothing, and their false prophecy shall not be confirmed; this revenge shall be taken of them;”

and so Kimchi interprets it of the prophets that prophesied peace to them, and said that the above mentioned should not come upon them; and Jarchi takes the last clause to be the words of the prophet to them that say the above words; namely, that thus it shall be done to them, what the Lord has said.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, because ye speak this word*, etc.] That it is not the Lord; it is not he that speaks; it is no prophecy of him, and therefore shall become wind, and come to nothing:

behold, I will make my word in thy mouth fire: it shall have its effect, and a dreadful one; it shall not become wind, but be as fire, not to enlighten the understanding, to purify the conscience, and warm the heart; but to torture, distress, and destroy, as the fire of the word out of the mouths of the two witnesses, (^{f116}Revelation 11:5):

and this people wood, and it shall devour them; as wood is devoured by fire, so shall this people be destroyed by sword and famine, as the word of the prophecy has declared they should; and which was done by the following means.

Ver. 15. *Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far*, etc.] From Babylon, as in (^{<24016>}Jeremiah 4:16):

O house of Israel, saith the Lord; though the house of Israel is generally taken for the ten tribes, especially when distinguished from the house of Judah; yet here it seems to design the Jews, the posterity of Jacob, or Israel in the land of Judea; for Israel, or the ten tribes, were carried captive into Assyria before this time:

it is a mighty nation; strong and powerful; so mighty that they would not be able to oppose them, and stand before them: “it is an ancient nation”; the Babylonish monarchy was the most ancient; it began in the times of Nimrod, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:10) and therefore must be a nation of great power and experience that had so long subsisted, and consequently must be formidable to others:

a nation whose language thou knowest not; which was the Syriac language: this, it is plain, was not known by the common people among the Jews in Hezekiah’s time, though some of the chief men understood it; wherefore Rabshakeh, the king of Assyria’s general, would not deliver his railing speech in the Syriac language, which only the princes understood; but in the Hebrew language, the language of the common people, (^{<12835>}2 Kings 18:26,28), though, after the captivity, this language was understood by the Jews, and was commonly spoken by them, as it was in our Lord’s time:

neither understandest what they say; so would be barbarians to each other; nor could they expect any mercy from them, or that quarters would be given them, when their petitions for favour and life could not be understood.

Ver. 16. *Their quiver is an open sepulchre*, etc.] The Chaldeans used bows and arrows in fighting; and the quiver is a case for arrows; and the phrase denotes, that their arrows would do great execution, and be very mortal; so that a quiver of them would be as devouring as an open grave, into which many dead are cast. The Septuagint and Arabic versions have not this clause; and the Syriac version renders it, “whose throats are as open sepulchres”; (see ^{<8183>}Romans 3:13):

they are all mighty men; strong in body, of bold and courageous spirits, expert in war, and ever victorious; so that there was no hope of being delivered out of their hands.

Ver. 17. *And they shall eat up thine harvest*, etc.] The standing corn in the fields, cut it down, and give it as fodder to their horses, which is usually done by armies; or the increase of the earth, when gathered into the barn, which so great an army would consume:

and thy bread; which includes all kind of provisions:

which thy sons and thy daughters should eat; which is an aggravation of the calamity and misery, that that should become the prey of their enemies, which they with so much labour and pains had provided for their children, who would now be deprived of it, and suffer want, The Targum renders it,

“shall kill thy sons and thy daughters;”

that is, with the sword; and so Kimchi interprets it; and so other versions read, “they shall eat up, or devour, thy sons and thy daughters”^{f120}; the sword ate them up, or devoured them; and they who besieged them were the cause or occasion of their being eaten literally, even by their own parents; (see ^{<2120>}Lamentations 2:20 4:10):

they shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds; their sheep and oxen, as the Targum interprets it:

they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: that is, the fruit of them, as the same paraphrase explains it:

they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword; that is, such strong and fortified cities as Jerusalem, and others, in which the Jews trusted they should be safe from their enemies; these the Chaldeans would enter into, kill with the sword those they found in garrisons, demolish the fortifications, take away what wealth and riches were laid up there, and so impoverish them, and render them weak and defenceless. The Targum of this clause is,

“shall destroy the fortified cities of thy land, in which thou trustedst thou shouldst be safe from those that kill with the sword.”

Ver. 18. *Nevertheless, in those days*, etc.] When these things should be done by the king of Babylon and his army:

saith the Lord, I will not make a full end with you: this was to be done at another time, not now; (See Gill on “^{<2027>}Jeremiah 4:27”), (See Gill on “^{<2150>}Jeremiah 5:10”), though some think that this is a threatening of more

and greater calamities; that this would not be all he would do to them; he had not yet done; he had other evils and calamities, to bring upon them, particularly a long captivity.

Ver. 19. *And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say*, etc.] That is, the people of the Jews, to whom the prophet belonged, after they had been spoiled by the enemy, and carried captive:

wherefore doth the Lord our God all these things unto us? as if they were innocent and guiltless, and had done nothing to provoke the Lord to anger; and it may be observed, that they professed to know the Lord in words, and call him their God, though in works they had denied him; and they own the hand of the Lord in all those evils that would now be come upon them; though before they had said they were not spoken by the Lord, nor would they befall them, (²⁴⁵¹²Jeremiah 5:12):

thou shalt then answer them; that is, the Prophet Jeremiah, in the name of the Lord:

like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land; when they were in their own land they forsook the worship and ordinances of God, and served the idols of the Gentiles, as the Targum rightly explains it:

so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours: which some understand of strange gods; but rather it designs strange lords, as the Chaldeans in the land of Babylon, a land not theirs; and so it is measure for measure, a just retaliation in righteous judgment upon them.

Ver. 20. *Declare this in the house of Jacob*, etc.] That a mighty nation should come and destroy them, and they should be servants in a strange land; or rather the words seem to be an order to declare war against the Jews, and even in their own land; and do not seem to be addressed to the prophet, but to others, seeing the words are in the plural number; (see ²⁴⁰¹⁵Jeremiah 4:5):

and publish it in Judah: the house of Jacob and Judah are the same, namely, the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah; for, as for the ten tribes, as observed on (²⁴¹⁵⁵Jeremiah 5:15), they had been carried captive before this time:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 21. *Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding,* etc.] or, “heart”^{f121}; (See Gill on “³¹⁰²Jeremiah 4:22”):

which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not; like the idols they served, (³¹⁰⁴Psalm 115:4-8). this is an upbraiding of them with their folly and stupidity, their want of common sense, their blindness and ignorance; notwithstanding they had the means of light and knowledge, the law, and the prophets.

Ver. 22. *Fear ye not me? saith the Lord,* etc.] They did not fear the Lord, and this is a reproof to them for the want of it, which is a reproof of their ignorance and folly; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, (³¹⁰⁶Proverbs 9:10), and where that is there is true wisdom; but, where it is not, there is nothing but ignorance and stupidity:

will ye not tremble at my presence? or “face”; his wrath and anger, justly resenting their carriage to him. The Targum is,

“from before my Word;”

the essential Word, his Son: or, “will ye not be in pain?” as a woman in travail; as Kimchi observes the word^{f122} signifies:

which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it. This is a very wonderful thing in nature, that the earth and sea, being spherical, and making one terraqueous globe, and the waters of the sea being higher than the earth, should be so bounded and restrained, by the power and providence of God, as not to overflow the earth, and that by means of the sand, which is penetrable, flexible, and movable; and yet this is set as a bound, and by the decree of God remains firm and stable, and that for ever, so that the sea cannot bear it down, go through it, or over it:

and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it; even when the sea is the most tumultuous and raging. This is an instance of the mighty power of God, and carries in it an argument and reason why he should be feared; and yet such was the stupidity of this people, that though they saw this with their eyes, the sea and the tossings of it, and the sand set as a bound to it, and an effectual one, and heard the roarings and ragings of the waves of it in vain; yet they feared not the Lord that did all this; and so showed themselves more stupid and disobedient than the sea and its waves, which

obeyed their Maker, though destitute of sense and reason; (see ^{<18310>}Job 26:10 38:8-11 ^{<19416>}Psalms 104:6,9 ^{<20829>}Proverbs 8:29).

Ver. 23 *But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart*, etc.] They are not so obedient as the sea and its waves; nor so firm and stable as the sand that is set for the bound of it. This is a reproof and an aggravation of the revoltings and rebellions of this people:

they are revolted and gone; they had departed from the ways of the Lord, and were gone back from his worship, as the Targum; and were gone into evil ways, and to a false worship; they not only had revolted, but they went on, they continued therein, and went further and further, off from God and his worship.

Ver. 24. *Neither say in their heart*, etc.] It came not into their mind, they never once thought of it, namely, of what follows,

let us now fear the Lord our God; they were not influenced and engaged to the fear of God, neither by his power in the preceding instance, nor by his goodness in the following one:

that giveth rain; in common, all the year round, at proper times, for the use of men and beasts. This is a pure gift of God, and an instance of his goodness, and is peculiar to him, what none of the gods of the Gentiles could give, (^{<21442>}Jeremiah 14:22):

both the former and the later, in his season; there were two particular seasons in the year in which the land of Israel had rain; the one was in the month Marchesvan, answering to part of October and part of November, and this was the former rain, after the seed was sown in the earth; and the other was in the month of Nisan, answering to part of March and part of April, just before the time of harvest, and this was the latter rain:

he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest; which was reckoned by weeks, because of the seven weeks between the passover and pentecost: the barley harvest began at the former, and the wheat harvest at the latter, called the feast of weeks, (^{<03422>}Exodus 34:22) and these were appointed of God, the harvest itself, (^{<00822>}Genesis 8:22) and the weeks in which it was gathered in, (^{<02315>}Leviticus 23:15,16), and these appointments and promises the Lord carefully observed, and faithfully kept.

Ver. 25. *Your iniquities have turned away these things*, etc.] Whereas of late years rain was withheld from them in common, and they had not the former and latter rain in its season, nor the appointed weeks of the harvest, and so their land was barren, and famine ensued. This was to be ascribed, not to the want of goodness and faithfulness in God, but to their own iniquities; these mercies were kept back from them in order to humble them, and bring them to a sense of their sins, and an acknowledgment of them:

and your sins have withholden good things from you; as rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, and had also brought many evil things upon them; for more is understood than is expressed.

Ver. 26. *For among my people are found wicked men*, etc.] Not a few only, but in general they appeared to be so, upon an inquiry into their character and conduct; for otherwise it would not have been so difficult to find a good man among them, as is suggested (^{<3101>}Jeremiah 5:1),

they lay wait as he that setteth snares; or, “they look about”^{f123}; that is, as Kimchi interprets it, every man looks in the ways, to see if a man passed by, that he might rob him of what he had; as a man that lays snares, or sets a trap to catch birds in: or, “everyone looks out, when they that lay snares rest”^{f124}; and so they are more diligent and constant in catching men than such persons are in catching birds:

they set a trap; or “dig a pit, or ditch”^{f125}; for men to fall in; (see ^{<3075>}Psalms 7:15):

they catch men; and rob them of their substance; or by their ill examples and counsels draw them into sin, and so into ruin; or circumvent them in trade and business.

Ver. 27. *As a cage is full of birds*, etc.] Jarchi and Kimchi understand it of a place in which fowls, are brought up and fattened, what we call a “pen”; and, so the Targum renders it, a house or place of fattening. The word is rendered a “basket” in (^{<3081>}Amos 8:1,2) and may here design one in which birds taken in snares, or by hawking, were put. The Septuagint version, and those that follow it, render it, “a snare”: which agrees with what goes before. It seems to intend a decoy, in which many birds are put to allure others; and, what with them, and those that are drawn in by them, it becomes very full; and this sense of the comparison is favoured by the rendition or application, which follows:

so are their houses full of deceit; of mammon, gathered by deceit, as Kimchi interprets it; ungodly mammon; riches got in a fraudulent way, by cozening and cheating, tricking and overreaching:

therefore they are become great; in worldly things, and in the esteem of men, and in their own opinion, though of no account with God:

and waxen rich; not with the true riches, the riches of grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ, his durable riches and righteousness; nor indeed with the riches of the world, honestly and lawfully gotten; but with unrighteous mammon.

Ver. 28. *They are waxen fat, they shine*, etc.] Becoming rich they grew fat, and their faces shone through fatness; so oil, delicious food, and good living, as it fattens men, it makes their faces to shine; (see ^{<19415>}Psalm 104:15),

yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked; though they pretended to religion, the fear and worship of God, yet they committed crimes more heinous than the most abandoned and profligate sinners: or, “they exceed the words of the wicked”^{f126}; either they speak words more wicked than they; or do such actions as are not to be expressed by words, and which even a wicked man would hardly choose to name. The Targum is,

“they transgress the words of the law;”

and the Vulgate Latin version comes pretty near it, “they have passed over my words very badly”; as if they referred to the words of the law and the prophets:

they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless; this shows that it was not the common people only that were become so wicked, but the judges and civil magistrates; and who were so far from doing justice between man and man, in all civil cases that came before them, that they would not even exercise right judgment in the case of the fatherless; who not only require justice to be done them, but mercy and pity to be shown them:

yet they prosper; in the world, and increase in riches; have health of body and prosperity in their families; nor are they in trouble, as other men: this sometimes has been trying to good men to observe; (see ^{<19718>}Psalm 73:3-14) and particularly to the Prophet Jeremiah, (^{<24121>}Jeremiah 12:1,2): or, “that

they may prosper”^{f127}; as Jarchi interprets it; and to the same sense is the Targum,

“if they had judged the judgment of the fatherless they would have prospered;”

but the former sense is best; and which Kimchi gives into, and agrees with what goes before, concerning the riches and prosperous estate of those men:

and the right of the needy do they not judge: because they are poor, and can not fee them, they will not undertake their cause; or, if it comes before them, they will not do them justice, being bribed by the rich that oppose them.

Ver. 29. *Shall I not visit for these things?* etc.] (See Gill on “^{<-248B>}Jeremiah 5:9”).

Ver. 30. *A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land.*] What may justly raise admiration in some, and horror in others, or both in all: it is so amazing that it can hardly be conceived of, and so shameful and filthy as not to be expressed; what it is follows:

Ver. 31. *The prophets prophesied falsely*, etc.] That the people would have peace and prosperity, and not be carried captive into Babylon, as Jeremiah and other true prophets of the Lord had predicted:

and the priests bear rule by their means; or rather “the princes”; for the word signifies princes as well as priests, and to the former government more properly belongs; and so Jarchi interprets it of the judges of the people, and their exactors; these governed the people according to the words of the false prophets, as the same writer explains it; they were “under” their influence and direction, they went after them, as the phrase **ry l** [is sometimes used; (see ^{<-32D>}1 Chronicles 25:2,3,6 ^{<-474>}2 Chronicles 17:14 31:15 ^{<-105B>}2 Samuel 15:8) or, as Kimchi understands it, the priests received gifts by their hands to pervert judgment, and they declined doing justice, according to their will. The Targum is,

“the priests helped upon their hands;”

took the false prophets, as it were, and carried them in their hands. Some render it, “the priests remove, or depart by their means”^{f128}; through their false prophesies they departed from the law, and the worship of God and

his ordinances, from attending to them, and performing them in the manner appointed; in the whole it denotes great friendship, unity, and agreement between the priests, or princes, and the false prophets; they agreed together to keep the people in awe and in bondage; and what was of all the most surprising is what follows:

and my people love to have it so; both that the prophets prophesy smooth things to them, though false; and that the princes should govern as they directed:

and what will ye do in the end thereof? that these evils will bring unto; namely, the destruction of the city and nation. The meaning is, what will become of them at last? or what would they do, when this wicked government would come to an end, and they should be taken and carried captive by the Chaldeans? which would be their case; and how would they like that, who love to have things as they were, which would bring on their ruin?

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 6

This chapter is of the same argument with the former; and contains two things in it, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the causes of it, which are intermixedly handled in it; a lively description is made of the notice of the approach of the enemy by blowing of trumpets and firing of beacons, (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 6:1), and of the siege of the city, by pitching tents around it, casting up a mount against it, and scaling its walls at noon and by night, (²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 6:2-6), and this destruction is illustrated by the simile of gleaning of grapes, (²⁴⁰³Jeremiah 6:9), and amplified by the universality of it, with respect to persons and things; it reaching to persons of every age, and in every state, as old men, young men, and children, husbands and wives, and to all sorts of possessions, houses and fields, (²⁴⁰⁴Jeremiah 6:11,12,21), a description is given of the instruments of it, the Chaldeans, (²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 6:22,23) and it is aggravated by the anxiety, distress, and sorrow, the Jews would be in on account of it, (²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 6:24-26), the causes of it are in general the great abounding of sin and wickedness in the midst of them, illustrated by a fountain casting out its waters, (²⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 6:6,7), in particular, their neglect and contempt of the word of the Lord, (²⁴⁰⁸Jeremiah 6:10), the sin of covetousness, which prevailed among all sorts of people, high and low, in civil or religious life, (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 6:13), the unfaithfulness of the prophets to the people, declaring peace, when there was none, (²⁴¹⁰Jeremiah 6:14), their impenitence and hardness, (²⁴¹¹Jeremiah 6:15), their disregard to all instructions and warnings, (²⁴¹²Jeremiah 6:16,17), their rejection of the law, and the precepts of it, (²⁴¹³Jeremiah 6:18,19), their hypocritical sacrifices, (²⁴¹⁴Jeremiah 6:20), and the chapter is concluded with an address to the prophet, setting forth his character and office, and the end of it, (²⁴¹⁵Jeremiah 6:27) and his testimony concerning the people, showing their obstinacy and stubbornness, illustrated by a simile of refining metal in a furnace without success, (²⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 6:28-30).

Ver. 1. *O ye children of Benjamin,* etc.] The tribe of Benjamin was with the tribe of Judah, and continued with that in the pure worship of God

when the ten tribes revolted; and in the land of Israel, when they were carried captive; and besides, Jerusalem, at least part of it, was in the tribe of Benjamin, and particularly Anathoth, which was Jeremiah's native place, was in that tribe; and this altogether is a reason why the children of Benjamin are so distinctly addressed:

gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem; where some of this tribe lived, or had betaken themselves for safety: or the Jews in general may be meant; for, as Ephraim is often put for the ten tribes, so Benjamin may be put for the two tribes, as Judah frequently is: or the words may be rendered, "be ye strong,"^{f129} "out of the midst of Jerusalem"; as by the Septuagint, and others; and the sense may be, gather together in bodies out of Jerusalem, and form yourselves into companies, and into an army, and be prepared to meet the enemy, and fight him, who is near at hand; quit yourselves like men, and be strong; show courage and valour; perhaps this is spoken ironically, as Kimchi thinks it is; though he interprets the word, "flee ye"; that is, if ye can find a place to flee to; and the Targum is,

"remove out of the midst of Jerusalem;"

but it seems rather to be a direction to go forth and meet the enemy, by what follows:

and blow the trumpet in Tekoa; as an alarm of war, to give the people notice of an invasion; that the enemy was at hand, and therefore should provide themselves with armour, and gather together to meet and oppose him. Tekoa was a city in Judah, (^{<4115>}2 Chronicles 11:5,6), famous, for a wise woman in it, in the times of David, (^{<3042>}2 Samuel 14:2). Jerom says it was twelve miles from Jerusalem, and might be seen with the eye; so that probably it was built on a very high hill, and for that reason chosen to blow the trumpet on, that it might be heard far and near; and which may be confirmed from its being said^{f130} to be the chief place in the land of Israel for the best oil, since olives grow on hills and mountains. There is in the clause a beautiful play on words^{f131}, which those, who understand the Hebrew language, will easily observe:

and set up a fire in Bethhaccerem. This place, as Jerom says, lay between Jerusalem and Tekoa; one of this name is mentioned in (^{<1634>}Nehemiah 3:14). The Targum renders it,

"the house of the valley of the vineyards;"

and in the Misnah^{f132} mention is made of the valley of Bethhacerem, the dust of which was red, and, when water was poured upon it, became hard; and this valley perhaps took its name from the town, which might be built upon a hill, and was famous for vines, from whence it was so called; and here might be a very high tower; for, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, it signifies a high tower, for the keepers of the vines to sit and watch the vines all about; and this was a very proper place to set up the sign of fire in, to give notice to the country all around; for it was usual with all nations, Persians, Grecians, and Romans, to signify in the night, by signs of fire, by burning torches, and the like, either the approach of an enemy, or help from friends; the former was done by shaking and moving their torches, the latter by holding them still^{f133}; (see ~~2028~~ Judges 20:38,40):

for evil appeareth out of the north; Nebuchadnezzar and his army out of Babylon, which lay north of Jerusalem: and great destruction; (see ~~2014~~ Jeremiah 1:14 4:6).

Ver. 2. *I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman.*] That dwells at home and lives in pleasure, and deliciously, in great peace and quietness, in entire ease and security, in no fear of enemies, or apprehension of danger; and so it describes the secure state of the Jews. Kimchi and Ben Melech supply the word “woman” as we do; but others supply “land” or “pasture”; and think that the Jewish nation is compared to pleasant and delightful lands and pastures, which are inviting to shepherds to come and pitch their tents about them; as follows. The words are by some rendered, “O beautiful and delicate one, I have cut off, or destroyed the daughter of Zion”^{f134}; in which sense the word is used in (~~2005~~ Isaiah 6:5 ~~2015~~ Hosea 4:5) and to this purpose is the Targum,

“O beautiful and delicate one, how hast thou corrupted thy ways?
therefore the congregation of Zion is confounded;”

but the former senses seem to be best; in which the word used is understood as having the signification of likening or comparing; for which (see ~~2009~~ Song of Solomon 1:9).

Ver. 3. *The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her*, etc.] Kings and their armies, as the Targum paraphrases it; kings and generals are compared to shepherds, and their armies to flocks, who are under their command and direction; here they design Nebuchadnezzar king of

Babylon, with his generals and armies, who should come up against Jerusalem, as to a good pasture:

they shall pitch their tents against her round about; their military tents, in allusion to pastoral ones. The phrase is expressive of the Chaldean army surrounding and besieging Jerusalem:

they shall feed everyone in his place; where he is ordered and fixed by his head general: or, “everyone shall feed his hand”^{f135}: the sheep of his hand; (see ⁴⁹⁸⁷Psalm 95:7), “them that are under his hand”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; who are committed to his care and charge. The meaning is, he shall direct the company or companies of soldiers under him, where to be, and what part to take in the siege; or “with his hand”, as the Septuagint, with the skilfulness of his hands, (⁴⁹⁸²Psalm 78:72), or with might and power; or “at his hand”, as the Arabic version; what is at hand, what is nearest to him; or according to his will and pleasure. The Targum is,

“everyone shall help his neighbour.”

The sense, according to Kimchi, is, one king or general shall lay siege against a city, or against cities, and so another, until they have consumed and subdued the whole land.

Ver. 4. *Prepare ye war against her*, etc.] Not only proclaim it, but prepare themselves for it; get everything ready for the siege, and begin it. These are either the words of the Lord, calling upon the Chaldeans in his providence to act such a part against Jerusalem; or of the Chaldeans themselves, stirring up one another to it; which latter seems to be the sense; since it follows:

arise, and let us go up at noon; scale the walls, and take the city; which, though in the heat of the day, and not so proper a time, yet such was the eagerness of the army, and their confidence of carrying the place at once; and concluding there was no need of waiting till the evening, or of taking any secret measures for the siege; they propose to go up at noon, in the heat of the day, and in the sight of their enemies, and storm the city:

woe unto us, for the day goes away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out; which some take to be the words of the besiegers, lamenting they had lost time, had not proceeded according to their first purpose, had neglected going up at noontime, and now the evening was coming upon

them; or as being angry, and out of humour, that the city was not taken by them so soon as they expected: though, according to Kimchi, they are the words of the prophet; and he may represent the besieged, mourning over their unhappy case and circumstances; the day of prosperity declining, and nothing but darkness and distress coming upon them.

Ver. 5. *Arise, and let us go up by night*, etc.] Since they could not take the city at noon, and by day, as they expected, they propose to attempt it by night; they would lose no time, but proceed on, day and night, until they had accomplished their end; this shows how much they were resolved upon it, and that nothing could discourage from it; and that they were sure of carrying their point: and therefore it follows,

and let us destroy her palaces; the tower and strong hold of Zion, the temple of Jerusalem, the king's palace, the houses of the high priest, judges, counsellors, and other civil magistrates, as well as the cottages of the meaner sort of people; for the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "her houses"; which, notwithstanding her strong walls, were not secure from the enemy.

Ver. 6. *For thus hath the Lord of hosts said*, etc.] To the Chaldeans; for as it was the Lord that brought them out of their own country, and directed them to Jerusalem, and ordered them to prepare war against it; so they were as an army under his command, and he it was that ordered them to do this, and that, and the other thing: the whole affair was of the Lord, and the Jews had more to fear from him, who is the Lord of armies, than from the army of the Chaldeans; for, as they could do nothing without his divine permission, so, having that, there was a certainty of succeeding:

hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: in the Hebrew text it is, "pour out a mount"^{f136}; the reason of which is, because there were a ditch or ditches about the city; and into these they poured in stones, and dirt, and trees, and pieces of wood, and so filled them up, and cast up a mount, on which they could raise their batteries, and demolish the walls and houses; hence mention is made of hewing down of trees, in order to cast the mount; for these were to be cut down, not so much to make battering rams, and other instruments of war, as to fill up the ditch, and raise the mount, so that the walls might be more easily battered and scaled: though some^{f137} interpret it of taking precise, fixed, determined counsel, about the war, and the manner of carrying it:

this is the city to be visited; or punished; not only that deserves to be so visited, but which would certainly be visited, and that immediately; its punishment was not far off; vengeance would soon be taken on it, and that for its sins: and so the Targum,

“this is the city whose sins are visited;”

as it follows:

she is wholly oppression in the midst of her; there were nothing but oppression and oppressors in her; not only full of oppressors, but oppression itself. This is instanced in for all kind of wickedness; the meaning is, that she was a sink of sin, and very wickedness itself.

Ver. 7. *As a fountain casteth out her waters*, etc.] In great abundance, and continually:

so she casteth out her wickedness; this metaphor expresses the multitude of her sins, the frequent and constant commission of them, and the source and spring of them, the corrupt fountain of the heart; (see ⁴¹²³Matthew 12:34,35 15:19):

violence and spoil is heard in her; that is, the cry of those that are oppressed and spoiled is heard, and that by the Lord himself, whose ears are open to the cries of the oppressed, and will avenge them:

before me continually is grief and wounds; the poor, who were grieved and wounded by their oppressors; the Lord was an eye and ear witness of their grievances, and would redress them; nor could their enemies expect to escape his wrath, since they were all known to him; or else the sense is, that because of their violence and spoil of the poor, it was continually before the Lord, in his mind and purpose, and he was just ready to bring upon them, by way of punishment for these things, what would grieve and wound them; so Jarchi interprets it, which Kimchi mentions; and to it the Targum agrees,

“the voice of robbers and plunderers is heard in her before me continually, therefore will I bring upon her evil and smiting.”

Ver. 8. *And be thou instructed, O Jerusalem*, etc.] Or “corrected”^{f138}; receive discipline or instructions by chastisements and corrections, return by repentance, that the evils threatened may not come: this shows the affection of the Lord to his people, notwithstanding all their sins; that their

amendment, and not their destruction, were pleasing to him; that it was with reluctance he was about to visit them in the manner threatened; and that even now it was not too late, provided they were instructed and reformed; but, if not, they must expect what follows:

lest my soul depart from thee; his Shechinah, or divine Presence, and all the tokens of his love, favour, and good will. The Targum interprets it of the Word of the Lord,

“lest my Word cast thee off;”

(see ⁴¹⁰⁰Romans 11:1), or, “lest my soul pluck itself from thee”; or “be plucked”^{f139}, and separated from thee: the phrase denotes an utter separation, a forcible one, joined with the utmost abhorrence and detestation. In (²⁶³⁸Ezekiel 23:18), it is rendered, “my mind was alienated”; it denotes disunion and disaffection.

Lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited; the Targum adds, by way of illustration,

“as the land of Sodom;”

so that not a man should dwell in it; (see ²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 4:25,27,29).

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, etc.] Finding that all his threatenings, admonitions, and exhortations, were in vain, he says of the Chaldeans, with respect to the Israelites,

they shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine; by “the remnant of Israel” are meant the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were left in the land when the ten tribes were carried captive; and these the Chaldeans should come and carry away also, just as the poor come into a vineyard, after the vintage has been gathered in, and pick off and glean what is left upon the branches:

turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets; these words, according to Kimchi, are the words of the Chaldeans to one another, to turn their hands to the spoil, and to the prey, again and again, just as the grape gatherer does; he gathers a bunch of grapes, and puts it into his basket, and then turns his hand, time after time, till he has gleaned the whole vine: and, according to Jarchi, it seems to be his sense, that they are the words of God unto them; and so Abarbinel; and it is as if he should say, O thou enemy, turn thine hand to the spoil a second time, as a grape

gatherer turns his hand to the baskets; and who observes that so it was, that when Jehoiakim was carried captive, and slain, Jeconiah was made king: then, at the end of three months, the enemy returned, and carried him captive; and, at the end of twelve years, returned again, and carried Zedekiah captive; nay, even of the poor of the people, and it may be observed, that they were carried away at different times; (see ^{<2675>}Jeremiah 52:15,16,28-30).

Ver. 10. *To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear?* etc.] These are the words of the prophet, despairing of any success by his ministry; suggesting that the people were so universally depraved, that there were none that would hear him; that speaking to them was only beating the air, and that all expostulations, warnings, remonstrances, and testimonies, would signify nothing:

behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; their ears were stopped with the filth of sin naturally, and they wilfully stopped their ears like the adder; and so being unsanctified, they neither could hear nor desired to hear the word of the Lord, as to understand it; (see ^{<4175>}Acts 7:51):

behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they reproached it, and blasphemed it, as a novel and false doctrine, and thought it a dishonour to them to receive and profess it; and just so the Jews vilified the Gospel, in the times of Christ and his apostles; and as many do now, who treat it with contempt, as unworthy of God, as contrary to reason, as opening a door to licentiousness, and think it a scandal to preach or profess it:

they have no delight in it; they see no beauty nor glory in it; they taste nothing of the sweetness of it; its doctrines are insipid things to them, they having never felt the power of it in their hearts; whereas such who are the true circumcision, who are circumcised in heart and ears, who are born again, these desire the sincere milk of the word; it is to them more than their necessary food; and, with this Prophet Jeremiah, they find it, and eat it, and it is the joy and rejoicing of their hearts, (^{<2456>}Jeremiah 15:16).

Ver. 11. *Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord,* etc.] Either of zeal for the Lord, for the glory of his name, and the honour of his word; or rather of the prophecy of the Lord, as the Targum interprets it, concerning the wrath of God, that should come upon this people for their sins:

I am weary with holding it; the prophecy, the message he was sent with to them, to pronounce the judgments of God upon them; which being a disagreeable task to him, he refrained from doing it as long as he could; but being highly provoked with the sins of the people, and particularly with their contempt of the word of God, and especially he being obedient to the divine will, he could forbear no longer making a full declaration of it; (see ³⁰⁰Jeremiah 20:9).

I will pour it upon the children abroad; or, “in the street”^{f140}; that are playing there:

and upon the assembly of young men together; that are met together for their pleasure and diversion; and the sense is, that the prophet would declare in a prophetic manner, and denounce, according to his office and commission, the wrath of God, which should come upon persons of every age, and of every relation in life, as follows: though the words may be rendered, “pour it upon the children”, etc.^{f141}; and so it is a prayer of the prophet’s to the Lord, that he would execute the vengeance on them which he had threatened them with by him:

for even the husband with the wife shall be taken; and carried captive:

the aged with him that is full of days; the old and the decrepit, such as are advanced in years, and also those that are just upon the brink of the grave, ready to die: the meaning is, that children should not be spared for their tender age, nor young men for their strength, nor husbands and wives on account of their relation, nor any because of their hoary hairs; seeing the corruption was so general, and prevailed in persons of every age, and of every station.

Ver. 12. *And their houses shall be turned unto others*, etc.] To strangers, to the Chaldeans; they shall be transferred unto them, come into their hands, and become their property:

with their fields and wives together: not only their houses and lands shall be taken away from them, and put to the use of others, but even their wives; than which nothing could be more distressing:

for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord; the inhabitants of the land of Judea; and so the Septuagint render it, “upon them that inhabit this land”; and so the Arabic version: wherefore,

since the Lord would exert himself in this affair, and stretch out his hand of almighty power, as the Targum paraphrases it,

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

it might be depended upon that all this destruction threatened would come on them.

Ver. 13. *For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them,* etc.] From the least in age to the oldest among them; or rather, from persons of the lowest class of life, and in the meanest circumstances, to those that are in the highest places of trust and honour, and are in the greatest affluence of riches and wealth; so that as men of every age and station had sinned, old and young, high and low, rich and poor, it was but just and right that they should all share in the common calamity:

everyone is given to covetousness; which is mentioned particularly, and instead of other sins, it being the root of evil, and was the prevailing sin among them:

from the prophet even unto the priest everyone dealeth falsely; the false prophet, as Kimchi interprets it, and so the Septuagint and other versions; and the priest of Baal, as the same interpreter; both acted deceitfully; the one in prophesying lies to the people, the other in drawing them off from the pure worship of God. The Targum is,

“from the scribe to the priest;”

from the lowest order of teachers to the highest in ecclesiastical office. The whole shows a most general and dreadful corruption.

Ver. 14. *They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly,* etc.] That is, the false prophets and lying priests, who pretended to be physicians, and to heal the sickly and distempered state of the people; and they did do it, in their way, but not thoroughly; they did not search the wound to the bottom; they drew a skin over it, and made a scar of it, and called it a cure; they made light of the hurt or wound; they healed it,

making nothing of it; or “despising it”, as the Septuagint: or they healed it “with reproach”, as the Vulgate Latin version; in such a manner, as that it was both a reproach to them, and to the people: or, as the Targum,

“they healed the breach of the congregation of my people with their lying words;”

which are as follow:

saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace; promising them all prosperity, plenty of good things, and a continuance in their own land; when in a short time there would be none of these things, but sudden destruction would come upon them; (see ^{SMH}1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Ver. 15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?* etc.] This seems chiefly, and in the first place, to respect the false prophets and wicked priests; who when they committed idolatry, or any other sin, and led the people into the same by their doctrine and example, yet, when reproved for it, were not ashamed, being given up to a judicial hardness of heart:

nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; they were men of impudent faces, they had a whore’s forehead; there was not the least sign or appearance of shame in them; when charged with the foulest crimes, and threatened with the severest punishment, they were not moved by either; they had neither shame nor fear:

therefore they shall fall among them that fall; meaning that the prophets and priests should perish among the common people, and with them, who should be slain, and fall by the sword of the Chaldeans; the sacredness of their office would not exempt them; they should fare no better than the rest of the people:

at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord; that is, when the city and temple should be destroyed by the Chaldeans, these would be cast down from their excellency, the high office in which they were, and fall into ruin, and perish with the rest.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see*, etc.] These are the words of the Lord to the people, whom he would have judge for themselves, and not be blindly led by the false prophets and priests; directing them to do what men should, when they are in a place where two or more ways meet, and know not which way to take; they should make a short stop, and look to the way mark or way post, which points whither each path leads, and so accordingly proceed. Now, in religious things, the Scriptures are the way mark to direct us which way we should take: if the

inquiry is about the way of salvation, look up to these, which are able to make a man wise unto salvation; these show unto men that the way of salvation is not works of righteousness done by them, but Christ only: if the question is about any doctrine whatever, search the Scriptures, examine them, they are profitable for doctrine; they tell us what is truth, and what is error: if the doubt is about the matter or form of worship, and the ordinances of it, look into the Scriptures, they are the best directory to us what we should observe and do:

and ask for the old paths; of righteousness and holiness, which Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others, walked in, and follow them; and the way of salvation by Christ, which, though called a new way, (~~<S10D>~~Hebrews 10:20), yet is not newly found out, for it was contrived in eternity; nor newly revealed, for it was made known to Adam and Eve immediately after the fall; nor newly made use of, for all the Old Testament saints were saved by the same grace of Christ, and justified by his righteousness, and their sins pardoned through his blood, and expiated by his sacrifice, as New Testament saints; only of late, or in these last days, it has been more clearly made known; otherwise there is but one way of salvation; there never was any other, nor never will be; inquire therefore for this old path, which all true believers have trodden in:

where is the good way, and walk therein; or, “the better or best way”^{f142}, and more excellent way, which is Christ, (~~<B146>~~John 14:6 ~~<A121>~~1 Corinthians 12:31), he is the way of access to God, and acceptance with him, and the way of conveyance of all the blessings of grace; he is the way to the Father, and to eternal happiness; he is the living way which always continues, and is ever the same; and is a plain, pleasant, and safe way, and therefore a good one; there is no one better, nor any so good; and therefore this must be the right way to walk in, and to which there is great encouragement, as follows:

and ye shall find rest for your souls; there is rest and peace enjoyed in the ways of God, and in the ordinances of the Gospel; wisdom’s ways are ways of peace, which are the lesser paths; and in the doctrines of the Gospel, when the heart is established with them, the mind is tranquil and serene, and at rest, which before was fluctuating and wavering, and tossed to and fro with every wind; but the principal rest is in Christ himself, in whom the true believer, that walks by faith in him, has rest from the guilt and dominion of sin, from the curse and bondage of the law, and from the

wrath of God in his conscience; and enjoys a spiritual peace, arising from the blood, sacrifice, and righteousness of Christ, (^{<4012>}Matthew 11:28 ^{<4101>}Romans 5:1,11 ^{<4124>}Hebrews 12:24):

but they said, we will not walk therein; in the old paths, and in the good way but in their own evil ways, which they chose and delighted in; and therefore, as their destruction was inevitable, it was just and righteous.

Ver. 17. *Also I set watchmen over you*, etc.] That is, prophets, as Jarchi; true prophets, as Kimchi; such an one was Ezekiel, (^{<2417>}Jeremiah 3:17). The Targum interprets it teachers; such were the apostles and first ministers of the Gospel; and all faithful preachers of it, who teach men good doctrine and watch for their souls, give them warning of their danger, and exhort them to flee to Christ for rest and safety; and these are of the Lord's appointing, constituting, and setting in his churches; (see ^{<4128>}1 Corinthians 12:28).

Saying, hearken to the sound of the trumpet; to their voice, lifted up like a trumpet, (^{<2801>}Isaiah 58:1), to the word preached by them; to the law, which lays before them their sin and danger; and to the Gospel, which is a joyful sound, and gives a certain one, and proclaims peace, pardon, and salvation, by Christ:

but they said, we will not hearken; so the Jews, in the times of Christ and his apostles, turned a deaf ear to their ministry, contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel, and judged themselves unworthy of it, and of eternal life, brought to light by it. Perhaps here it may regard the punishments threatened the Jews by the prophets, which they would not believe were coming upon them, but put away the evil day far from them.

Ver. 18. *Therefore hear, ye nations*, etc.] Since the Jews refused to hearken to the word of the Lord, the Gentiles are called upon to hear it, as in (^{<4135>}Acts 13:45,46), this is a rebuke to the Jews, that the Gentiles would hear, when they would not:

and know, O congregation; either of Israel, as the Targum and Kimchi explain it; or of the nations of the world, the multitude of them; or the church of God in the midst of them:

what is among them; among the Jews: either what evil is among them; what sins and transgressions are committed by them; which were the cause of the Lord's threatening them with sore judgments, and bringing them

upon them; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the words; to which agrees the Targum,

“and let the congregation of Israel know their sins;”

or the punishments the Lord inflicted on them: so the Vulgate Latin version, “and know, O congregation, what I will do unto them”; which sense is confirmed by what follows:

Ver. 19. *Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people,* etc.]

The people of the Jews; the evil of punishment, for the evil of sin committed by them; wherefore the earth, and the inhabitants of it, are called upon to bear witness to, the righteousness of such a procedure:

even the fruit of their thoughts; which they thought of, contrived, and devised; which shows that they did not do what they did inadvertently, but with thought and design. Kimchi interprets it of sinful deeds and actions, the fruit of thoughts; but his father, of thoughts themselves. The Talmudists,^{f143} comment upon it thus,

“a thought which brings forth fruit, the holy blessed God joins it to an action; but a thought in which there is no fruit, the holy blessed God does not join to action;”

that is, in punishment; very wrongly. For the sense is, that God would bring upon them the calamities and distresses their thoughts and the evil counsels of their minds deserved. The Targum renders it,

“the retribution or reward of their works.”

Because they have not hearkened unto my words; spoken to them by the prophets:

nor to my law, but rejected it; neither hearkened to the law, nor to the prophets, but despised both. The Targum is,

“because they obeyed not the words of my servants, the prophets, and abhorred my law.”

Ver. 20. *To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba,* etc.] In

Persia or Arabia, from whence incense was brought, and perhaps the best; (see ²³⁰⁶Isaiah 60:6), and yet the offering of this was of no esteem with God, when the words of the prophet, and the law of his mouth, were despised; (see ²³¹³Isaiah 1:13):

and the sweet cane from a far country? either from the same place, Sheba, which was a country afar off, (^{238B}Joel 3:8), or from India, as Jerom interprets it; this was one of the spices in the anointing oil, (^{238C}Exodus 30:23) and though this was of divine appointment, and an omission of it is complained of, (^{238D}Isaiah 43:24) yet when this was brought with a hypocritical heart, and to atone for neglects of the moral law, and sins committed against that, it was rejected by the Lord:

your burnt, offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me: being offered up with a wicked mind, and without faith in Christ, and in order to expiate the guilt of black crimes unrepented of, and continued in; they were not grateful to God, nor could he smell a sweet savour in them, but loathed and abhorred them; (see ^{238E}Isaiah 1:11).

Ver. 21. *Therefore thus saith the Lord,* etc.] Because of their immorality and hypocrisy, their contempt of his word, and confidence in legal rites and ceremonies:

behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this people; by which may be meant the judgments of God upon them, raising up enemies against them, and suffering them to invade their land; particularly the Assyrians, as the following words show. Moreover, the prophecies of the false prophets, and the doctrines which they were permitted to spread among the people, were snares and stumblingblocks unto them, they being given up to believe their lies, and to be hardened by them; nay, even true doctrines, the doctrines of justification and salvation by Christ, yea, Christ himself, were a rock of offence, and a stumbling stone to these people, (^{238F}Isaiah 8:14 ^{238G}Romans 9:32,33 ^{238H}1 Peter 2:7,8)

and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; or, “by them”^{f144}; the latter following the examples of the forager; and so it denotes, that as the corruption was general, the punishment would be:

and the neighbour and his friend shall perish; in the same calamity, being involved in the guilt of the same iniquity, in which they encouraged and hardened one another. The Septuagint and Arabic versions by “stumblingblocks” understand an “infirmity” or “disease”, which should come upon the people, and make a general desolation among them. Kimchi interprets the whole of the wickedness of fathers and children, neighbours and friends, and such as were in trade and partnership, and of their delight in mischief; that though they were aware of the stumblingblocks, yet would

not give each other warning of them. The whole, according to the accents, should be rendered thus, “and they shall fall upon them, the fathers and the sons together, the neighbour and his friend, and they shall perish”; falling and perishing are said of them all.

Ver. 22. *Thus saith the Lord, behold, a people cometh from the north country*, etc.] The Assyrians from Babylon, which lay north of Judea, as in (^{<2014>}Jeremiah 1:14,15 4:6):

and a great nation shall be raised; that is, by the Lord, who would stir them up to this undertaking. The Targum is,

“many people shall come openly:”

from the sides of the earth; afar off, as Babylon was, (^{<2015>}Jeremiah 5:15).

Ver. 23. *They shall lay hold on bow and spear*, etc.] That is, everyone of them should be furnished with both these pieces of armour, that they might be able to fight near and afar off; they had bows to shoot arrows at a distance, and spears to strike with when near. The Targum renders it bows and shields. “They are cruel, and have no mercy”; this is said, to strike terror into the hearts of the hardened Jews:

their voice roareth like the sea; the waves of it, which is terrible, (^{<2016>}Luke 21:25,26):

and they ride upon horses; which still made them more formidable, as well as suggests that their march would be quick and speedy, and they would soon be with them:

set in array as men for war; prepared with all sorts of armour for battle: or, “as a man”^{f145}; as one man, denoting their conjunction, ardour, and unanimity; being not only well armed without, but inwardly, resolutely bent, as one man, to engage in battle, and conquer or die; (see ^{<2018>}Judges 20:8),

against thee, O daughter of Zion; the design being against her, and all the preparation made on her account; which had a very dreadful appearance, and threatened with ruin, and therefore filled her with terror and distress, as follows.

Ver. 24. *We have heard the fame thereof*, etc.] Meaning not the prophet’s report then, but the rumour of the enemy’s coming from another quarter, at

the time he was actually coming. These are the words of the people, upon such a rumour spread; or the words of the prophet, joining himself with them, describing their case, when it would be strongly reported, and they had reason to believe it, that the enemy was just coming, and very near:

our hands wax feeble; have no strength in them, shake and tremble like men that have a palsy, through fear and dread:

anguish hath taken hold of us; tribulation or affliction; or rather anguish of spirit, on hearing the news of the near approach of the enemy:

and pain, as of a woman in travail; which comes suddenly, and is very sharp; and this denotes that their destruction would come suddenly upon them, before they were aware, and be very severe.

Ver. 25. *Go not forth into the field*, etc.] Either for pleasure, or for business; to take a walk in it for the air, or to till it, plough, sow, or reap; but keep within the city and its walls, there being danger:

nor walk by the way; in the high road from Jerusalem, to any town or village near it:

for the sword of the enemy: or, “because there is a sword for the enemy”^{f146}; or, “the enemy has a sword”; and that drawn; the enemy is in the field, and in the ways, and there is no escaping him:

and fear is on every side; all round the city, being encompassed by the Assyrian army: or, the enemy’s sword “is fear on every side”^{f147}; causes fear in all parts round the city. The Targum is,

“because the sword of the enemy kills those who are gathered round about;”

or on every side.

Ver. 26. *O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth*, etc.] Either as a token of repentance for sin; so the king of Nineveh and his subjects did, to show their repentance, (Jon 3:6,8) or as a sign of mourning, for the calamities coming on them, (^{OL3734}Genesis 37:34)

and wallow thyself in ashes; or roll thyself in them, as a token of the same. The Targum is,

“cover your heads with ashes.”

Make thee mourning as for an only son; which of all is the most bitter: and therefore it is added,

most bitter lamentation; (see ^{<3820>}Zechariah 12:10).

For the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us; namely, Nebuchadnezzar, that would spoil their cities, towns, villages, and houses, and them of all their wealth and substance, and carry it away.

Ver. 27. *I have set thee for a tower*, etc.] Or “in” one ^{f148}; in a watch tower, to look about and observe the actions of the people, their sins and transgressions, and reprove them for them; as well as to descry the enemy, and give notice of danger; (see ^{<3011>}Habakkuk 2:1) or, “for a trier”; since the word used comes from one which signifies to “try” metals, as gold and silver; and the rather this may be thought to be the meaning here, since the verb is made use of in this sense in the text; and the metaphor is carried on in the following words; though the word is used for towers in (^{<2313>}Isaiah 23:13 32:14) and may well enough be understood of a watchtower, agreeably with the office of the prophet; who is here addressed as a watchman, and was one to the house of Israel: and as the faithful discharge of his work required courage, as well as diligence and faithfulness, it follows, and

for a fortress among my people; not to defend them, but himself against them; or he was to consider himself as so under the divine protection, that he was as a fortress or strong tower, impregnable, and not to be dismayed and terrified with their calumnies and threatenings; (see ^{<3018>}Jeremiah 1:18):

that thou mayest know and try their way; their course and manner of life, whether good or bad; which he would be able to do, being in his watch tower, and in the discharge of his duty; for the ministry of a good man is as a touchstone, by which the principles and practices of men are tried and known; for if it is heard and attended to with pleasure, it shows that the principles and practices of men are good; but if despised and rejected, the contrary is evident, (see ^{<6115>}1 John 4:5,6).

Ver. 28. *They are all grievous revolters*, etc.] From the right way of God and his worship: or,

they are all revolters of revolters ^{f149}; of all, the greatest revolters, the greatest sinners and transgressors, the most stubborn and disobedient; or sons of revolters; fathers and children are alike. The Targum, is,

“all their princes rebel;”

and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions: “walking with slanders”: of one another; or with deceit, as the Targum; in a hypocritical and fraudulent manner; playing the hypocrite with God, or tricking and deceiving their neighbours. They are “brass and iron”; as vile and mean as those metals, and not as gold and silver; or as hard and inflexible as they are; or they deal as insincerely

“as he that mixes brass with iron;”

so the Targum:

they are all corrupters; as such that mix metals are; they are corrupters of themselves and of others, of the doctrines and manners of men, and of the ways and worship of God.

Ver. 29. *The bellows are burnt*, etc.] Which Kimchi interprets of the mouth and throat of the prophet, which, through reprovng the people, were dried up, and become raucous and hoarse, and without any profit to them; and so the Targum,

“lo, as the refiner’s blower, that is burnt in the midst of the fire, so the voice of the prophets is silent, who prophesied to them, turn to the law, and they turned not;”

or the judgments and chastisements of God upon the Jews may be meant, which were inflicted upon them to no purpose:

the lead is consumed of the fire; lead being used formerly, as is said^{f150}, instead of quicksilver, in purifying of silver; which being consumed, the refining is in vain: or it may be rendered,

out of the fire it is perfect lead^{f151}; or wholly lead, a base metal, no gold and silver in it, to which the Jews are compared:

the founder melteth in vain; to whom either the prophet is likened, whose reproofs, threatenings, and exhortations, answered no end; or the Lord himself, whose corrections and punishments were of no use to reform this people:

for the wicked are not plucked away; from their evil way, as Jarchi; or from good men, they are not separated the one from the other; or, “evils (sins) are not plucked away”^{f152}; from sinners: their dross is not purged away

from them; neither the words of the prophet, nor the judgments of God, had any effect upon them. The Targum of the latter part of the verse is,

“and as lead which is melted in the midst of the furnace, so the words of the prophets which prophesied to them were nothing in their eyes; and without profit their teachers taught them and they did not leave their evil works.”

Ver. 30. *Reprobate silver shall men call them*, etc.] Or, “call ye them”^{f153}, as the Targum; so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions; by whom are meant the Jews, who thought themselves of some account, as silver; being the seed of Abraham, and having the law, the covenant and promises, and service of God; when those that tried them, as the prophets, found them to be nothing but dross; and therefore, if they must be called silver, they could call them no other than reprobate silver; or what is of no account and value; and which is confirmed by the following reason, which contains the judgment and conduct of him that cannot err:

for the Lord hath rejected them; from being his people; and therefore cast them out of their own land, and caused them to go into captivity.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 7

In this chapter the Lord, by the prophet, calls the people of the Jews to repentance and reformation; reproves them for their vain confidence; and threatens them with destruction for their many sins, and particularly idolatry. The preface to all this is in (^{<2470B>}Jeremiah 7:1,2), the exhortation to amendment, encouraged to by a promise that they should dwell in the land, is in (^{<2470B>}Jeremiah 7:3), but this was not to be expected on account of the temple, and temple service; but through a thorough reformation of manners; an exercise of justice, and avoiding all oppression and idolatry, (^{<2470B>}Jeremiah 7:4-7), their vain confidence in the temple is exposed; they fancying that their standing there, and doing the service of it, would atone for their theft, murder, adultery, perjury, and idolatry; and that they might commit these with impunity; wherefore they are let to know, that so doing these they made the temple a house of thieves; and that for such wickedness, what the Lord had done to his place in Shiloh, which they are reminded of, he would to the temple, and to them, reject and cast them off, (^{<2470B>}Jeremiah 6:8-15), and seeing they also had a dependence on the prophet's prayer, he is bid not to pray for them, for his prayers would not be heard; and he is directed to observe their wretched idolatry, of which an instance is given, whereby they provoked the Lord to anger; and therefore he was determined to pour out his fury on man and beast, and on the trees and fruit of the field, (^{<2471G>}Jeremiah 7:16-20) and whereas they trusted in their burnt offerings and sacrifices, these are rejected, as being what were not originally commanded; but obedience to the moral law, and the precepts of it, which they refused to hearken to, though they were oft called upon to it by his servants the prophets, (^{<2472I>}Jeremiah 7:21-26), and it is foretold that the Prophet Jeremy would meet with the same treatment; that they would not hearken to his words, nor answer to his call; and therefore he should declare them a disobedient, incorrigible, and an unfaithful people, (^{<2472I>}Jeremiah 7:27,28) hence, either he, or Jerusalem, is called upon to cut off the hair, as a sign of mourning; for their rejection of the Lord, occasioned by their sins, and especially their idolatry, of which instances are given, (^{<2472I>}Jeremiah 7:29-31) and it is threatened that the

place of their idolatry should be a place of slaughter and of burial, till there should be no room for more; and the carcasses of the rest should be the food of fowls and beasts; and all joy should cease from Judah and Jerusalem, (²⁴⁷³Jeremiah 7:32-34).

Ver. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah*, etc.] The Word of prophecy, as the Targum:

from the Lord, saying; this begins a new prophecy. This verse, and the beginning of the next, are wanting in the Septuagint version.

Ver. 2. *Stand in the gate of the Lord's house*, etc.] That is, of the temple, and the court of it. This gate, as Kimchi says, was the eastern gate, which was the principal gate of all; (see ²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 26:2):

and proclaim there this word, and say; with a loud voice, as follows:

hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah; the inhabitants of the several parts of Judea, which came to the temple to worship; very probably it was a feast day, as Calvin conjectures; either the passover, or pentecost, or feast of tabernacles, when all the males in Israel appeared in court:

that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord; there were seven gates belonging to the court, three on the north, three on the south, and one in the east, the chief of all, as Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Ben Melech observe; and this agrees with the account in the Misna^{f154}. The names of them were these; on the south side were these three, the watergate, the gate of the firstlings; or the gate of offering, and the gate of kindling; on the north were these three, the gate Nitzotz, called also the gate of the song, the gate Korban, sometimes called the gate of women, and Beth Moked; and the gate in the east was the gate Nicanor, and this gate was the most frequented; and therefore Jeremiah was ordered to stand here, and deliver his message.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] The Lord of armies above and below in general, and the God of Israel in particular; wherefore they ought to hearken to what he was about to say, and to be obedient to him:

amend your ways and your doings; or, “make them good”^{f155}; which shows that they were bad, and were not agreeable to the law and will of God, to

which they ought to have been conformed; and the way to amend them was to act according to the rule of the divine word they were favoured with:

and I will cause you to dwell in this place; to continue to dwell in Jerusalem, and in Judea, the land of their nativity, and in the temple, the house of God, and place of religious worship; but, if not, it is suggested that they should not continue here, but be carried captive into a strange land.

Ver. 4. *Trust ye not in lying words*, etc.] In the words of the lying prophets, as the Targum; and to the same purpose is the Arabic version,

“do not trust in lying words, for the false prophets do not profit you in anything;”

the things in which they trusted, and in which the false prophets taught them to place their confidence, were their coming up to the temple at certain times for religious exercises, and their attendance on temple service and worship, offering of sacrifices, and the like. The Septuagint version is, “trust not in yourselves, in lying words”; (see ^A Luke 18:9), in their external actions of devotion, in their ritual performances, taking them for righteousness; and adds, what is not in the Hebrew text, “for they altogether profit you not”; in the business of justification before God, and acceptance with him:

saying, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these; that is, the people that hypocritically worshipped there, as the false prophets told them; and so the Syriac version, “ye are the temple of the Lord”; though that begins the next verse, with the last clause of this,

if ye amend your ways, etc. (see ^A 1 Corinthians 3:16,17) or rather the temple of the Lord are those gates through which they entered, (^A Jeremiah 7:2) or those buildings which were pointed at with the finger; or *hnh*, “these”, is a clause by itself; and the sense is, these are the lying words that should not be trusted in, namely, the temple and temple services; when all manner of sin and wickedness were committed by them, which they thought to atone for by coming to the temple and worshipping there. The mention of these words three times is, as Jarchi thinks, in reference to the Jews appearing in the temple three times a year, at the feast of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; and so the Targum,

“who say (i.e. the false prophets), before the temple of the Lord ye worship; before the temple of the Lord ye sacrifice; before the temple of the Lord ye bow; three times in a year ye appear before him.”

Kimchi’s father, R. Joseph, is of opinion, that it refers to the three parts of the temple, the porch, the holy place, and the holy of holies; but Kimchi himself takes it that these words are trebled for the greater confirmation of them; and they may denote the vehemence and ardour of affection for the temple.

Ver. 5. *For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings*, etc.] Or, “if ye make your ways good, and do your works well”, which is what is exhorted to (^{247B}Jeremiah 7:3), and respects the duties of the moral law; which are more acceptable to God than legal sacrifices, when done from right principles, and with right views, from love, in faith, and to the glory of God; which is doing good works well; the particulars of which follow:

if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; without respect to persons, without favour and affection, without bribery and corruption; passing a righteous sentence, and making an equitable decision of the case between them, according to the law of God, and the rules of justice and equity: this respects judges and civil magistrates.

Ver. 6. *If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow*, etc.] Who have none to help them, and who ought to have mercy and compassion shown them, as well as justice done them; and should not be injured by private men in their persons and properties, and much less oppressed in courts of judicature by those who should be the patrons and defenders of them:

and shed not innocent blood in this place: in the temple, where the sanhedrim, or great court of judicature, sat; for this does not so much respect the commission of murder by private persons, as the condemnation of innocent men to death by the judges, which is all one as shedding their blood; and by which actions they defiled that temple they cried up, and put their trust in; to shed innocent blood in any place, Kimchi observes, is an evil; but to shed it in this place, in the temple, was a greater evil, because this was the place of the Shechinah, or where the divine Majesty dwelt:

neither walk after other gods to your hurt; the gods of e people, as the Targum; “for this”, as the Arabic version renders it, “is pernicious to you”;

idolatry was more hurtful to themselves than to God; and therefore it is dissuaded from by an argument taken from their own interest.

Ver. 7. *Then will I cause you to dwell in this place*, etc.] In the land of Judea, and not suffer them to be carried captive, which they had been threatened with, and had reason to expect, should they continue in their sins, in their impenitence and vain confidence:

in the land that I gave to your fathers; to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by promise; and to the Jewish fathers in the times of Joshua, by putting them in actual possession of it:

for ever and ever: for a great while; a long time, as Kimchi explains it; from the days of Abraham for ever, even all the days of the world, provided they and their children walked in the ways of the Lord. This clause may either be connected with the word “dwell”, or with the word give; and the sense is, either that they should dwell in it for ever and ever; or it was given to their fathers for ever and ever.

Ver. 8. *Behold, ye trust in lying words*, etc.] What they are dissuaded from, (^{2100b}Jeremiah 7:4), is here affirmed they did, and which is introduced with a note of asseveration, attention, and admiration; it being a certain thing that they did so; and was what was worthy of their consideration and serious reflection upon; and it was astonishing that they should, since so to do was of no advantage to them, but the contrary:

that cannot profit; temple worship and service, legal sacrifices and ceremonies, could not take away sin, and expiate the guilt of it; or justify men, and render them acceptable to God; these, without faith in the blood and sacrifice of Christ, were of no avail; and especially could never be thought to be of any use and profit, when such gross abominations were indulged by them as are next mentioned.

Ver. 9. *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely*, etc.] At the same time they offered sacrifices, and trusted in them, they did those things, which would not be grateful to the Lord, nor profitable to them; or, “ye do steal”, etc.; so the Septuagint, and all the Oriental versions; and likewise the Targum; as charging them with them; these are sins against the second table of the law, as what follow are against the first:

and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; for they not only burnt incense to Baal, which was an act of idolatrous

worship; but served other strange gods they had not known before; whose names they had never heard of, and of whose help and assistance they now had no experience, nor received any benefit from, as they had on the one and only true God; and therefore it was great folly and ingratitude in them to forsake the Lord, and walk after these.

Ver. 10. *And come and stand before me in this house*, etc.] In the temple; this they did after they had been guilty of such immoralities and idolatry; thinking by their appearance there, and their performance of a few ceremonies, and offering of some sacrifices, that all were atoned for: or this denotes their impudence, that, after the commission of such notorious crimes, they should have the front to come into the house of God, and stand before him, as if they had never departed from him, and were his people, and the true worshippers of him:

which is called by my name; the temple of God, the house of God, the sanctuary of the Lord; and where his name was also called upon, being a house of prayer; or where prayer was made to the Lord:

and say, we are delivered; from the punishment of the above sins, by coming into the temple, and standing before the Lord in it; by calling on his name, and offering sacrifices, though with impure hearts and hands, and in a hypocritical way

to do all these abominations; before mentioned; theft, murder, adultery, perjury, and idolatry. The sense is, either we are delivered and freed from punishment, that we may do these things with impunity; this is the use we make of, and the inference we draw from, our deliverance from evil: or we are delivered, though we commit these abominations, and therefore in them: or, seeing we are delivered, therefore do we these things; not that they really said these words, but this was the language of their actions. The Syriac version is, “deliver us, while we commit all these sins”.

Ver. 11. *Is this house, which is called by my name*, etc.] Meaning the temple:

become a den of robbers in your eyes? or do you look upon it, and make use of it, as thieves do of dens; who, when they have robbed and murdered men, betake themselves to them, not only to share their spoil, but to hide themselves? just so those thieves, murderers adulterers, perjurers, and idolaters, after they had committed such gross enormities, came into the temple and offered sacrifices; thinking hereby to cover their sins, and

expiate the guilt of them, and to be looked upon as good men, and true worshippers of God, when they were no better than thieves and robbers; and such were the Pharisees in Christ's time, and such was the temple as made by them; (see ^{<4213>}Matthew 21:13):

behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord; not only all the abominations committed by them, but the use they made of the temple and the worship of it; all the hypocrisy of their hearts, and the inward thoughts of them, and their views and intentions in their offerings and sacrifices; as well as what ruin and destruction the Lord designed to bring shortly upon them, and upon that house which they had made a den of robbers; as follows:

Ver. 12. *But go ye now unto my place, which was in Shiloh,* etc.] A city in the tribe of Ephraim, on the north of Bethel, and the south of Lebonah, and not far from Shechem, (^{<47219>}Judges 21:19) here were the tabernacle, the ark and altar of the Lord, and the sacrifices; and therefore the tabernacle is called the tabernacle of Shiloh, (^{<49780>}Psalm 78:60), and here the Lord calls it his place; the place of the house of his Shechinah, as the Targum paraphrases it; and where he would have those people go; which is not to be understood locally, but of their taking this place into the consideration of their minds, and observe what was done to it, and became of it; though it was once the place where the Lord dwelt, and where his name was called formerly; as follows:

where I set my name at the first; when the children of Israel first entered into Canaan's land, the tabernacle was set up and established in Shiloh, in Joshua's time, (^{<4680>}Joshua 18:1) and there it continued to the times of Eli:

and see what I did to it, for the wickedness of my people Israel; he refused and forsook his tabernacle there; he suffered the ark, which was fetched from thence in the times of Eli, to be taken and carried captive, and that because of the sins of his people, (^{<49780>}Psalm 78:60,61,67 ^{<49004>}1 Samuel 4:4,11). Jerom^{f156} says, in his time, the altar that was pulled down was shown, though scarce the foundations of it were to be seen. Now the Lord would have these people consider what was done to Shiloh; that though this was the first place where the tabernacle was set in the land of Canaan, and so the inhabitants of it had antiquity on their side; yet this did not secure them, nor the tribe it was in, from being rejected by the Lord, when they sinned against him; nor should the tribes of Judah and Benjamin think themselves secure because of the temple of the Lord, since they might

expect he would do to them for their sins what he had done to others before.

Ver. 13. *And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord,* etc.] Meaning evil works, such as theft, murder, adultery, perjury, and idolatry, mentioned (^{<24008>}Jeremiah 7:8) or the same which were done by the people of Israel, on account of which the tabernacle at Shiloh was left:

and I spake unto you, rising up early; that is, by his servants the prophets, whom he sent unto them, and by whom he spoke, as the Targum paraphrases it, and as it is in (^{<24075>}Jeremiah 7:25 44:4 ^{<4865>}2 Chronicles 36:15), which shows the Lord's great concern for this people, his early care of them, in sending his servants betimes to warn, rebuke, and reclaim them:

and speaking, but ye heard not; would not listen to the words of the prophets, and of the Lord by them; but turned a deaf ear to them, which aggravates their stubbornness, obstinacy, and wickedness, that so much respect should be shown them, so much pains should be taken with them, and that so early, and yet to no purpose:

and I called you, but ye answered not; this call was by the external ministry of the prophets, and was with great vehemence in them, but not with divine energy; however, it was sufficient to leave the Jews without excuse; and their inattention to it exposes their hardness and wilful obstinacy; (see ^{<2024>}Proverbs 1:24).

Ver. 14. *Therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name,* etc.] The temple, as in (^{<24071>}Jeremiah 7:11), for though it was called by his name, and his name was called upon in it, yet this could not secure it from desolation; for so the name of the Lord was set in the tabernacle at Shiloh, and yet he forsook it through the wickedness of the people:

wherein ye trust; they trusted in the sacrifices there offered up, and the service there performed; in the holiness of the place, and because it was the residence of the divine Majesty; wherefore they thought this would be a protection and defence of them; and this was trusting in lying words, as in (^{<24074>}Jeremiah 7:4):

and unto the place which I gave unto you and your fathers; meaning either Jerusalem; and so the Syriac version renders it, "and to the city"; or the whole land of Judea, as in (^{<24077>}Jeremiah 7:7):

as I have done to Shiloh; (See Gill on “^{Q172}Jeremiah 7:12”).

Ver. 15. *And I will cast you out of my sight*, etc.] Or, “from before my face”, or “faces”^{f157}; out of the land of Judea, and cause them to go into captivity; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“I will cause you to remove out of the land of the house of my majesty:”

as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim; or Israel, as the Targum; that is, the ten tribes so called, because Ephraim, a principal tribe, and the metropolis of the kingdom, was in it, and Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, was of it: now, as they were carried captive into Babylon, so should the Jews; or they of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; who could not expect to fare better than their brethren, who were more in number than they; and especially since they were guilty of the same sins.

Ver. 16. *Therefore pray not thou for this people*, etc.] These are the words of the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah, forbidding him to pray for the people of the Jews; which he either was doing, or about to do, and which, from the great affection he had for them, he was inclined unto; wherefore, to show how much the Lord was displeased with them, and how determined he was to punish them with captivity, he orders the prophet not to make any supplication for them:

neither lift up cry nor prayer for them; referring to the gestures of lifting up the eyes and hands in prayer, and also to the frame of the heart, in the exercise of faith and holy confidence: “cry” and “prayer” are put together, because prayer is sometimes made, especially when persons are in great distress, with strong cryings and tears; (see ^{Q173}Hebrews 5:7):

neither make intercession to me; or, “meet me”^{f158}; or come between him and this people, and so act the part of a mediator, of which office intercession is a branch; it properly belongs to Christ. The Jews say^{f159} there is no **h[ygp]**, “meeting”, but prayer, or that is always intended by it; for proof of which they cite this passage:

for I will not hear thee; on the behalf of them, being so highly provoked by them, and determined they should go into captivity; (see ^{Q174}Jeremiah 15:1).

Ver. 17. *Seest thou not what they do in the cities Judah,* etc.] Not in one city only, but in all of and particularly the chief of them; as follows:

and in the streets of Jerusalem? these words, with what is said next, show the reason why the prophet was forbid to pray for this people, and the Lord was so provoked with them as to cast them out of his sight; and he appeals to the prophet, and to what he saw, or which he might see; for what was done was done not in secret, but openly, in the very streets of the city; by which he might be sufficiently convinced it was but just with God to do what he determined to do with them.

Ver. 18. *The children gather wood,* etc.] In the fields, or out of the neighbouring forest; not little children, but young men, who were able to cut down trees, and bear and carry burdens of wood:

and the fathers kindle the fire; take the wood of their children, lay it in order, and put fire to it; which shows that they approved of what their children did, and that what they did was by their direction and order:

and the women knead their dough; so that every age and sex were employed in idolatrous service, which is here intended; the corruption was universal; and therefore the whole body was ripe for ruin; nor would the Lord be entreated for them: and all this preparation was,

to make cakes for the queen of heaven; the moon, as Abarbinel; which rules by night, as the sun is the king that rules by day; and which was much worshipped by the Heathens, whom the Jews imitated. Some render it,

to the work, or workmanship, of heavens;^{f160} that is, to the whole host of heaven, sun, moon, and stars, which were worshipped in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem, (^{<423>}2 Kings 23:5). The Targum renders it,

“to the star of heaven;”

and Jarchi interprets it of some great star in the heaven, called the queen of heaven; and thinks that these cakes had the impress of a star upon them; (see ^{<318>}Amos 5:26) where mention is made of “Chiun, your image, the star of your god”. The word “chiun” is akin to the word here translated cakes, and thought to be explained by a star; see also (^{<418>}Acts 7:43) but it seems rather to be the moon, which is expressly called by Apuleius^{f161} the queen of heaven; and often by others Coelestis; and Urania by the Africans, as

Tertullian^{f162} and Herodian^{f163} affirm; as also Beltis, by Abydenus^{f164}; and Baaltis, by Philo-Byblius, or Sanchoniatho^{f165}; which have the signification of “queen”; and these cakes might have the form of the moon upon them, and be made and offered in imitation of the shewbread:

and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods; not different from the queen of heaven, and the hosts thereof; for to her and them drink offerings were poured out, (~~2448~~Jeremiah 44:18,19) but other gods besides the one, only, living, and true God:

that they may provoke me to anger; not that this was their intention, but so it was eventually.

Ver. 19. *Do they provoke me to anger? saith the Lord*, etc.] No: he cannot be provoked to anger as men are; anger does not fall upon him as it does on men; there is no such affection in God as there is in men; his Spirit cannot be irritated and provoked in the manner that the spirits of men may be; and though sin, and particularly idolatry, is disagreeable to him, contrary to his nature, and repugnant to his will; yet the damage arising from it is more to men themselves than to him; and though he sometimes does things which are like to what are done by men when they are angry, yet in reality there is no such perturbation in God as there is in men:

do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces? the greatest hurt that is done is done to themselves; they are the sufferers in the end; they bring ruin and destruction upon themselves; and therefore have great reason to be angry with themselves, since what they do issues in their own shame and confusion. The Targum is,

“do they think that they provoke me? saith the Lord; is it not for evil to themselves, that they may be confounded in their works?”

Ver. 20. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, etc.] Since these are their thoughts, and this the fruit of their doings:

behold, my anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place; like fire, to consume and destroy it; meaning Jerusalem, which was burned with fire; as an emblem of God’s wrath, and an instance of his vengeance upon it, for sins; which came down in great abundance, like a storm or tempest:

upon man and upon beast; upon beasts for the sake of man, they being his property, and for his use; otherwise they are innocent, and do not deserve the wrath of God, nor are they sensible of it:

and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of your ground; which should be blighted by nipping winds, or cut down and trampled upon by the Chaldean army:

and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched; that is, the wrath of God shall burn like fire, and shall not cease until it has executed the whole will of God in the punishment of his people.

Ver. 21. *Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] The Lord of armies above and below, and the covenant God of the people of Israel; who were bound to serve him, not only by the laws of creation, and the bounties of Providence, but were under obligation so to do by the distinguishing blessings of his goodness bestowed upon them; wherefore their idolatry, and other sins committed against him, were the more heinous and aggravated:

put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh; that is, add one offering to another; offer every kind of sacrifice, and, when you have done, eat the flesh of them yourselves; for that is all the advantage that comes by them; they are not acceptable to me, as Jarchi observes, therefore why should you lose them? burnt offerings were wholly consumed, and nothing was left of them to eat; but of other sacrifices there were, particularly the peace offerings; which the Jewish commentators think are here meant by sacrifices; and therefore the people are bid to join them together, that they might have flesh to eat; which was all the profit arising to them by legal sacrifices. The words seem to be sarcastically spoken; showing the unacceptableness of legal sacrifices to God, when sin was indulged, and the unprofitableness of them to men.

Ver. 22. *For I spake not unto your fathers*, etc.] Meaning not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but Moses, Aaron, and others, who were living at the time of the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egypt, as appears by what follows:

nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings, or sacrifices; these are not in the decalogue or ten commands; these are no part of that law or covenant, but are an appendage or addition to it; and though they are of early institution

and use, yet they never were appointed for the sake of themselves, but for another end; they were types of Christ, and were designed to lead the faith of the people of God to him; they never were intended as proper expiations of sin, and much less to cover and encourage immorality; whenever therefore they were offered up in a hypocritical manner, and without faith in Christ, and in order to atone for sinful actions, without any regard to the sacrifice of Christ, they were an abomination to the Lord. These were not the only things the Lord commanded the children of Israel; nor the chief and principal ones; and in comparison of others, of more consequence and moment, were as none at all; and which are next mentioned.

Ver. 23. *But this thing commanded I them, saying,* etc.] This was the sum and substance of what was then commanded, even obedience to the moral law; this was the main and principal thing enjoined, and to which the promise was annexed:

obey my voice: the word of the Lord, his commands, the precepts of the decalogue; obedience to which was preferable to the sacrifices of the ceremonial law; (see ⁽¹⁹⁵²⁾1 Samuel 15:22), wherefore it follows:

and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; the meaning is, that while they were obedient to him, he would protect them from their enemies, and continue them in their privileges and blessings, which he had bestowed upon them as his peculiar people:

and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you; not only in some of them, but in all of them; not merely in the observance of legal sacrifices, but chiefly in the performance of moral actions; even in all the duties of religion, in whatsoever is required in the law, respecting God or man:

that it may be well unto you; that they might continue in the land which was given them for an inheritance, and enjoy all the blessings promised to their obedience.

Ver. 24. *But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear,* etc.] Neither to the law that was given them, nor to the promises that were made unto them, this was the case of the Jewish fathers, and also of their posterity, to whom belonged the law, and the promises, and the service of God:

but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart; what their evil heart imagined, advised and directed to, that they attended to, walked in, and pursued after. The heart of man is evil; it is desperately

wicked, even wickedness itself; and so is every thought and every imagination of the thoughts of it and all its counsels, machinations and contrivances; and therefore the consequence of walking in these, or steering the course of life according to them, must be bad:

and went backward, and not forward; they went backwards from the ways of God, and walked not in them. The Targum is,

“they turned the back in my worship, and did not put my fear before their face;”

or else this may design, not their sin, but their punishment, as Kimchi interprets it; they did not prosper, but suffered adversity; a curse, and not a blessing, attended the works of their hands.

Ver. 25. *Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day*, etc.] That is, in all generations; ever since their first coming out of Egypt, they had been disobedient to the commands of God, and had walked after their own hearts’ lusts, and had gone backward, and not forward; for this is not to be connected with what follows:

I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them; which should be rendered, “although I have sent”^{f166}; which is an aggravation of their sin, that they should continue in their disobedience, though the Lord sent to them to exhort and warn them, not one, or two, of his servants the prophets, but all of them, and that daily; who rose early in the morning, which denotes their care and diligence to do their message; and which, because they were sent of the Lord, and did his work as he directed them, it is attributed to himself; and of these there was a constant succession, from the time of their coming out of Egypt unto that day; which shows the goodness of God to that people, and their slothfulness, hardness, and obstinacy.

Ver. 26. *Yet they hearkened not unto me*, etc.] Speaking by the prophets: *nor inclined their ear*; to what was said to them; would not listen to it, and much less obey what was commanded them:

but hardened their neck; and so became stiffnecked, and would not submit to bear the yoke of the law:

they did worse than their fathers; every generation grew more and more wicked, and went on to be so until the measure of their iniquity was filled up; hence it follows:

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them*, etc.]

Before mentioned in the chapter; exhortations to duty, dehortations from sin, promises and threatenings:

but they will not hearken to thee: so as to reform from their evil ways, and do the will of God; they will neither be allured by promises, nor awed by menaces:

thou shalt also call unto them; with a loud voice, showing great vehemency and earnestness, being concerned for their good, and knowing the danger they were in:

but they will not answer thee; this the Lord knew, being God omniscient; and therefore, when it came to pass, it would be a confirmation to the prophet of his mission; and being told of it beforehand, was prepared to meet with and expect such a reception from them; so that he would not be discouraged at it; and at the same time it would confirm the character given of this people before.

Ver. 28. *But thou shalt say unto them*, etc.] Having found by experience, after long speaking and calling to them, that they are a disobedient and incorrigible people:

this is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God; who, though the Lord is their God, and has chosen and avouched them to be his special people, whom he has distinguished by special favours; yet what he says by his prophets they pay no regard unto, and are no better than the Gentiles, which know not God:

nor receiveth correction; or “instruction”^{f167}; so as to be reclaimed, and made the better; neither by the word, nor by the rod; neither had any effect upon them:

truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth; neither faith nor faithfulness is in them; nothing but lying, hypocrisy, and insincerity.

Ver. 29. *Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away*, etc.] This supplement is made, because the word is feminine; and therefore cannot be directed to the prophet, but to Jerusalem, and its inhabitants; shaving the

head is a sign of mourning, (^{<1812>}Job 1:20) and this is enjoined, to show that there would soon be a reason for it; wherefore it follows:

and take up a lamentation on high places: that it might be heard afar off; or because of the idolatry frequently committed in high places. The Targum is,

“pluck off the hair for thy great ones that are carried captive, and take up a lamentation for the princes:”

for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath; a generation of men, deserving of the wrath of God, and appointed to it, on whom he determined to pour it out; of which his rejection and forsaking of them was a token: this was remarkably true of that generation in which Christ and his apostles lived, who disbelieved the Messiah, and had no faith in him, and spoke lying and blasphemous words concerning him; and therefore were rejected and forsaken by the Lord; and wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

Ver. 30. *For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord*, etc.] Meaning not a single action only, but a series, a course of evil actions; and those openly, in a daring manner, not only before men, but in the sight of God, and in contempt of him, like the men of Sodom, (^{<0133>}Genesis 13:13):

they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it; that is, set their idols in the temple; here Manasseh set up a graven image of the grove, (^{<1207>}2 Kings 21:7) which was done, as if it was done on purpose to defile it.

Ver. 31. *And they have built the high places of Tophet*, etc.] Where was the idol Moloch; and which place had its name, as Jarchi thinks, from the beating of drums, that the parents of the children that were burnt might not hear the cry of them: which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom; a valley near Jerusalem, and lay to the south of it, (^{<0153>}Joshua 15:8 18:16):

to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire: which was done, as Jarchi says, by putting them into the arms of the brasen image Moloch, heated hot. The account he gives of Tophet is this,

“Tophet is Moloch, which was made of brass; and they heated him from his lower parts; and his hands being stretched out, and made

hot, they put the child between his hands, and it was burnt; when it vehemently cried out; but the priests beat a drum, that the father might not hear the voice of his son, and his heart might not be moved:”

but in this he is mistaken; for “Tophet” was not the name of an idol, but of a place, as is clear from this and the following verse. There is some agreement between this account of Jarchi, and that which Diodorus Siculus^{f168} gives of Saturn, to whom children were sacrificed by the Carthaginians; who had, he says, a brasen image of Saturn, which stretched out his hands, inclining to the earth; so that a child put upon them rolled down, and fell into a chasm full of fire:

which I commanded them not: not in my law, as the Targum; nor by any of the prophets, as Jarchi paraphrases it; he commanded them, as Kimchi observes, to burn their beasts, but not their sons and daughters. The instance of Abraham offering up Isaac will not justify it. The case of Jephthah’s daughter, if sacrificed, was not by divine command. The giving of seed to Moloch, and letting any pass through the fire to him, is expressly forbidden, (~~CR21~~ Leviticus 18:21 20:23):

neither came it into my heart; it was not so much as thought of by him, still less desired, and much less commanded by him. Jarchi’s note is,

“though I spoke to Abraham to slay his son, it did not enter into my heart that he should slay him, but to make known his righteousness.”

Ver. 32. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord,* etc.] And they were coming on apace; a little longer, and they would be come; for it was but a few years after this ere Jerusalem was besieged and taken by the army of the Chaldeans, and the slaughter made after mentioned:

that it shall no more be called Tophet: no more be used for such barbarous and idolatrous worship; and no more have its name from such a shocking circumstance:

nor the valley of the son of Hinnom; as it had been from the times of Joshua:

but the valley of slaughter: or, “of the slain”; as the Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; because of the multitude of men that should be killed there, or brought there to be buried; as follows:

for they shall bury in Tophet till there be no place: till there be no more room to bury there; or, “because there was no place”^{f169} elsewhere; the number of the slain being so many: this was in righteous judgment, that where they had sacrificed their children, there they should be slain, at least buried.

Ver. 33. *And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth*, etc.] That is, those which remain unburied, for which there will be found no place to bury them in; all places, particularly Tophet, being so full of dead bodies; not to have a burial, which is here threatened, was accounted a great judgment:

and none shall fray them away; or frighten them away; that is, drive away the fowls and the beasts from the carcasses. The sense is, either that there should be such a vast consumption of men, that there would be none left to do this, and so the fowls and beasts might prey upon the carcasses without any disturbance; or else that those that were left would be so devoid of humanity, as not to do this office for the dead.

Ver. 34. *Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem*, etc.] Signifying that the devastation should not only be in and about Jerusalem, but should reach all over the land of Judea; since in all cities, towns, and villages, would cease

the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness; upon any account whatever; and, instead of that, mourning, weeping, and lamentation:

the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; no marrying, and giving in marriage, and so no expressions of joy on such occasions; and consequently no likelihood, at present, of re-peopling the city of Jerusalem, and the other cities of Judah:

for the land shall be desolate; without people to dwell in it, and till it. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “the whole land”.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 8

In this chapter the prophet goes on to denounce grievous calamities upon the people of the Jews; such as would make death more eligible than life; and that because of their idolatry, (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 8:1-3) and also because of their heinous backslidings in other respects, and continuance in them, (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 8:4,5) likewise their impenitence and stupidity, (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 8:6,7) their vain conceit of themselves and their own wisdom; their false interpretation of Scripture, and their rejection of the word of God, (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 8:8,9) their covetousness, for which it is said their wives and fields should be given to others, (^{<2480>}Jeremiah 8:10), their flattery of the people, and their impudence, on account of which, ruin and consumption, and a blast on their vines and fig trees, are threatened, (^{<2481>}Jeremiah 8:11-13), their consternation is described, by their fleeing to their defenced cities; by their sad disappointment in the expectation of peace and prosperity; and the near approach of their enemies; devouring their land, and all in it; who are compared to serpents and cockatrices that cannot be charmed, (^{<2484>}Jeremiah 8:14-17) and the chapter is closed with the prophet's expressions of sorrow and concern for his people, because of their distress their idolatry had brought upon them; and because of their hopeless, and seemingly irrecoverable, state and condition, (^{<2488>}Jeremiah 8:18-22).

Ver. 1. *At that time, saith the Lord, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah,* etc.] That is, either the Chaldeans or the Romans would do this; for this refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, either by the former or the latter; and it is certain that Jerusalem was ploughed up by the Romans, whereby the prophecy in (^{<3082>}Micah 3:12) was accomplished; when it is highly probable the graves were dug up, and the bones of the dead brought out, and scattered abroad by way of revenge; or it may be that graves were opened, especially the graves of kings and great men, for the sake of finding treasure in them: it follows,

and the bones of his princes; of the princes of Judah:

and the bones of the priests; that sacrificed to idols:

and the bones of the prophets: the false prophets; though this might be the case of the priests and prophets of the Lord; whose bones, in this general devastation, might be exposed as well as others; which of all might be thought to be the most sacred: and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem out of their graves; high and low, rich and poor, male and female; their graves, in common, were without the city.

Ver. 2. *And they shall spread them before the sun and the moon, and all the host of heaven*, etc.] The stars. This shows, not only that they should be publicly exposed; but, as it refers to their idolatrous worship of the sun, moon, and stars, that these deities will not be able to help them; as they could not prevent their dead bodies being dug up, so neither could they order or cause them to be gathered together, and buried again:

whom they have loved; whereas they ought to have loved the Lord their God, and him only: it means an idolatrous love of and affection for them; and not the love of them, as creatures for use and delight; otherwise the light of the sun, moon, and stars, is sweet, and their influence great; and a pleasant thing it is to behold them, and especially the former of them, the fountain of light and heat: and whom they have served; more and besides the Creator of them, whom they should have served, the Lord of hosts, and him only:

and after whom they have walked; not in a natural and literal sense, but in a religious one, as is after explained:

and whom they have sought; for advice and counsel, and by making their prayers and supplications to them:

and whom they have worshipped; by bowing the knee, or kissing the hand; by offering sacrifices, and burning incense, and putting up petitions to them; by trusting in them, and expecting good things from them; (see ^{<2218>}2 Kings 21:3-5 23:5 ^{<2078>}Jeremiah 7:18 ^{<2186>}Ezekiel 8:16):

they shall not be gathered, nor be buried: meaning not the men that should die in those times, but the bones that should be brought out of the graves; these, having been scattered about, should not be collected together again, and replaced in their sepulchres:

they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth; that is, they should lie and rot upon the face of the earth, and crumble into dust, and become dung for it; (see ^{<4830>}Psalm 83:10).

Ver. 3. *And death shall be chosen rather than life*, etc.] By them that should be alive in those times, who would be carried captive into other lands, and be used very hardly, and suffer greatly, by the nations among whom they should dwell; (see ^{<4806>}Revelation 9:6). The Septuagint version, and those that follow it, make this to be a reason of the former, reading the words thus, “because they have chosen death rather than life”; (see ^{<4509>}Deuteronomy 30:19), but the other sense is best, which is confirmed by what follows:

by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family; the nation of the Jews, become very corrupt and degenerate; so the people of Israel are called the whole family of Israel, (^{<4081>}Amos 3:1), now it is foretold, that those which remained of that people, who died not by famine, or were not slain by the sword, yet should be in such a miserable condition, as that death would be more eligible to them than life:

even which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the Lord of hosts: for, though they were carried captive by men, yet the thing was of the Lord, and a just punishment upon them for their sins.

Ver. 4. *Moreover, thou shalt say unto them*, etc.] The Jews, in Jeremiah’s time, in order to leave them inexcusable, though the Lord had before assured that they would not hearken to him, (^{<4177>}Jeremiah 7:27):

thus saith the Lord, shall they fall, and not rise? men, when they fall, endeavour to get up again, and generally they do:

shall he turn away, and not return? when a man turns out of the right way into a wrong one, as soon as he is sensible of his mistake, he returns back; this is usually done among men. This is generally the case in a natural sense, and might be expected in a moral sense; that whereas these people had fallen into sin, they would rise again by repentance; and, having turned from the good ways of God, would soon return again to them.

Ver. 5. *Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?* etc.] These people fall into sin, and rise not again by repentance; they turn out of the good ways of God and religion, and return not again; they backslide and revolt from the Lord, and they continue in

their revolt and rebellion; their backsliding is an everlasting one; there is no hope of their repentance and recovery: it is a vehement and passionate expostulation about the people of the Jews, founded upon the former general observation, showing them to be the worst of all people: it is a common saying, “it is a long lane that has no turning”; but these people, having departed from the Lord, return no more. A very learned man renders the words, “why does Jerusalem turn away this people with an obstinate aversion?”^{f170} that is, the rulers and governors of Jerusalem, as in (~~4237~~ Matthew 23:37) or rather thus, “why does a stubborn aversion turn away this people, O Jerusalem?” and so they are an address to the magistrates and inhabitants of Jerusalem.

They hold fast deceit; practise it, and continue in the practice of it, both with God and man:

they refuse to return: to the Lord, to his worship, and to the right ways of holiness and truth, from whence they had erred; (see ~~2483~~ Jeremiah 5:3).

Ver. 6. *I hearkened and heard*, etc.] These are either, the words of the prophet, as Kimchi and Abarbinel think; who listened and attended to, and made his observations upon, the words and actions, conduct and behaviour, of this people, of which he gives an account: or of the Lord himself, as the Targum; who hearkened to the language of their hearts and actions, and heard the words of their mouth; all that they spoke against him, against his prophets, and those that feared his name; all their lying words, their false swearing; all their oaths and curses, and every idle expression that dropped from them; all which he takes notice of, and men are accountable to him for them:

but they spake not aright: what is so in the sight of God and good men; what is agreeable to right reason, and the word of God; they spoke what was contrary to all this. Wicked men neither think aright, nor act aright, nor speak aright.

No man repented him of his wickedness: of his heart, of his lips, and of his life; no man can repent of himself; no man truly does, without the grace of God:

saying, what have I done? which question an impenitent man does not put; but when it is made, the true answer to be returned to it is, that which is contrary to the nature of God; which is a breach of his law; which a man has reason to be ashamed of; at which he may be astonished, it being so

exceeding sinful; that which cast the angels out of heaven, Adam out of paradise, and wicked men down to hell; which is deserving of the wrath of God, and eternal death; for which a man can never make atonement himself; and by which he is undone, to all intents and purposes, without an interest in Christ, and salvation by him.

Every one turneth to his course: which is not a good, but a bad one; sin is a way, a road, a path, in which men walk; a course, a series of sinning, a progress and persisting in it; such as the course of this world, and this course is evil, (~~⁸³²¹~~Ephesians 2:2):

as the horse rusheth into the battle, which denotes their swiftness to commit sin, the pleasure they take in it, and their inattention to danger, and death by it; (see ~~⁸³²¹~~Job 39:21-25), or overflows^{f171}; the impetuosity of the horse is expressed by the overflowing of a river.

Ver. 7. *Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times*, etc.] Of going and returning; for this is a bird of passage, as Pliny^{f172} and other naturalists observe; which goes away as winter approaches, and returns when that is over. The temperature of the air, as to heat and cold, and the natural propensity of such birds of passage to breed their young, are thought to be the incentives to change their habitation; and wonderful thing it is in nature, that they should know the proper time of their passage, what places to go to, and how to steer their course thither; and, as the above naturalist observes, they go and come in the night:

and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming: for these also are birds of passage; the turtle is absent in the winter, and its coming is a sign of spring, (~~²¹¹¹~~Song of Solomon 2:11,12), the crane, according to Aelianus^{f173}, goes away with the stork, and returns when winter is over; and the same is observable of the swallow; hence the common saying, one swallow does not make spring; so Horace^{f174} uses “hirundine prima” for the beginning of spring. Where these birds retire to is not known; some think the swallows fly into Egypt and Ethiopia; but Olaus Magnus^{f175} says they lurk in holes, and even under water, where they hang together, and are sometimes drawn out in clusters, and being brought to the fire, and thawed, will revive and fly about.

But my people know not the judgment of the Lord; meaning not the unsearchable judgments of God, or those providential dispensations of God which are a great deep, and are not clearly discerned and known by the

best of men; but either his own judgments, which are inflicted upon wicked men as punishments for sin, which yet are not taken notice of, and duly attended to, as they should be; or rather the law of God, and his revealed word, which is the rule of judgment and justice, and a declaration of righteousness, showing what is just and good, and ought to be done, which they were willingly ignorant of; or else the final and future judgment of God after death, to which all men must come, and into which every thought, word, and work, will be brought, and which day wicked men put far from them; (see ^{<2003>}Isaiah 1:3).

Ver. 8. *How do ye say, we are wise*, etc.] Which they were continually boasting of, though they were ignorant of the judgment of the Lord, and were more stupid than the stork, turtle, crane, and swallow:

and the law of the Lord is with us? this was the foundation of their boast, because the law was given to them, and not to the nations of the world, which knew not God, and therefore they must be a wise and understanding people; and this law continued with them, they had it in their synagogues, and in their houses, and read it, and heard, or at least they might and ought to have heard and read it, and in this they trusted; of this character and cast were the Jews in the times of Christ and his apostles, (^{<8017>}Romans 2:17-20) to which agrees the Targum,

“how say ye, we are wise, and in the law of the Lord we trust?”

Lo, certainly in vain made he it; either the law, which was made or given in vain by the Lord to this people, since they made no better use of it, and valued themselves upon having it, without acting according to it; or the pen of the scribe, which was made by him in vain to write it, as follows:

the pen of the scribes is in vain; in vain, and to no purpose, were the scribes employed in writing out copies of the law, when either it was not heard or read, or however the things it enjoined were not put in practice; or the pen of the scribes was in vain, when employed in writing out false copies of the law, or false glosses and interpretations of it, such as were made by the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ’s time, and the fathers before them, by whose traditions the word of God was made of none effect: and so the Targum,

“therefore, lo, in vain the scribe hath made the lying pen to falsify;”
that is, the Scriptures. The words may be rendered,

“verily, behold, with a lie he wrought; the pen: is the lie of the scribes^{f176}.”

Ver. 9. *The wise men are ashamed*, etc.] Of the wisdom of which they boasted, when it would appear to be folly, and unprofitable to them:

they are dismayed and taken; frightened at the calamities coming upon them, and taken as in a snare, as the wise sometimes are in their own craftiness, (^{<8613>}Job 5:13).

Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; sent by the prophets, which urged obedience to the law, and is the best explanation of it; but this they despised, and refused it:

and what wisdom is in them? to condemn that, which, if attended to, would have been profitable to them, and the means of making them wise unto salvation; let them therefore boast of their wisdom ever so much, it is certain there can be none in persons of such a spirit and conduct.

Ver. 10. *Therefore will I give their wives unto others*, etc.] To strangers, to the Gentiles; than which nothing could be more disagreeable to them, or a sorer punishment, of a temporal one:

and their fields to them that shall inherit them; or,

to the heirs^{f177}; other and new ones; and who should possess them as if they were the true and rightful heirs of them.

For everyone from the least even to the greatest is given to covetousness; from the prophet even to the priest everyone dealeth falsely; covetousness and false dealing, which prevailed in all ranks and orders of men among them, were the cause of their ruin: covetousness is the root of all evil; and to deal falsely, or make a lie, as the words may be rendered, is diabolical and abominable in the sight of God, and especially in men of such characters, who were to preach truth to others; (See Gill on ^{“<2063>}Jeremiah 6:13”).

Ver. 11. *For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people*, etc.] (See Gill on ^{“<2064>}Jeremiah 6:14”), (See Gill on ^{“<2065>}Jeremiah 6:15”).

Ver. 13. *I will surely consume them, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “gathering I will gather them”^{f178}; into some one place, the city of Jerusalem, and there destroy them. The word is, *hyyl k ^wql*, expressive of consumption and

destruction, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech observe; and so the Targum,

“destroying I will destroy them, saith the Lord.”

There shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; some understand this by way of complaint, that there were no fruit on the vine and fig tree, nor even leaves; which they allegorically interpret of the fruit of good works being wanting in them, which was the cause of their ruin. Others think there are metaphors which describe the manner of their destruction; and so the Targum,

“and they shall fall, as the grapes fall from the vine, and as the falling fruit from the fig tree, and as the leaf from the tree.”

Though it rather intends the sterility of the land, and in general the famine that should attend the siege of Jerusalem. Grapes and figs are mentioned only, as Kimchi observes, because they were the chief fruits, and they are put for the whole.

And the things that I have given them shall pass away from them; whatever they had in their barns and cellars, or were just becoming ripe in their fields, vineyards, and gardens, should either be blasted, or rather be taken away and devoured by their enemies, so that they themselves should not enjoy them. The Targum interprets it of the law transgressed by them, as the cause of their ruin, and paraphrases it thus,

“because I have given them my law from Sinai, and they have transgressed it;”

and so Jarchi,

“this shall be unto them, because I have given them statutes, and they have transgressed them.”

Ver. 14. *Why do we sit still?* etc.] In the country, where were barrenness and want of provisions; in the villages and unwalled towns, where they were exposed to the spoils and ravages of the enemy. These words, with what follow, are the words of the prophet, in the language of the Israelites, as Kimchi observes.

Assemble yourselves; this is the gathering together, in order to be consumed, before threatened, which they themselves were made to do:

and let us enter into the defenced cities; such as Jerusalem, where they thought they should be safe from their enemies:

and let us be silent there; either promising themselves rest, quietness, and security; or suggesting that it would be right in them to say nothing by way of complaint; having no reason to murmur at their afflictions, since they were no other than what their own sins had brought upon them:

for the Lord our God hath put us to silence; stopped their mouths that they could not complain, being convicted in their consciences of their sins; and brought them into a state of destruction and death, which makes silent:

and given us water of gall to drink; afflictions bitter and deadly. The Targum is,

“and hath made us drink the cup of an evil curse, as the heads of serpents;”

a poisonous and deadly potion:

because we have sinned against the Lord; which they were obliged to own; though it does not appear that they had true repentance for their sins, or amended their ways; sometimes confession of sin is made without either of these.

Ver. 15. *We looked for peace*, etc.] Outward prosperity, affluence of temporal blessings, peace with enemies, and safety from them, which the false prophets had given them reason to expect; or which last they concluded and hoped for, from their being in the defenced cities:

but no good came; they were disappointed in their expectation; the good that was promised them, and they looked for, never came, but all the reverse:

and for a time of health; or, of healing^{f179}; the political wounds of the commonwealth of Israel:

and behold trouble! or “terror”^{f180}; at the approach of the enemy, described in the following verses. The Targum is,

“a time of pardon of offences, and, lo, a punishment of sins.”

Healing, in Scripture, signifies pardon of sin; (see ^{<3940>}Psalm 41:4 103:3).

Ver. 16. *The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan*, etc.] That is, was heard at Jerusalem. It seems to be a hyperbolical expression, showing the certainty of the coming of the Assyrian monarch and his army, to invade Judea, and besiege Jerusalem; the news of which was brought from Dan, which lay in the further part of the land; (see ²⁴¹⁵Jeremiah 4:15), and pointing at the way in which they should come northwards, through Phoenicia and the tribe of Dan, with a numerous cavalry of horses and horsemen: for, by “his” horses are meant Nebuchadnezzar’s; unless, with Calvin, it can be thought that they are called the Lord’s, because ordered and sent by him, whose war it was against the people. The Targum paraphrases the words thus,

“because they worshipped the calf that is in Dan, a king with his army shall come up against them, and carry them captive;”

and so Jarchi interprets it.

The whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; his horses, strong and mighty; (see ⁴¹¹²²Judges 5:22) where we read of the prancings of the mighty ones; and here the Targum,

“at the voice of the treading of his strong ones, all the inhabitants of the earth shall be moved;”

and by the land trembling undoubtedly are meant the inhabitants of the land, filled with dread and consternation at the noise and near approach of the Chaldean army.

For they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it; or, “the fulness of it”; which because of the certainty of it, is represented as then done: the city, and those that dwell therein; meaning not only the city of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it, but other cities also, the singular being put for the plural; and so the Targum,

“the cities, and they that dwell in them.”

Ver. 17. *For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you*, etc.] The Chaldeans, comparable to these noxious and hurtful creatures, because of the mischief they should do unto them. The Targum is,

“for, lo, I will raise up against you people that kill as the destroying serpents.”

These were raised up by the Lord, and sent by him, just as he sent fiery serpents among the Israelites in the wilderness, when they sinned against him; there literally, here metaphorically.

Which will not be charmed: Jarchi says, at the end of seventy years a serpent becomes a cockatrice, and stops its ear, that it will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, according to (¹⁸⁸⁰Psalm 58:4,5), the meaning is, that these Chaldeans would not be diverted from their purposes in destroying of the Jews by any arts or methods whatever; as not by force of arms, so not by good words and entreaties, or any way that could be devised.

And they shall bite you, saith the Lord; that is, kill them, as the Targum interprets it; for the bite of a serpent is deadly.

Ver. 18. *When I would comfort myself against terror,* etc.] Either naturally, by eating and drinking, the necessary and lawful means of refreshment; or spiritually, by reading the word of God, and looking over the promises in it:

my heart is faint in me; at the consideration of the calamities which were coming upon his people, and which were made known to him by a spirit of prophecy, of which he had no room to doubt. So the Targum takes them to be the words of the prophet, paraphrasing them,

“for them, saith the prophet, my heart grieves.”

Ver. 19. *Behold, the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people,* etc.] This was what made his heart faint, such was his sympathy with his countrymen, his people in distress, whom he affectionately calls the daughter of his people, whose cry was loud, and whose voice he heard lamenting their case:

because of them that dwell in a far country; because of the Chaldeans, who came from a far country; (see ²⁴⁵⁵Jeremiah 5:15) who were come into their land, and devoured it; through fear of them, and because of the devastation they made; hence the voice of their cry: or this is to be understood of the Jews in a far country, carried captive into Babylon, and the voice of their cry there, because of their captivity and oppression. So Abarbanel and the Targum,

“lo, the voice of the cry of the congregation of my people from a far country;”

and so read the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions.

Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her King in her? these are the words of the people, complaining of the Lord, calling in question whether he was in Zion, and whether he was King there; and if he was, how came it to pass that he did not protect it; that he suffered the city to be taken, and the inhabitants to be carried captive?

Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with their strange vanities? that is, with their idols, and their idolatrous worship; this is the Lord’s answer to them, giving a reason why he suffered the enemy to come in among them, and prevail over them, namely, their idolatry. It may be rendered, “with the vanities of a stranger”^{f181}; of a strange people, or of a strange god.

Ver. 20. *The harvest is past*, etc.] Which was in the month of Ijar, as Jarchi observes, and answers to part of April and May:

the summer is ended; which was in the month Tammuz, and answers to part of June and July:

and we are not saved; delivered from the siege of the Chaldeans; and harvest and summer being over, there were no hopes of the Egyptians coming to their relief; seeing winter was approaching; and it may be observed, that it was in the month of Ab, which answers to part of July and August, that the city and temple were burnt. These are the words of the people of the Jews, despairing of help and salvation. So the Targum,

“the congregation of Israel said, the time is passed, the end is up, and we are not redeemed.”

Ver. 21. *For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt*, etc.] These are the words, not of God, as Jerom; nor of Jerusalem, as the Targum; but of the prophet, as Kimchi observes, expressing his sympathy with the people in their affliction: and they may be rendered, “for the breach of the daughter of my people”^{f182}, which was made when the city was broken up and destroyed, (²⁶³⁷Jeremiah 52:7).

I am broken; in heart and spirit:

I am black; with grief and sorrow. The Targum is,

“my face is covered with blackness, black as a pot.”

Astonishment hath taken hold on me; at the miseries that were come upon his people; and there was no remedy for them, which occasion the following words.

Ver. 22. *Is there no balm in Gilead?* etc.] Which was famous for it; (see ^{<1375>}Genesis 37:25), or rather turpentine or rosin, a gum which drops from pine trees and the like; since balm or balsam grew on this side Jordan, near Jericho and Engedi, and not beyond Jordan, in the land of Gilead; and rosin is good for healing. Some render it “treacle”, but very wrongly, since, as Calvin observes, that is a composition of many things,

Is there no physician there? or surgeon, anyone that heals wounds and bruises; very probably there were many such lived in Gilead, since it was a place where proper medicines were to be got and applied: this may be understood of prophets and teachers, who, in a moral and spiritual sense, are instruments of healing of men, by showing them their evil, calling them to repentance, and directing where to go for healing or pardon of sin; namely, to Christ, the alone physician, and to his precious blood, shed for the remission of sins. Some reference may be had to Elijah, who was of Gilead, and to the school of the prophets there, (^{<1170>}1 Kings 17:1). The Targum is,

“Jeremiah the prophet said, perhaps there are no good works in me, that I should supplicate for the house of Israel; should I not desire the doctrine of Elijah the prophet, who was of Gilead, whose words were healing?”

Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? that is, seeing there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there, how comes it to pass that such medicine is not made use of, and such a physician not applied to, that health might be restored? This shows the stupidity, sluggishness, and indolence of the people, and how inexcusable they were, as well as the prophet’s great concern for their welfare; the want of means of deliverance, or non-attendance to them, or the failure of them.

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 9

This chapter is a continuation of the judgments of God upon the Jews for their sins and transgressions herein mentioned; illustrated by the lamentation of the prophet; by calling for the mourning women, and upon other women that had lost their husbands or children, with an intimation that none of any rank and class should escape. The prophet is introduced mourning over the destruction of his people, (²⁴⁹⁰Jeremiah 9:1), and as uneasy at his stay with them, because of their uncleanness, treachery, lying, unfaithfulness, and deceit, (²⁴⁹²Jeremiah 9:2-6), wherefore the Lord threatens to melt and try them; and for their deceitfulness particularly to visit them, and avenge himself on them, (²⁴⁹⁷Jeremiah 9:7-9), the destruction is described by the desolation of the mountains and habitations of the wilderness; they being so burnt up, that there were neither grass upon them, nor beasts nor birds to be seen or heard about them; and of Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, so that there was no inhabitant in them, (²⁴⁹⁸Jeremiah 9:10,11), upon which a wise man is inquired after, to give the true reason of all this, (²⁴⁹⁹Jeremiah 9:12) but none appearing, the Lord gives it himself; which were their disobedience to his law, and their worship of idols, following the imagination of their own hearts, (²⁴⁹³Jeremiah 9:13,14) wherefore they are threatened to be fed with wormwood and gall; to be scattered among the nations, and a sword sent after them to their utter consumption, (²⁴⁹⁵Jeremiah 9:15,16), hence, for the certainty of it, mourning women are ordered to be called for in haste, to assist them in their mourning, on account of their distress, (²⁴⁹⁷Jeremiah 9:17-19), and such as were mothers of children are bid to teach their daughters and neighbours lamentation, because of the children and young men cut off by death, and for the carcasses of men that should fall as dung in the field, and as the handful after the harvestman, (²⁴⁹⁸Jeremiah 9:20-22), and it is suggested that none should escape; not the wise man by any art or cunning he was master of; nor the strong man by his strength; nor the rich man by his riches; and therefore ought not either of them to glory in these things, but in the Lord, as exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, (²⁴⁹³Jeremiah 9:23,24), and the chapter is

concluded with a strong asseveration, that the wicked, both circumcised and uncircumcised, should be punished, (²⁴⁰²⁵Jeremiah 9:25,26).

Ver. 1. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears,* etc.] Or, “who will give to my head water, and to mine eyes a fountain of tears?” as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions. The prophet wishes that his head was turned and dissolved into water, and that tears might flow from his eyes as water issues out from a fountain; and he suggests, that could this be, it would not be sufficient to deplore the miserable estate of his people, and to express the inward grief and sorrow of his mind on account of it.

That I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people; the design of all this is to set forth the greatness and horribleness of the destruction, signifying that words were wanting to express it, and tears to lament it; and to awaken the attention of the people to it, who were quite hardened, insensible, and stupid. The Jewish writers close the eighth chapter with this verse, and begin the ninth with the following.

Ver. 2. *Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men,* etc.] Such as travellers take up with in a desert, when they are benighted, and cannot reach a town or village. This the prophet chose, partly that he might have an opportunity to give vent to his grief, being alone; for which reason he did not desire to be in cities and populous places, where he might be amused and diverted while his people were in distress: and partly to show his sympathy, not being able to bear the sight of their misery; and also some degree of indignation at their impieties, which had brought ruin upon them; on account of which it was more eligible to dwell with the wild beasts of the desert than with them in his native country: wherefore it follows,

that I might leave my people, and go from them; which of itself was not desirable; no man chooses to leave his country, his own people, and his father’s house, and go into distant lands and strange countries; and especially into a wilderness, where there is neither suitable food nor agreeable company: wherefore this shows, that there must be something very bad, and very provoking, to lead him to take such a step as this: the reason follows,

for they be all adulterers; either in a literal or figurative sense; the latter seems rather intended; for though corporeal fornication and adultery might

greatly prevail among them, yet not to such a height as that “all” of them were guilty; whereas idolatry did generally obtain among them: an assembly of treacherous men; not a few only, but in general they were apostates from God and from true religion, and treacherous to one another. The Septuagint calls them “a synod”; and Joseph Kimchi interprets it “a kingdom”; deriving the word from רָמַל, as it signifies to have rule and dominion; denoting, that the kingdom in general was false and perfidious.

Ver. 3. *And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies*, etc.] Their tongues were like bows, and their lying words like arrows, which they directed against persons to their injury; (see ^{⁹¹¹²Psalm 11:2 64:3), or, “like their deceitful bow”^{f183}; to which the Targum agrees,}

“they teach their tongues words of falsehood, they are like to a deceitful bow.”

Most agreeably to the accents the words may be rendered, “they bend their tongues, their bow is a lie”^{f184}; either deceitful, or carries a lie in it, and shoots one out of it:

but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; which a man should do everything for, and nothing against; and which he should earnestly contend for, and not part with or give up at any rate; not only for the truth of doctrine, for faith, as the Targum; for the doctrine of faith, the truth of the Gospel, and as it is in Christ; but for truth between man and man, for veracity, rightness, and integrity: for they proceed from evil to evil; from one sin to another, growing worse and worse, as wicked men and deceivers usually do. Kimchi observes, it may be interpreted, as of evil works, so of the evil of punishment, from one evil of the enemy to another; or this year they are smitten with blasting, another with mildew, or with the locust, and yet they turn not from their evil ways:

and they know not me, saith the Lord; the God of truth, and without iniquity, and who will severely punish for it; they did not serve and worship him as the only Lord God. The Targum is,

“the knowledge of my fear they learned not.”

Ver. 4. *Take ye heed everyone of his neighbour*, etc.] Take care of being imposed upon by them, since they are so given to lying and deceit; be not too credulous, or too easily believe what is said; or keep yourselves from

them; have no company or conversation with them, since evil communications corrupt good manners:

and trust ye not in any brother; whether by blood or by marriage, or by religion, believe not his words; trust him not, neither with your money, nor with your mind; commit not your secrets to him, place no confidence in him; a people must be very corrupt indeed when this is the case: or, “trust ye not in every brother”^{f185}; some may be trusted, but not all though the following clause seems to contradict this,

for every brother will utterly supplant; or, in supplanting supplant^{f186}; play the Jacob, do as he did by his brother, who supplanted him twice; first got the birthright from him, and then the blessing; which was presignified by taking his brother by the heel in the womb, from whence he had his name; and the same word is here used, which signifies a secret, clandestine, and insidious way of circumventing another;

and every neighbour will walk with slanders; go about spreading lies and calumnies, as worshippers, backbiters, and tale bearers do. The word **lykd** is used for a “merchant”; and because such persons went from place to place with their goods, and made use often times of fraudulent practices to deceive people, it is applied to one that is guilty of slander and calumny; (²⁸⁸Song of Solomon 3:8).

Ver. 5. *And they will deceive everyone his neighbour*, etc.] In conversation, with lying words; and in trade and commerce, by art and tricking:

and will not speak the truth; with respect to facts they report, or goods they sell:

they have taught their tongue to speak lies; and become so accustomed to lying that they cannot do otherwise; it is as it were natural to them:

and weary themselves to commit iniquity; spared no pains to come at it, nor any in it, and go on even to weariness; are more laborious and indefatigable in committing sin than good men are in doing good; which shows great folly and stupidity. The Targum is,

“they are become foolish, they have erred.”

Ver. 6. *Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit*, etc.] In the midst of a people of deceit, as Kimchi and Ben Molech. These are the words of the

Lord to the prophet, showing what a people he dwelt among, and had to do with; how cautiously and prudently he should act; how little they were to be trusted to and depended upon; and what little hope there was of bringing them to true repentance, since there was so much deceit and hypocrisy among them. The Targum interprets the words not of the habitation of the prophet, but of the people, thus,

“they sit in the house of their own congregation, and talk of their iniquities deceitfully;”

and so Jarchi,

“while they are sitting they devise deceitful devices.”

Through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord: or, “because of deceit”^{f187}; hypocrisy being a reigning and governing sin in them; they liked not the true knowledge of God, and refused to worship him according to the revelation of his will.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts,* etc.] Because of this deceit and hypocrisy, and lying:

behold, I will melt them, and try them: as the refiner does his gold and silver, by putting them into the fire of afflictions, and thereby remove their dross and corruption from them. So the Targum,

“behold, I will bring distress upon them, and melt them, and try them.”

For how shall I do for the daughter of my people? the sense is, what could be done otherwise or better? what was more fit or proper to be done, than to melt and try them, and purge away their sin, “from the face of the daughter of my people”, as the words may be rendered? The Septuagint version is, “what shall I do from the face of the wickedness of my people?” and so the Targum,

“what shall I do from before the sins of the congregation of my people?”

that is, by way of resentment of them, and in order to remove them.

Ver. 8. *Their tongue is as an arrow shot out,* etc.] As an arrow out of a bow, which moves swiftly, and comes with great force; or, “drawn out”^{f188}; as out of a quiver. The word is used of gold, and rendered “beaten gold”,

(~~11006~~1 Kings 10:16), gold drawn out into plates; and here of an arrow drawn out of a quiver; and so it is interpreted in the Talmud^{f189}; or is “wounding”, as the Septuagint, or “slaying”^{f190}; denoting the mischief and injury done to the characters of men, by a deceitful, detracting, and calumniating tongue. The Targum is, “as a sharp arrow their tongue”; which pierces deep, and is deadly; (see Gill on “~~2008~~Jeremiah 9:3”),

it speaketh deceit; deceitful words, by which men are imposed upon, and are led into wrong ways of thinking and acting:

one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth; salutes him in a friendly manner; wishes him all health, peace, and prosperity; professes a sincere and cordial friendship for him, and pretends a strong affection to him:

but in his heart he layeth wait; to draw him into snares, and circumvent, trick, and defraud him.

Ver. 9. *Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord*, etc.] The Targum adds,

“to bring evil upon them.”

Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? the Targum is,

“or of a people whose works are such, shall I not take vengeance according to my pleasure?”

(See Gill on “~~2009~~Jeremiah 5:9”).

Ver. 10. *For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing*, etc.] Because of the desolation of them; because no pasture upon them, nor flocks feeding there; or “concerning” them, as the Arabic version; or “upon” them^{f191}, in order to cause the lamentation to be heard the further; but the former sense seems best, as appears by what follows. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read it as an exhortation to others, “take up a weeping”: but they are the words of the prophet, declaring what he would do.

And for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation; for the cottages of the shepherds, erected for their convenience, to look after their flocks, feeding on the mountains, and in the valleys; for the wilderness does not denote barren places, but pastures:

because they are burnt up; by the fire of the Chaldeans, who burnt the cottages, and drove off the cattle:

so that none can pass through them; or there is none that passes through; as no inhabitant there, so no passenger that way; which shows how very desolate these places were:

neither can men hear the voice of the cattle; the lowing of the oxen, or the bleating of the sheep, there being none to be heard, being all carried off; and indeed no men to hear them, had there been any:

both the fowl of the heavens and the beasts are fled, they are gone; or, “from the fowl of the heavens to the beasts”, etc.^{f192}, the places lying waste and uncultivated; there were no seed for the fowls to pick up, which generally frequent places where there is sowing, and where fruit is brought to perfection; and no pasture for the beasts to feed upon. Kimchi says these words are an hyperbole. The word **hmhb**, “beast”, being by geometry, or numerically, fifty two, the Jews^{f193} gather from hence, that for the space of fifty two years no man passed through the land of Judah; which they reckon from the time that Zedekiah was carried captive, to the commandment of Cyrus.

Ver. 11. *And I will make Jerusalem heaps*, etc.] That is, the walls and houses of it shall be thrown down, and become heaps of stones and rubbish:

and a den of dragons; only inhabited by wild beasts:

and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without inhabitant; so that the calamity would be universal; not only Jerusalem, but all the cities of the land, would be destroyed, forsaken, and uninhabited.

Ver. 12. *Who is the wise man that may understand this?* etc.] Not the calamity, but the cause of it; a man of wisdom would inquire into it, find it out, and understand it; but the intimation is, that there was not a wise man among them, at least very few; there were scarce any that took any notice of these things, or were concerned about them:

and who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken; and foretold this desolation and destruction; meaning a prophet:

that he may declare it; as from the Lord, namely, what follows:

for what the land perisheth, and is burnt like a wilderness, that none passeth through? that is, what were the sins of the inhabitants of the land, which brought such distress upon it, and for which it became such a ruinous heap, and like the heath in the wilderness, so that it had no inhabitant, nor even a passenger: they must be some very great and abominable iniquities that were the cause of all this.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord saith*, etc.] The Septuagint version adds, “to me”; there being no wise and understanding man, nor prophet^{f194}, to take up this affair, and open the cause of it, therefore the Lord undertakes it himself: the question was put to them, but they not answering it, the Lord does it,

because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them; in a plain and easy manner, so as to be readily understood; yet this they attended not unto, but forsook it, neglected it, and cast it behind their backs. Kimchi’s note on the phrase, “before them”, is,

“not in heaven is it, nor beyond the sea is it;”

(see ^{<6301>}Deuteronomy 30:11-14):

and have not obeyed my voice; in the law, and by the prophets:

neither walked therein: according to it, as the Lord directed; they neither hearkened to the voice of the Lord, nor did as they were instructed by it.

Ver. 14. *But have walked after the imagination of their own heart*, etc.] What their own hearts devised, chose, and were best pleased with; (See Gill on “^{<2472>}Jeremiah 7:24”),

and after Baalim; the idols of the Gentiles; these they served and worshipped, and not the true God:

which their fathers taught them; which was so far from excusing them, that it was an aggravation of their sin, that they had continued in their wicked ways and idolatrous practices, from age to age, from one generation to another. This then was the cause of their calamity and destruction; they had forsaken the law of the Lord, and had broken that; they had chose their own ways, and had been guilty of idolatrous practices time out of mind; wherefore the Lord had shown much longsuffering and patience with them, and would now no longer forbear he was just and righteous in his doings.

Ver. 15. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] He calls himself “the Lord God of hosts”, of armies above and below, in heaven and in earth, in opposition to Baalim, the idols of the Gentiles; which word signifies “lords”; which, though there be many who are called so, there is but one God, and one Lord, who is God over all, and “the God of Israel”; who had chosen them, and distinguished them by the blessings of his goodness; and yet they had forsaken him, and followed after other gods; by which the eyes of his glory were provoked, and he was determined to chastise them for it:

behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood; that is, with straits or difficulties, as the Septuagint version; with bitter afflictions; such are not joyous, but grievous; which are irksome and disagreeable, as bitter things, and particularly wormwood, are to the taste. The Targum is,

“I will bring tribulation upon them, bitter as wormwood:”

and give them water of gall to drink; meaning either of the entrails of a beast so called, or of the juice of the herb hemlock, as the word is rendered in (²³⁰⁰⁴Hosea 10:4), as Kimchi; or of the poison of a serpent, as Jarchi; and so the Targum,

“and I will give them the cup of cursing to drink as the heads of serpents:”

signifying that their punishment would be very severe, though just.

Ver. 16. *I will scatter them also among the Heathen,* etc.] Besides the bitter judgments of famine and pestilence during the siege, what remained of them should be carried captive out of their own land into foreign countries, than which nothing could be more distressing:

whom neither they or their fathers have known; a circumstance greatly aggravating their captivity:

and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them; or men that kill with the sword, as the Targum: it chiefly regards such of them as were scattered among the Moabites and Ammonites, and especially that went into Egypt; (see ²⁴⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 44:27,28).

Ver. 17. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider ye,* etc.] The punishment that was just coming upon them, as Kimchi; or the words that the Lord was about to say unto them; as follows:

and call for the mourning women, that they may come; the same with the “*præficae*” among the Romans; persons that were sent for, and hired by, the relations of the dead, to raise up their mourning; and who, by their dishevelled hair, naked breasts, and beatings thereon, and mournful voice, and what they said in their doleful ditties in praise of the dead, greatly moved upon the affections of the surviving relatives, and produced tears from them. This was a custom that early prevailed among the Jews, and long continued with them; and was so common, that, according to the Misnic doctors^{f195}, the poorest man in Israel, when his wife died, never had less than two pipes, and one mourning woman; (see Gill on “~~4023~~ Matthew 9:23”). Now, in order to show what a calamity was coming on them, and what mourning there would be, and what occasion for it; the Lord by the prophet, not as approving, but deriding the practice, bids them call for the mourning women to assist them in their lamentations:

and send for cunning women, that they may come; such as were expert in this business, and could mimic mourning well, and had the art of moving the affections with their voice and gestures.

Ver. 18. *And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us*, etc.] Deliver out a mournful song, as the Arabic version; setting forth their miseries and distresses, and affecting their minds with them. The prophet puts himself among the people, as being a party concealed in their sufferings, and sympathizing with them, as well as to show the certainty of then and how soon they would be involved in them:

that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters; or balls of the eye, as the Targum and Kimchi; these hyperbolical expressions are used to express the greatness of the calamity, and that no mourning was equal to it; (see ~~2000~~ Jeremiah 9:1).

Ver. 19. *For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion*, etc.] Out of the fortress of Zion, out of the city of Jerusalem, which was thought to be inexpugnable, and could never be taken; but now a voice is heard out of that, deploring the desolation of it:

how are we spoiled? our houses destroyed, and we plundered of our substance:

we are greatly confounded: filled with shame, on account of their vain confidence; thinking their city would never be taken, and they were safe in it:

because we have forsaken the land; the land of Judea, being obliged to it, the enemy carrying them captive into other countries:

because our dwellings have cast us out; not suffering us to continue there any longer, as being unworthy of them; or enemies have cast down our habitations to the earth, as Jarchi; and so the Targum, “for our palaces are desolate”; the principal buildings in Jerusalem, as well as the houses of the common people, were thrown down to the ground, or burnt with fire, and particularly the temple; so that the whole was in a most ruinous condition, and a fit subject of a mournful song.

Ver. 20. *Yet hear the word of the Lord, O ye women*, etc.] Not the mourning women, but others who had lost their husbands and their children, and had just reason for real mourning; and therefore they are called upon to it, not only because they were more tenderhearted than men, as Kimchi observes; or because they were more attentive to the hearing of the word of God than men; but because of the paucity of men, such numbers being slain in the siege, and by the sword; and of the loss the women had sustained, (see ³⁴²²Jeremiah 9:22):

and let your ear receive the word of his mouth; by his prophets; so the Targum,

“let your ear hearken to the words of his prophets:”

and teach your daughters wailing. The Arabic version, “a mournful song”; but not the daughters of the mourning women are meant; but the real daughters of those who had lost their husbands or children; since it follows:

and everyone her neighbour lamentation; signifying that the mortality among them would be very universal, not a family escaping; which is described in the next verses. This wailing and lamentation was made by responses, according to the Jews; for they say ^{f196},

“what is lamentation? when one speaks, and all the rest answer after her, as it is written in (³⁴²³Jeremiah 9:20).”

Ver. 21. *For death is come up into our windows*, etc.] Their doors being shut, bolted, and barred, they thought themselves safe, but were not; the Chaldeans scaled their walls, broke in at the tops of their houses, or at their windows, and destroyed them: for the invasion of the enemy, and the

manner of their entrance into them, seem to be described. Death is here represented as a person, as it sometimes is in Scripture; (see ^{f188}Revelation 6:8 20:13,14) and as coming suddenly and unawares upon men, and from whom there is no escape, or any way and method of keeping him out; bolts and bars will not do; he can climb up, and go in at the window:

and is entered into our palaces; the houses of their principal men, which were well built, and most strongly fortified, these could not keep out the enemy: and death spares none, high nor low, rich nor poor; it enters the palaces of great men, as well as the cottages of the poor. The Septuagint version is, “it is entered into our land”; and so the Arabic version; only it places the phrase, “into our land”, in the preceding clause; and that of “into”, or “through our windows”, in this:

to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets; these words are not strictly to be connected with the preceding, as though they pressed the end of death, ascending up to the windows, and entering palaces, to cut off such as were in the streets; but the words are a proposition of themselves, as the distinctive accent “athnach” shows; and must be supplied after this manner, and passing through them it goes on, “to cut off”, etc. and so aptly describes the invading enemy climbing the walls of the city, entering at windows, or tops of houses, upon or near the walls; and, having destroyed all within, goes forth into the streets, where children were at play, and slays them and into courts or markets, where young men were employed in business, and destroys them. The Jews ^{f197} interpret it of famine.

Ver. 22. *Speak, thus saith the Lord*, etc.] These are the words of the Lord to Jeremiah, to go on with his prophecy in his name; so the Targum,

“prophesy, thus saith the Lord:”

even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field; or, “upon the face of the field”^{f198}; this shows the reason why the women are called to mourning, because the men would fall by the sword in the open field, and there lie and rot, and become dung upon it. The Targum is,

“as dung spread upon the face of the field;”

which denotes the great number that should fall, which would cover the face of the field; the condition they should be in; and the contempt and neglect they should be had in:

and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them; as a handful of corn that is forgot, and left by the harvestman; or as ears of corn which are dropped by the reaper, or binder, and are usually gleaned or gathered up by the poor that follow; but in the case referred to, or supposed, are not gathered; so it would be with these people; they should be left upon the ground, like a handful forgot, or like ears of corn dropped, and not gathered up, and there they should lie, and none should bury them.

Ver. 23. *Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom*, etc.] Not in his natural wisdom, or knowledge of natural things: this is often but an appearance of wisdom, and is science falsely so called; and whatever is real of this kind is of God; and the best falls short of leading men to a true and saving knowledge of God; the foolishness of God is wiser than it; and it is made foolish, destroyed, and brought to nought by him: nor in evangelical wisdom and knowledge; not in that which is less common, or what fits men for public usefulness, as ministerial gifts; for such are received from above; are more for the use of others than a man's self; there is something better than these, which a man may not have, and yet have these, which is grace; those may fade, or be taken away; and a man have them, and be lost eternally: nor in that which is more general, speculative knowledge of Gospel truths; for if it is attended with conceit, it is little or nothing that a man knows; if he is proud of it, his knowledge is not sanctified; and it is no other than what the devils themselves have: nor in that which is more special; wisdom in the inward part, or a spiritual and saving knowledge of God in Christ; this a man has wholly of free grace, and should give the praise and glory of it to God, and not attribute it to himself:

neither let the mighty man glory in his might; not in his natural might or strength; this is of God, and is greater in some of the brutes than in men; and is what God can take away, and does often weaken it in the way by diseases, and at last destroys it by death; nor in moral strength, or in the power of free will; which is very weak and insufficient to do anything that is spiritually good: nor even in spiritual strength; this is from Christ; it is only through him strengthening his people that they do what they do; and all supplies and increase of it are from him; and therefore no room for glorying:

let not the rich man glory in his riches; these come of the hand of God, and are what he can take away at pleasure; they are very uncertain and

precarious things; there is a better and more enduring substance; these cannot profit in a day of wrath, nor deliver from death, corporeal, spiritual, or eternal. And the intention of the words here is to show, that neither the wise man with all his art and cunning, nor the mighty man by his strength, nor the rich man through his riches, could save themselves from the destruction before prophesied of. The Targum paraphrases them thus,

“thus saith the Lord, let not Solomon the son of David the wise man praise (or please himself) in his wisdom; nor let Samson the son of Manoah the mighty man please himself in his might; nor let Ahab the son of Omri the rich man please himself in his riches.”

Ver. 24. *But let him that glorieth glory in this*, etc.] In the Lord alone, as it is interpreted by the apostle, (~~403~~1 Corinthians 1:31 ~~407~~2 Corinthians 10:17):

that he understandeth and knoweth me; or, “in understanding and knowing me”^{f199}; or, “he understanding and knowing me”; for this clause is descriptive of the person that is to glory in the Lord, and not of the thing in which he is to glory; for it is not even in the knowledge of God that men are to glory, but in the Lord himself; and he that understands himself as a creature dependent on God, and especially as a fallen sinful creature; and still more as one regenerated by the grace of God; he will never glory in himself, but in the Lord; and so, if he understands divine things, and the scheme of salvation by the grace of God, and not by the works of men; and if he knows the Lord, he will never glory in his own wisdom, nor in his own strength, nor in his riches, nor in his righteousness, nor in any man or creature, but in the Lord only; and particularly in what follows:

that I am the Lord, which exercise lovingkindness; in such various instances; in election, redemption, effectual calling, the pardon of sin, justification, adoption, and eternal life; and towards persons so very undeserving of any favour; and to have an interest in this exceeds all things else; it is better than life, and all the enjoyments of it:

judgment; exercising it on Christ, sin being laid, found, and condemned on him; and through Christ protecting and defending his people; and by Christ at the last day:

and righteousness in the earth; wrought by Christ here on earth in our nature, and imputed to his people in their present state, whereby they have a right to eternal glory:

for in these things I delight, saith the Lord; in showing mercy, grace, and favour, to miserable and undeserving men; in making his Son an offering for sin, and bruising him; and in his righteousness, whereby the law is magnified and made honourable.

Ver. 25. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”^{f200}; it seems to respect the time after the Babylonish captivity, when the punishment after threatened took place, and not before:

that I will punish all them that are circumcised with the uncircumcised; Jews and Gentiles together. The circumcised. Jews trusting in their circumcision, and being, as is said in the next verse, uncircumcised in heart, were no better than the uncircumcised Gentiles; wherefore both being transgressors of the law, and despisers of the Gospel of Christ, are threatened with destruction; (see ~~f201~~ Romans 2:12,25-29).

Ver. 26. *Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab*, etc.] Places and people among which the Jews were dispersed, and whose punishment is predicted in Jeremiah chapters forty six through forty nine, and whose countries are now under the dominion of the Turks:^{f201}

and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness; who dwelt in the desert of Arabia; these, according to Kimchi, were the Kedarenes, and the kingdoms of Hazor, a people that dwelt in the utmost corners, whom Nebuchadnezzar smote, as Jeremiah foretold, (~~248B~~ Jeremiah 49:28-33). Jarchi’s note is,

“them that are cut off in a corner of the wilderness;”

that live by themselves, and have no communication with other people; were at the greatest distance, and secure; dwelt alone, and had neither gates nor bars, as is said of the same people, (~~248B~~ Jeremiah 49:31). The Septuagint version is, “upon everyone that shaves what is about his face, that dwells in the wilderness”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; to which agrees the Targum,

“upon all that round the corners of the head, that dwell in habitations in the wilderness,”

The Arabians used to shave the extreme hairs of the head round about, as the forehead, temples, and behind the ears, which are the corners of the head; so Herodotus^{f202} reports of them, who seem to be meant here;

though some think the Jews are intended, to whom this was forbidden, (~~REB~~ Leviticus 19:27):

for all these nations are uncircumcised; in the flesh; though they were not punished on this account, because it was not commanded them, as Kimchi observes; but is mentioned to show that the Jews were no better than they, though circumcised, and that they should be punished together:

and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart; had not the circumcision made without hands; or were not circumcised in heart, to love the Lord, fear and serve him; the foreskin of their flesh taken off availed not so long as that on their heart remained, and they were stupid, impenitent, and disobedient.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 10

This chapter shows that there is no comparison to be made between God and the idols of the Gentiles; represents the destruction of the Jews as near at hand; and is closed with some petitions of the prophet. It begins by way of preface with an exhortation to hear the word of the Lord, and a dehortation not to learn the way of the Heathens, or be dismayed at their signs, since their customs were in vain, (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 10:1-3) which lead on to expose their idols, and set forth the greatness and glory of God. Their idols are described by the matter and makers of them, (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 10:3,4,9) and from their impotence to speak, to stand, to move, or do either good or evil, (²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 10:4,5), but, on the other hand, God is described by the greatness of his name and power, and by the reverence that belongs unto him; in comparison of whom all the wise men of the nations are brutish, foolish, and vain, (²⁴⁰³Jeremiah 10:6-8), by the epithets of true, living, and everlasting, and by the terribleness of his wrath, (²⁴⁰⁴Jeremiah 10:10), by his power and wisdom, in making the heavens and the earth, in causing thunder and lightning, wind and rain, when the gods that have no share in these shall utterly perish, (²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 10:11-13) their makers being brutish, and brought to shame; and they falsehood and breathless vanity, the work of errors, and so shall come to ruin, (²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 10:14,15), but he, who is Jacob's portion, and whose inheritance Israel is, is not like them; being the former of all things, and his name the Lord of hosts, (²⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 10:16) and next follows a prophecy of the destruction of the Jews; wherefore they are bid to gather up their wares, since in a very little time, and at once, the Lord would fling them out of the land, and bring them into distress, (²⁴⁰⁸Jeremiah 10:17,18), upon which the prophet expresses his sympathy with his people in trouble, and the part of grief he took and bore with them, (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 10:19), the particulars of his distress, through the desolation of the land, and the captivity of the people, with the cause and authors of it, by whose means these things were brought upon them, are mentioned, (²⁴¹⁰Jeremiah 10:20,21), and the Chaldean army, the instruments of their ruin, are represented as just at hand, (²⁴¹¹Jeremiah 10:22), when the prophet,

directing himself to God, acknowledges the impotence of man in general to help and guide himself, deprecates correction in anger to himself in particular, and prays that the wrath of God might be poured down upon the Heathens, by whom his people were devoured, consumed, and made desolate, (^{240B}Jeremiah 10:23-25).

Ver. 1. *Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel.*] Or, “upon you”; or, “concerning you”^{f203}; it may design the judgment of God decreed and pronounced upon them; or the prophecy of it to them, in which they were nearly concerned; or the word of God in general, sent unto them by his prophets, which they were backward of hearing; and seems to refer particularly to what follows.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the Heathen,* etc.] Of the nations round about them, particularly the Chaldeans; meaning their religious ways, their ways of worship, their superstition and idolatry, which they were very prone unto, and many of which they had learned already; and were in danger of learning more, as they were about to be dispersed in divers countries, and especially in Chaldea, which was a very superstitious and idolatrous nation:

and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; by which are meant, not any extraordinary signs, such as are predicted in (^{240B}Joel 2:30,31), and by our Lord, as signs of the last destruction of Jerusalem, and of his coming, and of the end of the world, (^{240B}Matthew 24:3,29 ^{240C}Luke 21:25-28), but ordinary signs, which are no other than the sun, and moon, and stars, which are set up for signs and seasons, and days and years, (^{240H}Genesis 1:14), and as long as they are observed as signs of places and of times, it is well enough; but if more is attributed unto them, as portending things future, and as having an influence on the birth and death, dispositions and actions of men, when in such a conjunction, situation, and position, it is wrong; which is what is called judicial astrology, and to which the Chaldeans were much addicted, and is here condemned; nor should men possess themselves with fears with what shall befall them on such accounts, since all things are under the determination, direction, and influence of the God of heaven, and not the signs of them; especially they should not be so observed as to be worshipped, and to be so awed by them as to fear that evil things will befall, if they are not; and to this sense is the Syriac version, “the signs of the heavens do not worship, or fear”. Jarchi interprets them of

the eclipses of the luminaries, which may be thought to forbode some dreadful things^{f204}:

for the Heathen are dismayed at them; which is a reason why the people of God should not, because it is a Heathenish fear; or, “though the Heathen”^{f205}, etc.; though they are frightened at such and such conjunctions and positions of the stars, and fear that such and such dreadful things will follow; and never regard the supreme Being and first cause of all things; yet such who have the knowledge of the true God, and a revelation of his will, ought not to be terrified hereby; (see ^{<2473>}Isaiah 47:13). This text is brought to prove that the Israelites are not under any planet^{f206}; since the Heathens are dismayed at them, but not they.

Ver. 3. *For the customs of the people are vain*, etc.] Or, “their decrees”, or “statutes”^{f207}, their determinations and conclusions, founded upon the observation of the stars; or, their “rites and ceremonies”^{f208} in religion, in the worship of the sun and moon, and the hosts of heaven. The Syriac version is, “the idols of the people are nothing”; and which appears by what follows:

for one cutteth a tree out of the forest (the work of the hands of the workman) with the axe; not for building, or for burning, but to make a god of; the vanity, stupidity, and folly of which are manifest, when it is considered that the original of it is a tree that grew in the forest; the matter and substance of it the body and trunk of a tree cut down with an axe, and then hewed with the same, and planed with a plane, and formed into the image of a man, or of some creature; and now, to fall down and worship this must be vanity and madness to the last degree; (see ^{<2413>}Isaiah 44:13-17 45:20).

Ver. 4. *They deck it with silver and with gold*, etc.] Cover it with plates of silver and gold, for the sake of ornament, that it may look grand, majestic, and venerable; and by this means draw the eye and attention, and so the devotion of people to it:

they fasten it with nails and hammers, that it move not. The sense is, either that the idol was fastened to some post or pillar, or in some certain place on a pedestal, that it might not fall, it not being able otherwise to support itself; or the plates of silver and gold, as Kimchi thinks, were fastened to the idol with nails and hammers, that so they might not be taken away from

it; for, were it not for the nails, the god would not be able to keep his silver and golden deckings.

Ver. 5. *They are upright as the palm tree*, etc.] Being nailed to a post, or fastened to a pillar, or set upon a pedestal, and so stand erect without bending any way; and are like a palm tree, which is noted for its uprightness; hence the church's stature is compared to it, (^{<2100>}Song of Solomon 7:7), here it is a sarcasm, and a bitter one:

but speak not; man, that is of an erect stature, in which he differs from other creatures, has the faculty of speech, which they that go upon four feet have not; but the idols of the Gentiles, though erect, have not the power of speaking a word; and therefore can give no answer to their worshippers; (see ^{<4985>}Psalm 115:5 ^{<1183>}1 Kings 18:26),

they must needs be borne: or, "in carrying be carried",^{f209}; when being made they are fixed in the designed place, or are moved from place to place; they are then carried in men's arms, or on their shoulders:

because they cannot go; they have no life, and so are incapable of motion of themselves; they have feet, but walk not; and cannot arise and bestir themselves for the help of those that pray unto them, (^{<4987>}Psalm 115:7),

be not afraid of them, for they cannot do evil; that is, inflict judgment, cause drought, famine, or pestilence, or any other evil or calamity:

neither is it also in them to do good; to give rains and fruitful seasons, or bestow any favour, temporal or spiritual; (see ^{<2442>}Jeremiah 14:21).

Ver. 6. *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord*, etc.] None like him, for the perfections of his nature, for the works of his hands, and for the instances of his kindness and beneficence, both in a way of grace and providence; there is none like him for doing good, or doing evil; that is, for bestowing favours, or inflicting punishments; there is none like him for goodness or greatness, as follows:

thou art great; in his nature; of great power, wisdom, faithfulness, truth, and goodness; and in his works of creation and providence, and in everything in which he is concerned; and greatness is to be ascribed to him, and greatly is he to be praised; and all the glory due unto his name is to be given him:

and thy name is great in might; his name is himself, and his greatness much appears in the exertion of the attribute of his power and might; in making all things out of nothing, in upholding the whole creation, and in the government of the universe; or the fame of him is great through the effects of his power, which are to be seen throughout the earth.

Ver. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O King of nations?* etc.] Not that the fear of him among the nations was general, or that he was owned by them as their King; but inasmuch as of right he was their King, so he ought to have been feared and revered by them; and it was an instance of great stupidity and ingratitude not to do it. The Targum renders it,

“King of all people;”

and the Syriac version, “King of all worlds”; some reference seems to be had to this passage in (^{<6618>}Revelation 15:3,4), where, instead of “King of nations”, the Lord is called “King of saints”; and there refers to a time when he will be feared, that is, worshipped and served by all nations, as he ought to be:

for to thee doth it appertain; that is, fear belongs to him, it is his due; and this, with keeping the commandments of God, is the whole duty of man. The Vulgate Latin version is, “thine is the glory”; honour or praise, as the Syriac version; and so Jarchi interprets it of beauty or glory; but the Targum,

“thine is the kingdom;”

and so Kimchi; and to which agrees the Arabic version.

Forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee; that is, among all the wise kings of the nations, and all their wise counsellors, there is none like unto God for wisdom, or for glory and majesty; there is none of them that has such a kingdom as he has, or that governs it as he does; and as all their power and government, so all that wisdom by which they manage their political affairs, are from him.

Ver. 8. *But they are altogether brutish and foolish*, etc.] In comparison of the Lord, there is no knowledge and wisdom in them, this is a certain fact; they are verily brutish and foolish; or they are one and all so, there is not a wise man among them: or, “in one thing they are brutish”,^{f210} etc.; namely,

in their idolatry; however wise they may be in other respects, in this they are foolish: or, to give no more instances of their brutishness^{f211} and folly, this one is sufficient, even what follows,

the stock is a doctrine of vanities; or what they teach persons, as to worship the trunk of a tree, or any idol of metal, or of wood, is a most vain and foolish thing, and argues gross stupidity and folly, and proves them to be brutish, and without understanding.

Ver. 9. *Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish*, etc.] In Cilicia, where the Apostle Paul was born; according to Josephus, as Jerom says, it was a country in India. The Targum renders it, from Africa, and calls it silver “rolled up”, or “covered”; so the Vulgate Latin; such was beaten with a hammer into plates, and might be rolled up for better convenience of shipment; and with which they covered and decked their idols, to make them look glittering and pompous, and command some awe and reverence from the common people. The Arabic version renders it, “solid silver”; it being the same word from whence the firmament of heaven has its name, or the wide expanse; hence we render it “spread”, stretched, and drawn out into plates. The Syriac version is, “the best silver”; as very likely that from Tarshish was reckoned.

And gold from Uphaz; called sometimes “the gold of Uphaz”; (²⁷⁰⁵Daniel 10:5) or “Fess”; perhaps the same with the gold of Ophir, (¹⁸⁸⁶Job 28:16) and so the Targum here calls it, “gold from Ophir”; to which agrees the Syriac version; and was esteemed the best gold.

The work of workmen, and of the hands of the founder; melter or refiner, being first purified by him from dross, and then wrought into plates, and polished, and fitted for the idol; and all this being owing to the art and workmanship of men, shows the brutishness and ignorance of the people, in worshipping it as a god. Blue and purple is their clothing; not the clothing of the workmen, but of the idols; these colours seem to be chosen to dazzle the eyes of the populace, and cause them to entertain a high opinion of them; the “blue” being the colour of the heavens, and the “purple” what is wore by kings; and so both may denote their deity and dominion. But, alas!

they are all the work of cunning men: both the idols, and their clothing; especially the latter is meant, which were curiously wrought and embroidered by men skilful in that art.

they cannot bring down rain, and out of the earth they cannot produce fruit:”

so Jarchi observes: it follows in the text,

the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens; which the Targum paraphrases thus,

“they and their worshippers shall perish from the earth, and shall be consumed from under these heavens.”

The words may be considered as a prediction that so it would be; or as an imprecation that so it might be, and be read, “let the gods”, etc.; and considered either way, being put into the mouth of the godly Jews in Babylon, to be openly pronounced by them in the midst of idolaters, and in answer to them, when they should be enticed to idolatry, show how open and ingenuous men should be in the profession of the true God, and his religion and worship: and it may be observed, against the deniers of the true deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that if he is not that God that made the heavens and the earth, he lies under this imprecation or prediction.

Ver. 12. *He hath made the earth by his power,* etc.] The Targum considers these words as a continuation of the answer of the Jews to the Chaldeans, paraphrasing them thus,

“and so shall ye say unto them, `we worship him who hath made the earth by his power’ :”

who stands opposed to the gods that made not the heavens and the earth, that had no title to deity, nor right to worship; but the true God has both; and his making the earth out of nothing, and hanging it upon nothing, and preserving it firm and stable, are proofs of his almighty power, and so of his deity; and consequently that he ought to be worshipped, and he only.

He hath established the world by his wisdom; upon the rivers and floods; or he hath poised it in the air; or he hath disposed it in an orderly, regular, and beautiful manner, as the word^{f213} used signifies; by making it terraqueous, partly land, and partly water; by opening in it fountains and rivers; by diversifying it with hills and vales, with wood and arable land, etc.; all which show the wisdom as well as the power of God.

And hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion; as a canopy over the earth, as a tent to dwell in; and which is beautifully bespangled with the luminaries in it; hence it has the name of expanse, or the firmament of heaven.

Ver. 13. *When he uttereth his voice*, etc.] Declares his will and pleasure, issues out his commands; or when he thunders, for thunder is his voice, (^{<1870>}Job 37:2-5 40:9):

there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; they are covered with clouds, and these clouds full of water; which is brought about by the following means:

and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; from the north and south, as Kimchi observes from the philosophers; or from all parts of the earth, the most distant, and particularly from the sea, the border of the earth, from whence clouds arise, being exhaled by the sun; (see ^{<1183>}1 Kings 18:43,44).

He maketh lightnings with rain; which very often go together, and the one makes way for the other, (^{<1886>}Job 28:26), though they are so opposite one to another:

and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures; the caverns of the earth, or his fists, in which he holds it, (^{<2104>}Proverbs 30:4) and lets its loose at his pleasure; he has plenty of it in reserve; he is Lord over it; he sends it forth when he pleases, and it fulfils his will and his word.

Ver. 14. *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*, etc.] Or science of making an idol, whether it be of wood, or of gold, or silver, or brass; he is no better than a brute, if he thinks, when he has made it, he has made a god: or, “because of knowledge”^{f214}; for want of it; being without the knowledge of God and divine things, he is like the beasts that perish, (^{<1940>}Psalms 49:20):

every founder is confounded by the graven image; or put to shame on account of it; since, after all his art, and care, and trouble, in melting and refining, and casting it into a form, it is no more than a piece of gold, or silver, or brass, and has no deity, nor anything like it, in it:

for his molten image is falsehood; it is a lie, when it is said to be a god; and it deceives those who worship it, and place any confidence in it.

Kimchi renders it, “his covering”^{f215}. The covering of the idol with gold and silver, with blue and purple, as in (^{<240>}Jeremiah 10:4,9), is all a piece of deceit, to impose upon the people, and lead them into idolatry:

and there is no breath in them; they are mere stocks and stones, lifeless and inanimate creatures; they have neither life themselves, nor can they give it to others.

Ver. 15. *They are vanity*, etc.] They are the fruit of the vain imagination of men; to worship them shows the vanity of the human mind; and they are vain things to trust to:

and the work of errors; of erroneous men, and which lead men into errors; and are worthy to be laughed at, as the Targum paraphrases it.

In the time of their visitation they shall perish; or in the time that I shall visit upon them their sins, as the Targum; that is, when Babylon should be destroyed by the Medes and Persians, as Kimchi interprets it; when their idols were destroyed also; (see ^{<240>}Isaiah 46:1).

Ver. 16. *The portion of Jacob is not like them*, etc.] Like those idols, vain, and the work of errors, or shall perish; even the true God, who is the portion of his people, of Jacob, whom he has chosen and redeemed; who call themselves by the name of Jacob, and are Israelites indeed, and plain hearted ones; and who have seen the insufficiency of all other portions, and the excellency of this; for there is none like it, none so large, so rich, so satisfying, and so durable; for God is the portion of his, in all the perfections of his nature, which all, some way or other, are for their good and advantage; and in all his persons, and under every character; even all he has is theirs, now and hereafter:

for he is the former of all things: which idols are not, being the maker of creatures themselves; wherefore the Creator must be a better portion than they; and as he has all things at his dispose, he bestows them on his people, and they cannot want:

and Israel is the rod of his inheritance; chosen and possessed by him, and dear unto him; and wonderful this is, that on the one side he should be the portion of his people; and, on the other, that they should be his portion and his inheritance, when so few in number, and despised by and among men, and but sinful dust and ashes; and especially when what follows is considered:

the Lord of hosts is his name: his title is the Lord of armies, above and below; he rules both in heaven and in earth, and has the inhabitants of both worlds, angels and men, at his command; and yet he chooses a handful of people to be his possession and inheritance.

Ver. 17. *Gather up thy wares out of the land*, etc.] Or thy merchandise, as the Targum; or thy substance, as the Septuagint; all valuable effects and goods that are movable, which might be carried from place to place. The meaning is, that the Jews would gather up their riches from the several parts of the land of Judea, and bring them to Jerusalem, a fortified place; or they would be in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy. Kimchi interprets the words as if spoken of Babylon, and directed to the Chaldeans, not to be elated with the captivity of Israel; and because the word [nk signifies “to humble and subdue” he takes the sense to be,

“gather in or contract thine humiliation or subjection;”

that is, of other nations; refrain thyself, or cease from subduing kingdoms; that is now at an end, it shall be no more so; but the words manifestly respect the people of the Jews, as is clear from the next verse.

O inhabitant of the fortress; of the fortress of Zion, or the fortified city, Jerusalem. The Targum is,

“O thou that dwellest in the strong place, in the fortified cities.”

It may be rendered, “that dwellest in the siege”^{f216}; in the besieged city, Jerusalem.

Ver. 18. *For thus saith the Lord*, etc.] This is a reason enforcing the exhortation in the preceding verse, and shows that the same people that are spoken of here are addressed there.

Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this once; meaning the inhabitants of the land of Judea; or otherwise the prophet would never have expressed such a concern for them as he does in the following verse. Their captivity is signified by the slinging of a stone out of a sling, and shows how sudden, swift, and certain, it would be: and that it would as easily and swiftly be done, and with equal force and rapidity, as a stone is slung out of a sling; and that it would be done by the Lord himself, whoever were the instruments:

and will distress them; or “straiten”^{f217} them, on every side; it seems to intend the siege; or bring them into great straits and difficulties, through the pestilence, famine, sword, and captivity:

that they may find it; so as he had spoken by his prophets, it coming to pass exactly as they had foretold. The Targum is,

“that they may receive the punishment of their sins;”

and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, “that thy stroke may be found”; but the Syriac version is very different from either, “that they may seek me and find”; which is an end that is sometimes answered by afflictive dispensations.

Ver. 19. *Woe is me for my hurt!* etc.] Or “breach”^{f218}; which was made upon the people of the Jews, when besieged, taken, and carried captive; with whom the prophet heartily sympathized, and considered their calamities and distresses as his own; for these are the words of the prophet, lamenting the sad estate of his people.

My wound is grievous; causes grief, is very painful, and hard to be endured:

but I said; within himself, after he had thoroughly considered the matter:

this is a grief; an affliction, a trial, and exercise:

and I must bear it; patiently and quietly, since it is of God, and is justly brought upon the people for their sins.

Ver. 20. *My tabernacle is spoiled*, etc.] Not the temple at Jerusalem only, rather Jerusalem itself, as Kimchi; or the whole land, as the Targum,

“my land is wasted:”

the allusion is to the tents of shepherds, and denotes the unstable condition of the Jewish nation:

and all my cords are broken: all the rest of the cities of the land are destroyed, as Kimchi; and so the Targum,

“my cities are spoiled:”

as the cords are what the parts of the tabernacle or tent are fastened and kept together with, they may intend the strength of the nation, which lay in

its wealth, its fortresses, and the numbers of its people, now weakened, loosed, and broke.

My children are gone forth of me; into captivity, as the Targum interprets it; the prophet, representing Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah. The Septuagint adds, “and my sheep”; keeping on the metaphor of a shepherd, his tent, and flock.

And they are not; either not in the world, being destroyed by one judgment or another; or rather not in their own land, being carried captive.

There is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains; which shows the great destruction and desolation of the land, and its inhabitants, that there would be none to set up a shepherd’s tent; perhaps the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the rest of the cities, may be meant.

Ver. 21. *For the pastors are become brutish*, etc.] The “kings” of Judah, so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, as Jehoiakim and Zedekiah; though it need not be restrained to these only, but may include all inferior civil magistrates, and even all ecclesiastical rulers, who were the shepherds of the people; but these being like the brute beasts, and without understanding of civil and religious things, and not knowing how to govern the people either in a political or ecclesiastical way, were the cause of their ruin.

And have not sought the Lord; this is an instance of their brutishness and stupidity, and opens the source of all their mistakes and misfortunes; they did not seek the Lord for counsel, by whom kings reign well, and princes decree justice; nor doctrine from the Lord, as the Targum, as the priests and prophets should have done, in order to instruct the people, and feed them with knowledge and understanding; nor did either of them seek the glory of God in what they did, but their own interest, worldly advantage, or applause:

therefore they shall not prosper; in their kingdom, and in the several offices and stations in which they were. Some render the words, “therefore they do not act prudently”^{f219}; not consulting the Lord, nor warning the people, nor giving them notice of approaching danger:

and all their flocks shall be scattered; the people of the Jews that were under their government, civil or ecclesiastical, should be dispersed in several nations, and especially in Chaldee; wherefore it follows:

Ver. 22. *Behold the noise of the bruit is come*, etc.] Or, “the voice of hearing”^{f220}; that is, the voice heard; the report that was made that the king of Babylon had invaded the land, and was coming up to besiege Jerusalem: “and a great commotion out of the north country”; a large army from Babylon, which lay north of Judea, which came with great noise, and caused a great trembling and shaking among the inhabitants of the land whither they were coming:

to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons; this shows that the whole paragraph is to be understood of the Jewish nation, and of their destruction. (See Gill on “²⁴⁹¹Jeremiah 9:11”).

Ver. 23. *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself*, etc.] Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of that well known man Nebuchadnezzar, whose way was not in himself, and was not master of his own resolutions, but was under the influence and direction of divine Providence: when he set out of Babylon, he thought to have gone against the Ammonites; but when he came to a place where two ways met; the one leading to the children of Ammon, the other to Jerusalem; God changed his mind, and he steered his course to Jerusalem, to chastise Zedekiah for the breach of his oath: but the words seem to have a more general meaning; and the sense to be, that the prophet knew that it was not with him, nor with any of the godly, to escape the judgments that were coming upon them; that they were entirely in the hands of the Lord, to be guided, directed, and disposed of at his pleasure. The words may be accommodated to spiritual things and the affair of salvation; and be rendered thus, “I know, O Lord, that not for man is his way”^{f221}; his own way is not good for him; not his sinful way, for this is opposite to God’s way, and a going out of it; it is not according to his word; it is after the course of the world; and it is a dark and crooked way, and leads to, and ends in, destruction and death, if grace prevent not: nor the way of his own righteousness; this is no way of access to God, no way of acceptance with him, no way of justification before him, no way of salvation, no way to heaven, and eternal happiness; that which is the good and right way, the only way of salvation, is not of man, in him, or with him naturally; it is not of his devising and contriving, and much less of his effecting; it is not even within his knowledge; and so far as he knows anything of it, he does not approve of it: but it is of God; the scheme of it is of his forming; it is a work wrought out by Christ; it is a way of salvation revealed in the Gospel; and the thing itself is savingly made known, and

applied by the Spirit of God; all which is known and owned when men are spiritually enlightened:

it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; as not in natural and civil things, much less in religious ones; a good man is one that “walks”, which supposes life and strength, without which there can be no walking; and a progression, a going on in a way; which ways are Christ, and his ordinances the path of doctrine and of duty; yet it is not even in this good man “to direct” and order “his steps” of himself; it is the Lord that must do it, and does; he can take no step aright without him; he is guided by him and his Spirit, both in the path of truth and of obedience; and hence it is that the saints persevere unto the end; (see ^{<49723>}Psalm 37:23 ^{<4185>}Proverbs 3:5,6).

Ver. 24. *O Lord, correct me, but with judgment*, etc.] The prophet here represents the body of the Jewish nation, especially the godly among them; he considers the troubles coming upon the nation as a correction and chastisement of the Lord; he does not refuse it, or desire it might not come upon them; he knew the chastisements of a father are for good; he only entreats it might be “with judgment”; not in strict justice, as his and the sins of his people deserved, then they would not be able to bear it; but in measure and moderation, with a mixture of mercy and tenderness in it; and in a distinguishing manner, so as to make a difference between his own people and others, in the correction of them; (see ^{<3546>}Ezekiel 34:16,17):

not in thine anger; in vindictive wrath, and hot displeasure, which is elsewhere deprecated by the saints, (^{<4911>}Psalm 6:1 38:1):

lest thou bring me to nothing; or “lessen me”^{f222}, or “make me little”; or make us few, as the Arabic version; or bring to a small number, as the Syriac; and so to utter ruin.

Ver. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not*, etc.] Make a difference between thy people that know thee, and make a profession of thy name, and worship thee, and the Heathen, the nations of the world who are ignorant of God, and worship stocks and stones; while thou correctest thine own people in measure, in love, and not in wrath, pour out without measure all thy fury upon the Gentiles that know not God, and are guilty of the grossest idolatry:

and upon the families that call not on thy name; this does not signify single families, commonly so called; but kingdoms, as the Targum interprets it;

Heathen kingdoms and nations, that call not upon or worship the God of Israel, but their own idols; such as the family of Egypt, (^{<3847>}Zechariah 14:17,18) and so it is expressed in a parallel place, (^{<1976>}Psalm 79:6), which is either taken from hence, or this from thence:

for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate; a heap of words to express the great destruction and desolation of the land of Israel, of Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah; and of their houses and dwelling places, private and public; and of their spoiling them of all their goods, substance, wealth, and riches; which is given as a reason of the above imprecation.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 11

This chapter gives an account of the covenant God had made with the people of the Jews; their breach of it; and the evils threatened them on that account; and particularly against the men of Anathoth, for their ill treatment of the prophet. It begins with the order to Jeremiah to rehearse the words of the covenant in the ears of the men of Judah and Jerusalem, (^{2410B}Jeremiah 11:1-3), which covenant is described by the sanction of it; a curse in case of disobedience; and a promise of being their God, and bringing them into the good land, in case of obedience; and by the time when it was made, when the Israelites were brought out of Egypt, (^{2410B}Jeremiah 10:3-5), which order, the prophet agreeing to, is repeated, (^{2410B}Jeremiah 10:5,6) declaring the earnest protestation and exhortation of God to obey it, which they not observing, were threatened with the curses of it, (^{2410B}Jeremiah 11:7,8), the present Jews doing as their forefathers had done, breaking the covenant, particularly by their idolatry, are threatened also with punishment they should not escape, (^{2410B}Jeremiah 11:9-11) which is aggravated by a resolution to show no regard to their cries, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:11), by the impotence of their idols to save them, though so numerous, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:12,13), by forbidding the prophet to pray for them, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:14), by their having no longer a place and protection in the house of God, because of their wickedness, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:15), by comparing their former and present state together, having been as a beautiful and fruitful olive tree, but now burnt, and its branches broken, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:16), next follows an account of a design of the men of Anathoth against the prophet, to take away his life, which he was ignorant of, till the Lord gave him knowledge of it, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:17-19), when he imprecates vengeance on them, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:20), and, under a spirit of prophecy from the Lord, foretells their utter ruin and destruction, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 11:21,22).

Ver. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying.*] Here seems to begin a new prophecy; but when it was, and under what reign,

and what time between this and the former, is not known; however, it was from the Lord, and so to be regarded.

Ver. 2. *Hear ye the words of this covenant*, etc.] Which. Dr. Lightfoot understands of the covenant lately made in the times of Josiah, upon finding and reading the law of Moses, (^{<123>}2 Kings 23:3), but it seems rather to design the law of Moses itself; or the covenant made with the people of Israel on Mount Horeb, (^{<124>}Exodus 24:7,8), or rather which was made with them in the land of Moab, (^{<125>}Deuteronomy 29:1). The words of it are the things contained in it, the blessings and curses; the order to hear them is in the plural number, and is directed, not to Jeremiah only, but to others with him, the rest of the prophets that were in his days; as Zephaniah, who prophesied, as Kimchi observes, in the reign of Josiah; and there was Baruch his companion; or the priests at Anathoth are here addressed with him; though it is usual, in the Hebrew language, to put one number for another; and Jeremiah, in the next verse, is singly addressed; and the Syriac version renders it in the singular number; perhaps the book of the law might lie before him, and be pointed at; and so he is bid to take it, or “receive” it, as the Targum is, and read and publish it to the Jews, as follows:

and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: the words of the covenant, and what follows.

Ver. 3. *And say thou unto them*, etc.] This shows that the command of publishing the law or covenant was, however, principally given to Jeremiah:

thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; that made them, and brought them out of Egypt, and made a covenant with them, and had taken care of them, and had bestowed many favours upon them:

cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant; which the prophet, it may be, had in his hands, even the book of the law, and held it forth unto them, while he was speaking; the language of which is, cursed is everyone that does not constantly and perfectly perform what is contained in it, (^{<126>}Deuteronomy 27:26).

Ver. 4. *Which I commanded your fathers*, etc.] To observe and keep:

in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: that is, quickly after, when they were in the wilderness, and before they came into

the land of Canaan. The “day” seems to include the whole time from their coming out of Egypt, to their entrance into Canaan’s land; it was in the first year of their coming out from thence that the law was given them on Mount Sinai, (^{<0200>}Exodus 19:1-11), and it was in the fortieth year, and when they were upon the borders of Canaan, that the covenant was made with them in the land of Moab, (^{<0200>}Deuteronomy 1:3 29:1): “from the iron furnace”; meaning Egypt, and their bondage and affliction in it, compared to an iron furnace for the grievousness of it, its long continuance, and the use of it to try and prove them; (see ^{<0200>}Deuteronomy 4:20 ^{<0200>}1 Kings 8:51):

saying, obey my voice; in the law:

and do them; the commands of it, the words of the covenant:

according to all which I command you; everything was to be done that was commanded, and as it was commanded; a perfect and uniform obedience is to be yielded to the law, in order to enjoy the blessing, or a penalty is incurred:

so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God; this is the tenor of the covenant of works; covenant interest in God, according to the law, depends upon obedience; that is the condition of it; but the covenant of grace is not clogged with such a condition; but runs absolutely,

they shall be my people, and I will be their God, (^{<0200>}Jeremiah 32:39).

Ver. 5. *That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers,* etc.] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:

to give them a land flowing with milk and honey: that is, abounding with plenty of all kind of provisions; (see ^{<0200>}Exodus 3:8 ^{<0200>}Deuteronomy 6:3 8:7-9):

as it is this day; the land of Canaan continued to those times a very fruitful country; it was as it was promised it should be, and which was a clear thing; their eyes saw it, and the day bore witness to it:

then answered I, and said; that is, the Prophet Jeremiah, to whom the above order was given:

so be it, O Lord; or, “Amen, Lord”^{f223}; either agreeing to publish what the Lord commanded him; or as wishing that the land of Canaan might

continue the same fruitful land it was, and the people of the Jews in it, they keeping the words of this covenant; or else as assenting that the curse might fall upon the men that did not observe them, alluding to (⁴²⁷⁵Deuteronomy 27:15-26). This is the sense of Abarbinel; Jarchi and Kimchi observe, that the word “Lord” is vocative, and in the language of prayer.

Ver. 6. *Then the Lord said unto me*, etc.] Again; for this is a repetition of the above order:

proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: with a loud voice, and openly, that all may hear:

saying, hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them; which their forefathers promised, when the covenant was made with them, (⁴²⁴⁰Exodus 24:7), but did not perform; hearing without doing is of little avail; not the hearers, but the doers of the law are justified; wherefore men should not be content with hearing only, (⁴⁸¹³Romans 2:13 ⁴⁹⁰²James 1:22).

Ver. 7. *For I earnestly protested unto your fathers*, etc.] Or “witnessing, witnessed”^{f224}; testified his great affection for them; importunately solicited their observation of his precepts for their good; and strictly cautioned them against neglect and disobedience:

the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt; (See Gill on ⁴¹¹⁰⁴Jeremiah 11:4’):

even unto this day, rising early, and protesting, saying, obey my voice; that is, from the time of the giving of the law, in all successive ages, to the present time, he had sent his prophets to them, time after time, morning by morning, early and late, to press, exhort, and stir them up to an obedience to his will, and to warn them of the evils that would come by disobedience to it.

Ver. 8. *Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear*, etc.] Though they had such strong solicitations and fair warnings, and these repeated again and again; all which was an aggravation of their disobedience and stubbornness:

but walked everyone in the imagination of their evil heart; which is desperately wicked, and is evil, and that continually, even every imagination of it; wherefore walking herein must be very wide and different

from walking in the law of the Lord, and obeying that; (see ²⁴⁸¹⁷Jeremiah 3:17 7:24):

therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant; that is, all the curses and threatenings denounced in it against the disobedient; and so the Targum,

“and I brought upon them vengeance (or punishment) because they received not the words of this covenant:”

which I commanded them to do, but they did them not; because they did not do the commands of the law, therefore the curses of it lighted on them; for the words of the preceding clause may be rendered, “and I brought upon them”^{f225}, etc.; and it is suggested that the like punishment would be inflicted on the present generation, they imitating and pursuing the iniquities of their fathers; as follows:

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto me*, etc.] After he had given him the order to publish and proclaim the words of the covenant, and exhort to obedience to them; he showed the prophet the reason of it, and opened to him a secret he was not acquainted with:

a conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem; not against the king, and against the civil government, but against the King of kings, against God and his covenant, his word and his worship; some designs were forming to cashier these, and introduce a new religion, the idolatry of the Gentiles; and it was not a few only that were in the scheme, the combination was general, city and country were in it; the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the more polite part of the nation, and the country people, that dwelt in the several cities of Judah, were all united in this affair; and this was found out by him who sees and knows all things. It is common for innovators in religion to lay schemes privately, and secretly inculcate them, before things are ripe for the open introduction of them. The Syriac version renders it, “a rebellion”; and conspiracies often issue in open rebellion; and so the Targum,

“and it is found that the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, have rebelled against my word.”

Ver. 10. *They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers*, etc.] According to Kimchi, this prophecy was delivered out in the times of Jehoiakim. There had been a reformation in the reign of Josiah, but now

they had rebelled against the Lord, and had returned to their former idolatries that had been practised in the times of Amon, Manasseh, and Ahaz:

which refused to hear my words; sent unto them by the prophets, Isaiah, and others:

and they went after other gods to serve them; not their forefathers, though it was true of them; but the then present generation, that were in the conspiracy and rebellion against God; they put their schemes into execution, and worshipped and served the gods of the nations:

the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers; by their many transgressions, and especially by their idolatry; the house of Israel, or the ten tribes, had done so, many years ago, and were carried captive; and the house of Judah, or the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, committing the same iniquities, might justly expect the like treatment.

Ver. 11. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, I will bring evil upon them*, etc.] The evil of punishment for the evil of their sins, such as famine, the sword, captivity, which latter is the evil more especially designed; and there is no evil of this nature but what is of God; it is of his sending and bringing; (see ^{<3116>}Amos 3:6):

which they shall not be able to escape; they should not have wisdom enough to form a scheme, nor power enough to put one in execution when formed, whereby they could extricate themselves out of the difficulties they would be in; doubtless reference is had to their being besieged by the Chaldean army, the evil that should come out of the north, (^{<2114>}Jeremiah 1:14), which should so closely surround them, that none should escape:

and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them: because their prayers were hypocritical, and not attended with faith and true repentance; otherwise, when men cry to God, under a sense of sin, being truly sorry for it, and put their trust in him, he hears them, and delivers them; but these would be concerned only for the evil that was come upon them, and not the evil they had been guilty of; and such sinners, when they pray to him, the Lord hears not. The Targum is,

“and they shall pray before me, and I will not receive their prayers.”

Ver. 12. *Then shall the cities of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,* etc.] That is, the inhabitants of the cities of Judah, as well as the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem; the former being in distress through the enemy being in their land, as well as the latter besieged by him:

go and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense; Baal, the queen of heaven, sun, moon, planets, and all the hosts of heaven, as in (^{<34415>}Jeremiah 44:15,17 ^{<12315>}2 Kings 23:5), these they should cry unto for help and deliverance in vain:

but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble; not yield them the least relief and comfort in their trouble, so far from saving them entirely from it.

Ver. 13. *For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah,* etc.] (See Gill on "^{<24123>}Jeremiah 2:28"),

and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem; of which there were many, and some of note^{f226}:

have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal; one of whose names is Bosheth, "shame"; (see ^{<3090>}Hosea 9:10), hence Jerubbaal is called, in (^{<10121>}2 Samuel 11:21), Jerubbesheth; very properly is this name given to Baal, not only because the worship of him was to the reproach of the true God, but brought shame and confusion in the issue to its worshipper; as well as because shameful things were done in the worship of it, especially of Baalpeor; who seems to be the same with the Priapus of other nations.

Ver. 14. *Therefore pray not thou for this people,* etc.] If for a remnant among them, yet not for the body of the people; and if for their spiritual and eternal good, yet not for their temporal salvation; their temporal ruin was certain; the decree was gone forth, and there was no revoking it; and this is said, not so much by way of prohibition of the prophet, as by way of threatening to the people, to show that as their own prayers should not profit them, so they should not have the benefit of the prayers of good men, their sin was a sin unto death, at least temporal death, and must not be prayed for, (^{<61516>}1 John 5:16):

neither lift up a cry or prayer for them; more words are used, to show the divine resolution, how inexorable he was, and how desperate was their

condition, and their ruin sure; these words are repeated from (²¹⁷⁶Jeremiah 7:16):

for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble; for, as he would not hear their prayers when they should cry to him to be delivered from their trouble, it cannot be thought that he should hear the prayers of others for them, The Targum understands this of the prayers of the prophet for them, paraphrasing the words thus,

“for there is no acceptance before me (or it is not pleasing to me) when thou shall pray for them before me, in the time of their evil;”

neither their prayers, nor the prophet’s for them, would be acceptable to God, or of any avail, he being determined to bring evil upon them.

Ver. 15. *What hath my beloved to do in mine house*, etc.] These are either the words of the prophet, as Kimchi and Ben Melech think, speaking after this manner; what has God, who is my beloved, he whom my soul loves, and who loves me, to do in the sanctuary, which is my house, and not this people’s, that have defiled it, to cause his Shechinah to dwell there, after so much wickedness has been committed in it? and so Cocceius interprets it of Christ the beloved Son of God, and the beloved of his church and people, withdrawing from the temple, because of the wickedness of the Jews; or they are the words of God concerning the people of the Jews, who were beloved for the Father’s sake; signifying that now, because of their abominations, it was not fitting they should continue in the house of God, or have any shelter and protection there. The Jews interpret^{f227} this of Abraham:

seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many; that is, the congregation of Israel, or the church of the Jews, had committed idolatry with many idols; or it was not only a few of them that were guilty of this sin, but a multitude, even their great men, the princes and nobles:

and the holy flesh is passed from thee? which Kimchi and Ben Melech understand of holy and good men, who ceased from among them, were perished and gone; and Jarchi, of the circumcision of the flesh, which was neglected: but it seems best to interpret it of the flesh of sacrifices; which were either laid aside by them, or, if offered and eaten of, were of no service to them, being offered up with a wicked mind; or rather the meaning is, the time was come that these were at an end, the temple being destroyed:

when thou doest evil; the evil of sin; or “when thine evil is”^{f228}; the evil of punishment is coming upon thee:

then thou rejoicest; instead of repenting of sin, and mourning for it, or being humbled at approaching judgments, gave themselves up to sensual lusts and pleasures; neither concerned at the one nor at the other; neither grieved for sin, nor trembled at punishment; but amidst all were brisk and jovial; though some say^{f229} the word has the signification of trembling; and render it, “then thou shalt tremble”. The Targum of the whole is,

“What (have I to do) with this people, that was beloved before me? they have left the worship of the house of my sanctuary; they have took counsel to sin much; they mingle the flesh of abominations with the holy flesh; they shall go into captivity from thee; because of thy wickedness thou art strong.”

Ver. 16. *The Lord called thy name a green olive tree*, etc.] That is, compared the Jewish church and people to one, and made them as one, very prosperous and flourishing in the enjoyment of privileges, civil and religious, being highly favoured with the word and ordinances: fair, and of goodly fruit; which, for a while, brought forth the fruit of good works; and, while such, was amiable and goodly to look upon; was, as the Syriac version is, “fair with fruit, and beautiful in sight”; and whereas it might have been expected she would have so continued, and been still as a green olive tree in the house of God, as David says, (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 52:8), now it was otherwise, she was become barren, dry, and fruitless: and therefore it follows:

with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it: that is, by means of the Chaldean army, which came with a mighty rushing noise, as a numerous army does; the Lord hath destroyed it, and burnt it with fire; what the Chaldeans did is ascribed to God, because it was done according to his will, and by his direction and overruling providence:

and the branches of it are broken; the high and principal ones, the king, princes, and nobles, their palaces, and the house of God. The apostle seems to have respect to this passage in (~~Romans~~ Romans 11:17). The Targum is,

“as an olive tree that is beautiful in form and comely of sight, whose branches overshadow the trees, so the Lord hath magnified thy name among the people; but now that thou hast transgressed

the law, the armies of the people, who are strong as fire, shall come against thee, and helps shall be joined to them.”

Ver. 17. *For the Lord of hosts that planted thee*, etc.] As a green olive tree, and gave thee all thy verdure, fruitfulness, happiness, and prosperity; when he first put thee into the possession of the good land, and distinguished thee by so many favours and blessings; as he is able to take them away, so he will:

for he hath pronounced evil against thee; he hath determined it in his mind, and he hath declared it by his prophets:

for the evil of the house of Israel; the ten tribes, who had committed sin, and for which the evil pronounced had been executed on them already, being some time ago carried captive:

and of the house of Judah; who had taken no warning by them, but had followed them in their iniquities, and even exceeded them; and therefore must expect the like punishment for their sins:

which they have done against themselves; for sin is not only against God, his nature, will, and law; but it is against the sinner himself, and is to his hurt and ruin, both temporal and eternal:

to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal; this particularly was the evil which was so provoking to God; and therefore he determined to bring the evil of punishment upon them; and shows the cause and reason of it; and which is a sufficient vindication of his justice.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord hath given me knowledge of it*, etc.] Either of what he had been declaring as the sins of these people; and of what he had been prophesying concerning punishment for their sins; what he had said was not of himself, did not arise from any pique or resentment in him against them; but it was of God, that knows all things, and had made known these things to him; and he had only faithfully related them as he had received them; or else of the malicious designs of the men of Anathoth to take away his life, after mentioned:

and I know it; and am sure of it; having it by divine revelation, and from that God that cannot lie, and will not deceive:

then thou shewedst me their doings. Some versions, as the Septuagint, Syriac; and Arabic, take the former words to be a prayer of the prophet's,

“O Lord, make me know, or show me, or teach me, that I may know”; and these signify that his prayer was answered. The Lord showed him the sins of these people, and what punishments they deserved, and would be inflicted on them; or rather what they were doing in the dark, and what schemes they were contriving and attempting to put in execution against his life; but God was careful of it, and would not suffer them to do him any harm; and therefore made all known unto him; (see ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 105:15).

Ver. 19. *But I was like a lamb, or an ox,* etc.] The word “alluph”, rendered an ox, is by many considered as an adjective to the word lamb^{f230}; since the disjunctive particle or is not in the next; and is differently translated; by the Vulgate Latin version, “as a meek or tame lamb”; by the Septuagint and Arabic versions, “as an harmless lamb”: and by the Syriac version, “as a pure” or “clean lamb”; and by the Targum,

“as a choice lamb;”

and so R. Menachem in Jarchi, a large or principal one; but the words respect not the excellency, the meekness, patience, innocence, and harmlessness of the prophet; but his security and insensibility of danger, like one or both of these creatures:

that is brought to the slaughter; to be sacrificed by the priest, or killed by the butcher; not knowing but it is going to the pasture to feed in, or to the fold or stall to lie down in; so ignorant was the prophet of the designs of his townsmen against him, and not at all jealous that they wished him ill; since he meant none to them, but sought their good:

and I knew not that they had devised devices against me; that they had met and consulted together, and devised mischief against him:

saying, let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof; meaning either the prophet and his family, root and branch; or him and his prophecies; for taking away his life would put an end to his prophesying. Some think this respects the manner in which they proposed to take away his life, as by poison; so the Targum,

“let us cast (put) poison (or the savour of death) into his food;”

for the word rendered fruit signifies bread; and so the Septuagint, Arabic, and Vulgate Latin versions render it, “let us cast, or put wood into his bread”^{f231}; either some poisonous plant or tree, or rotten wood; or give him

wood instead of bread, and so starve him. Deuteronomy Dieu observes, that **פך** , translated “fruit”, signifies, both in the Hebrew and Arabic languages, “flesh”; and renders it, “let us break wood upon his flesh”,^{f232} or body; that is, beat him with staves till they are broken upon him, and so kill him. The ancient fathers understand this of Christ, who is the bread of life, and of his crucifixion upon the wood of the cross. Jerom says it is the consent of all the churches that these things are said of Christ in the person of Jeremiah, even in this and the preceding verse, and the following one:

let us cut him off from the land of the living. The Targum explains it of the land of Israel; but it designs the world in general, and the taking away of his life out of it, and from among men:

that his name may be remembered no more; that he and his prophecies may be buried in everlasting oblivion; he no more spoken of, and his predictions no more regarded: but, as they failed in the former in taking away his life, he outliving many of them, so in the latter; for as what he foretold exactly came to pass, his name and his prophesying are in remembrance to this day; and, as the wise man says, “the memory of the just is blessed”, (**אמור** Proverbs 10:7).

Ver. 20. *But, O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously,* etc.] This is the prophet’s appeal to God, as the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right; he found there was no justice to be done him among men; he therefore has recourse to a righteous God, who he knew judged righteous judgment:

that triest the reins and the heart; of all men; as of his own, so of his enemies; and which he mentions, not so much on his own account as theirs:

let me see thy vengeance on them; which imprecation arose from a pure zeal for God, for his glory, and the honour of his justice; and not from private revenge; and so no ways inconsistent with the character of a good man; though some consider the words as a prediction of what would befall them, and he should live to see accomplished; and render them, “I shall see etc.”^{f233}; and so the Targum,

“I shall see the vengeance of thy judgment on them:”

for unto thee have I revealed my cause; as a client to his patron; told his whole case, and left it with him, believing he would manage it for him, and

do him justice. The Apostle Peter seems to have this passage in view, when speaking of Christ, (~~4023~~1 Peter 2:23).

Ver. 21. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of the men of Anathoth*, etc.] That is, “unto”, or “concerning the men of Anathoth”, the townsmen of Jeremiah, and who were the persons that combined together to destroy him; of this place, (see Gill on “~~3001~~Jeremiah 1:1”)

that seek thy life; or “soul”; that is, to take it away:

saying, prophesy not in the name of the Lord; without their leave, and such hard things as he did, unless he would prophesy smooth things, and then he might go on, otherwise he must expect to die:

that thou die not by our hand; or means; they intimate, that, should he persist in this way of prophesying, they should not stay to carry on a judicial process against him, to bring him and accuse him before a judge, or the sanhedrim, or any court of judicature; but should do as those called zealots in later times did; lay violent hands upon him, and dispatch him themselves at once; perhaps this they said after they found that the prophet had knowledge of their designs against him.

Ver. 22. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold, I will punish them*, etc.]. Or, visit “them”^{f234}; look into this matter, try this cause, bring it to an issue, and pass sentence on them; which is as follows:

the young men shall die by the sword; by the sword of the Chaldeans, in the field, going out in battle against them; or rather when their town was taken and plundered, since they were the sons of priests:

their sons and their daughters shall die by famine; that is, their little ones, male and female; so that the famine, it seems, was not only in Jerusalem at the time of its siege, but in other parts also: no mention is made of the parents themselves.

Ver. 23. *And there shall be no remnant of them*, etc.] And thus the measure they meted out to the prophet was measured to them; they devised to destroy him root and branch, the tree with its fruit; and now none shall be left of them; such who escaped the sword and the famine should be carried captive, as they were; for though there were none left in Anathoth, there were some preserved alive, and were removed into

Babylon; since, at the return from thence, the men of Anathoth were a hundred twenty and eight, (~~16172~~Nehemiah 7:27):

for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation; or, “in the year of their visitation”^{f235}; that is, of the visitation of their sins, as the Targum; which was the year of the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and was in the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar, (~~24522~~Jeremiah 52:12) and this was not a chance matter, but what was fixed and determined by the Lord.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 12

This chapter contains the prophets complaint of the prosperity of the wicked, and the Lord's answer to it; an account of the deplorable and miserable estate of the Jewish nation; and a threatening to the neighbouring nations that had used them ill; with a promise of deliverance of the Jews from them, and settlement among God's people in case of obedience. The prophet's complaint is in (^{2411B}Jeremiah 12:1,2) in which he asserts the justice of God, yet seems at a loss to reconcile it with the prosperity of the wicked; and the rather, because of their hypocrisy; and appeals to the Lord for his own sincerity and uprightness, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 12:3) and prays for the destruction of the wicked, and that the time might hasten, for whose wickedness the land was desolate, and herbs, beasts, and birds, consumed, (^{2411B}Jeremiah 12:3,4), the Lord's answer, in which he reproves him for his pusillanimity, seeing he had greater trials than those to encounter with, and instructs him how to behave towards his treacherous friends, is in (^{2411B}Jeremiah 12:5,6) the account of the miserable condition of the Jewish nation is from (^{2411F}Jeremiah 12:7-14), under the simile of a house and heritage left by the Lord, given up to enemies, and compared to a lion and a speckled bird, hateful to God, and hated by those about it, (^{2411F}Jeremiah 12:7-9) and of a vineyard destroyed and trodden down by shepherds, and made desolate, (^{2411D}Jeremiah 12:10,11) even as a wilderness through the ravage of the sword; so that what is sown upon it comes to nothing, (^{2411D}Jeremiah 12:12,13) then follows a threatening to those who had carried the people of Israel captive, with a promise to deliver the Jews out of their hands, and bring them into their own land, and settle them among the Lord's people, in case they use diligence to learn their ways, (^{2411D}Jeremiah 12:14-16), but in case of disobedience are threatened to be plucked up and utterly destroyed, (^{2411F}Jeremiah 12:17).

Ver. 1. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee*, etc.] The six first verses of this chapter properly belong to the preceding, being of the same argument, and in strict connection with the latter part of it. Jeremiah appears to be under the same temptation, on account of the prosperity of

the wicked, as Asaph was, (~~19730~~ Psalm 73:1) only he seems to have been more upon his guard, and less liable to fall by it; he sets out: with this as a first principle, an undoubted truth, that God was righteous, and could do nothing wrong and amiss, however unaccountable his providences might be to men: he did not mean, by entering the list with him, or by litigating this point, to charge him with any unrighteousness this he took for granted, and was well satisfied of, that the Lord was righteous, “though”, says he, “I plead with thee”^{f236}; so some read the words. Deuteronomy Dieu renders them interrogatively, “shall I plead with thee?” shall I dare to do it? shall I take that boldness and use that freedom with thee? I will. The Targum is the reverse,

“thou art more just, O Lord, than that I should contend before thy word:”

yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments; not of his laws, statutes, word, and ordinances, sometimes so called; but rather of his providences, which are always dispensed with equity and justice, though not always manifest; they are sometimes unsearchable and past finding out, and will bear a sober and modest inquiry into them, and debate concerning them; the people of God may take the liberty of asking questions concerning them, when they are at a loss to account for them. So the Targum,

“but I will ask a question of judgments before thee.”

The words may be rendered, “but I will speak judgments with thee”^{f237}; things that are right; that are agreeable to the word of God and sound reason; things that are consistent with the perfections of God, particularly his justice and holiness; which are founded upon equity and truth; I will produce such reasons and arguments as seem to be reasonable and just.

Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? or they prosper in all their ways? whatever they take in hand succeeds; they enjoy a large share of health of body; their families increase, their trade flourishes, their flocks and herds grow large and numerous, and they have great plenty of all outward blessings; and yet they are wicked men, without the fear of God, regard not him, nor his worship and ways; but walk in their own ways which they have chosen, and delight in their abominations. Some understand this, as Jarchi, of Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God had given greatness and prosperity, to destroy the house of God; but by what

follows, in the latter part of the next verse, it appears that God's professing people, the Jews, are meant, and most likely the priests at Anathoth.

Wherefore are all they happy; easy, quiet, secure, live in peace and plenty: *that deal very treacherously?* with God and men, in religions and civil affairs.

Ver. 2. *Thou hast planted them*, etc.] In the land of Canaan, fixed the bounds of their habitation, given them a firm and comfortable settlement; for all the good things, even of the wicked, come from God:

yea, they have taken root; as everything that is planted does not; but these did, though it was downwards in the earth, on which their hearts were set, and so were strengthened and established in their worldly circumstances:

they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit; but to themselves, not to God; not fruits of righteousness or good works; they grow, not in grace and holiness, but in their worldly substance; and they brought forth fruit, not such as were meet for repentance, but they had great riches, and numerous families; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, "they produce children, and bring forth fruit." The Targum is,

"they become rich, yea, they possess substance."

Thou art near in their mouth; they often made use of the name of God, either in swearing by it, or praying to him in an external manner; they called themselves the Lord's people, and boasted of being his priests, and employed in his service; they took his covenant, and the words of his law, into their mouths, and taught them the people, and yet had no sincere regard for these things:

and far from their reins; from the affections of their hearts, and the desires of their souls; they had no true love for God, nor fear of him, nor faith in him. The Targum is,

"near are the words of thy law in their mouth, and far is thy fear from their reins."

Ver. 3. *But thou, O Lord, knowest me*, etc.] The Lord knew him before he was born, (²⁰⁰⁵Jeremiah 1:5), he knew what he designed him for, and what use he would make of him; and he knew him now, and loved him, and cared for him, as his prophet; he knew his sincerity and faithfulness, and

took notice of it, with what integrity he performed his office, and discharged his duty; and he knew that all his enemies said of him were scandal and reproach, lies and calumnies.

Thou hast seen me; his inside, his heart, and all in it; for all things are naked and open to the eyes of an omniscient God:

and tried mine heart towards thee; he had tried him by various afflictive providences, and his heart was found towards God; the affections and desires of his soul were towards him, and he remained faithful and upright before him, and not like the wicked before mentioned.

Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter; either out of the fold, or from a fat pasture; so fat sheep are plucked from the rest, in order to be killed: this shows that their riches, affluence, and plenty, served but to ripen them for ruin and destruction, and were like the fattening of sheep for slaughter; which the prophet, by this imprecation, suggests and foretells would be their case, as a righteous judgment upon them; (see ~~485~~ James 5:5).

Prepare them for the day of slaughter; or, “sanctify them”^{f238}; set them apart for it: this, doubtless, refers to the time of Jerusalem’s destruction by the Chaldeans.

Ver. 4. *How long shall the land mourn*, etc.] The land of Judea, being desolate, and bringing forth no fruit, through the long drought that had been upon it:

and the herbs of every field wither; for want of rain to come upon it:

for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? this opens the cause, the reason of this dearth; it was the wickedness of the inhabitants of it: as the whole earth was originally cursed for the sins of men, so particular countries have had the marks of God’s displeasure upon them, because of the sins of those that dwell in them. This clause, according to the accents, belongs to what follows, and may be read in connection with the next clause; either thus, “the herbs” of every field wither, I say, “because of the wickedness of the inhabitants of it, which consumes the beasts and the birds”^{f239}; that is, which wickedness is the cause not only of the withering of the grass and herbs, but of the consumption of birds and beasts: or else, by repeating the interrogation in the preceding clause,

how long shall the earth mourn, etc.;

how long, for the malice of them that dwell in it, are the beasts and the birds consumed^{f240}? the one having no grass to eat; and the other no fruit to pick, or seeds to live upon; the barrenness being so very great and general.

Because they said; the Jews, the inhabitants of the land, the wicked part of them, and which was the greater:

he shall not see our last end; either the Prophet Jeremiah, who had foretold it; but they did not believe him, that such would be their end, and that he should live to see it; or such was their atheism and infidelity, that they said God himself should not see it; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions read, “God shall not see”.

Ver. 5. *If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee,* etc.] The Targum introduces the words thus,

“this is the answer which was made to Jeremiah the prophet, concerning his question; a prophet thou art, like to a man that runs with footmen, and is weary.”

Then how canst thou contend with horses? or with men on horses: the sense is, either as Kimchi gives it, thou art among men like thyself, and thou art not able to find out their secrets and their designs against thee ((see ^{<24118>}Jeremiah 11:18,19)); how shouldest thou know my secrets in the government of the world, as to the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous? be silent, and do not trouble thyself about these things: or rather, as thou hast had a conflict with the men of Anathoth, and they have been too many for thee; they have grieved and distressed thee, and have made thee weary of my work and service; and thou hast been ready to give out, and declare that thou wilt be no longer concerned therein; what wilt thou do, when thou comest to be exercised with greater and sorer trials, and shalt have to do with the king of Judah and his court, with his princes and nobles, the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and the priests and inhabitants thereof? The Targum interprets the footmen of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and of the good things done to him; and the horses of the righteous fathers of the Jews, who run like horses to do good works, and of the much greater good reserved for them; but very improperly: much better might it be applied, as it is by some, to the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, who gave the Jews much trouble; and therefore what would they do with the Chaldean army, consisting of a large cavalry, and which

would come upon them like an impetuous stream, and overflow, as the swelling of Jordan, as follows?

and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee; if in his own native country, where he promised himself much peace, safety, and security, he met with that which ruffled and disturbed him:

then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan? when it overflowed its bank, (^{CRISIS}Joshua 3:15) and may denote the pride and haughtiness of the king and princes of Judea, and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and the difficulties that would attend the prophet's discharge of his duty among them; and the same thing is signified by this proverbial expression as the former.

Ver. 6. *For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father*, etc.] The men of Anathoth;

even they have dealt treacherously with thee; by laying schemes, and consulting methods, to take away his life privately; his enemies were those of his own house; which is oftentimes the case of good men, and especially of such that are in public office:

yea, they have called a multitude after thee; a multitude of men, which they gathered together, and instigated to call after him in a clamorous and reproachful way: or,

they called after thee with a full voice, as the Vulgate Latin^{f241} version renders it; and which Deuteronomy Dieu approves of; they not only gathered a mob about him, and drew men after him, but they hooted him as he went along, and called aloud after him, giving him the most reproachful names they could think of:

believe them not, though they speak fair words to thee; this must be understood of some of them, who did not appear so openly against him, as to call after him, or gather a mob about him; but of such who pretended to be his friends, and to have respect for him, and yet had evil designs against him, and therefore were not to be trusted; their words were not to be believed; their company to be shunned; nor was he safe in their houses; nor was it safe for him to be with them, to eat with them, or converse with them.

Ver. 7. *I have forsaken my house*, etc.] The temple, where the Lord took up his residence, and vouchsafed his presence to his people; this was fulfilled in the first temple, when it was destroyed by the Chaldeans; and more fully in the second, when Christ took his leave of it, (^{<4138>}Matthew 23:38) and when that voice was heard in it, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, as Josephus^{f242} relates,

“let us go hence.”

So the Targum,

“I have forsaken the house of my sanctuary.”

I have left mine heritage: the people whom he had chosen for his inheritance, whom he prized and valued, took care of, and protected as such; (see ^{<4510>}Deuteronomy 32:9).

I have given the dearly beloved of my soul; whom he heartily loved and delighted in, and who were as dear to him as the apple of his eye:

into the hands of her enemies; the Chaldeans. This prophecy represents the thing as if it was already done, because of the certainty of it, and to awaken the Jews out of their lethargy and stupidity; and by the characters which the Lord gives of them it appears what ingratitude they had been guilty of, and that their ruin was owing to themselves and their sins.

Ver. 8. *Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest*, etc.] Which roars, and terrifies passengers from going that way; and which rends and tears in pieces all it meets with. This expresses the clamours of these people against God and his providences, and their rage, fierceness, and cruelty, against his prophets, sent in his name.

It crieth out against me; this is to be understood not of the cry of the oppressed through violence, for this is a cry to God, and not against him; or of idolaters to idols, as Baal's prophets to him, in the time of their service; which senses are mentioned by Kimchi: but either of their charging God with inequality and injustice, in the ways of his providence; or their blaspheming his name, and speaking ill of his ministry

Therefore have I hated it; which he showed by leaving his house, forsaking his heritage, and delivering his people into the hands of their enemies; the reason of which was not in himself, but them; the fault was not his, but theirs; this is all to be understood of the change in the dispensation of the

divine Providence towards them; otherwise the love of God to his chosen in Christ is unchangeable; it is never turned into hatred, but remains invariably the same, as it did to those, among these people; who belonged to the election of grace; for, as the love before expressed to this people in general only respects external favours and privileges, which they were indulged with above all people; so this hatred of them signifies the taking away of such favours, and leaving them to become a prey to their enemies.

Ver. 9. *Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird*, etc.] Or, “is not mine heritage unto me as a speckled bird?”^{f243} as a bird of various colours, delightful to look at, as the peacock, so Jerom interprets it here; it was so formerly, but not so now; or as a bird of various colours, and unusual, which other birds get about, look on, hate, and peck at. Some think this refers to the motley party coloured religion the Jews had embraced, consisting of various rites and ceremonies of the Heathens; on which account they thought they looked beautiful and comely, when they were hated and rejected of God for them; but the word signifies rather to be dipped or stained, as with blood, and so denotes a bird of prey that is stained with the blood of others; a fit emblem of the cruelty of the Jews, in shedding the blood of the prophets. Some, because a word near akin to this signifies a finger, render it a “fingered bird”^{f244}; that is, a bird with talons or claws; like fingers, a ravenous bird, and it comes to the same sense as before. But the Septuagint take it, to be not a bird, but a beast, and render it by the hyena; and which Bochart^{f245} approves of, since the word in the Arabic language signifies such a creature; and Schindler observes, that [bx, with the Arabians, is the name of a creature between a wolf and a middling dog, which agrees with the hyena. The word here used, in the Talmudic^{f246} language signifies a she leopard or panther, so called from its variety of spots; and is the same, as Maimonides says^{f247}, which, in the Arabic language, is called [bxl a; with the Targumists it is used for a kind of serpents or vipers. So the valley of Tzeboim is rendered, in the Targum, the valley of vipers, (~~0138~~ 1 Samuel 13:18). And it is said^{f248}, [wbx, the word in the text,

“this is from a white drop (or seed), and yet it has three hundred and sixty five kinds of colours, according to the number of the days of a solar year.”

The birds round about are against her; or, “are not the birds round about against her?” the birds of prey? they are; meaning the neighbouring nations,

that under Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jerusalem to take and destroy it.

Come ye, assemble all ye beasts of the field, come to devour; this is an invitation to the enemies of the people of the Jews, comparable for their fierceness and savageness to the beasts of the field, to come and destroy them; and shows that their destruction was by divine permission, and according to the will of God. Compare with this (~~6698~~ Revelation 19:18). The Targum interprets it of those that kill with the sword; kings of the earth, and their armies.

Ver. 10. *Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard*, etc.] This is a metaphor which is often used of the people of Israel and Judah; (see ~~4808~~ Psalm 80:8 ~~2308~~ Isaiah 5:1-7 27:2), the pastors that destroyed them are not their own governors, civil or religious, but Heathen princes, Nebuchadnezzar and his generals. So the Targum paraphrases it,

“many kings slay my people;”

so Kimchi and Ben Melech.

They have trodden my portion under foot; the people of the Jews, that were his portion, and before called his heritage; whom the Chaldeans subdued, and reduced to extreme servitude and bondage; and were as the dirt under their feet, greatly oppressed and despised.

They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness; by pulling down stately edifices, unwalling of towers, and destroying men; so that there were none to manure the fields, to dress the vineyards, and keep gardens and orchards in good case; but all were come to ruin and what before was a delightful paradise was now like an heath or desert.

Ver. 11. *They have made it desolate*, etc.] Which is repeated to denote the certainty of it; astonishment at it, and that it might be observed:

and being desolate it mourneth unto me; not the inhabitants of it for their sins, the cause of this desolation; but the land itself, because of the calamities upon it; it crying to God, in its way, for a restoration to its former beauty and glory.

The whole land is made desolate; it was not only the case of Jerusalem, and the parts adjacent, but even of the whole land of Judea:

because no man layeth it to heart, took any notice of the judgment threatened, foretold by the prophets; nor repented of their sins, for which they were threatened with such a desolation; nor even were properly affected with the destruction itself; the earth seemed more sensible of it than they were; this expresses the great stupidity of this people.

Ver. 12. *The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness*, etc.] Of Judea; or which lay between Chaldea and Judea, through which the Chaldean army came; called here the “spoilers”, because they spoiled and plundered all places where they came; nor could the high, strong, and fortified places withstand them, or escape their ravage and fury. Deuteronomy Dieu renders it, “upon all the plains in the wilderness”; where was pasture, land for cattle, as Kimchi serves; which were trodden down and spoiled by the soldiers, and made forage of.

For the sword of the Lord shall devour from the one end; of the land even the other end of the land; the sword of the Chaldeans is called the sword of the Lord, because it was drawn by his order and appointment, and was succeeded by him to do execution; and the calamity which it brought upon the land reached from one end of it to the other, so general and; extensive it was.

No flesh shall have peace; no inhabitant of Judea shall be in safety, but be exposed to the sword, or to captivity.

Ver. 13. *They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns*, etc.] Which may be understood literally, the land of Judea being cursed for their sins, and become barren and unfruitful, as the earth originally was for the sin of the first man, (²⁰⁰⁸⁹Genesis 3:19), or rather figuratively, which some interpret of the prophets as Kimchi, sowing the good seed of the word among the Jews; but it did not take place in them, and bring forth fruit; instead thereof thorns sprung up, or evil works were done by them, comparable thereunto; but it seems better to understand it of the people; not, as Jarchi, of their prayers, which were not accepted, because unattended with repentance and good works; but of their schemes, which they thought were prudently laid, in forming an alliance with Egypt, and sending thither for help against the Chaldeans, but all in vain; these proved in the issue like thorns, grievous and vexatious to them. The Septuagint version reads imperatively, “sow ye”: and Jarchi makes mention of a copy, in which the word was pointed as to be so read, as in (²⁸⁰¹²Hosea 10:12), and may be understood ironically. The Targum is,

“be ye not like those who sow wheat in untilled land, and can gather nothing but thorns.”

They have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit; were at a great deal of pains and trouble to make Egypt their ally, and send thither for assistance, and all to no purpose. Kimchi’s father interprets this of their uneasiness and grief, at parting with so much money to the king of Egypt, without having any advantage by it; which is to be preferred to the sense Jarchi gives, of the people crying to God, and grieving because not regarded by him. Some render the words, “they have got an inheritance”, as the Vulgate Latin; the land of Canaan, but they will not be able to keep it; it shall no longer be theirs, or any advantage to them.

And they shall be ashamed of your revenues; not the prophets of the evil works of the people, but rather the people of their own evil works; and, particularly, of their schemes, counsels, and preparations, to secure themselves against the enemy; of their alliances with other nations, and of vain confidences; the success not answering to the pains and expense they had been at; but these failing and disappointing them, would fill them with shame and confusion.

Because of the fierce anger of the Lord; against which there was no standing; this being infinitely more powerful than the Chaldean army, by the means of which it came upon them, and from which no schemes and alliances could protect them.

Ver. 14. *Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours*, etc.] Or, “concerning”^{f249} them; the Egyptians, Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Tyre, and Sidon; whom the Lord calls his “neighbours”, because they were near the land of Canaan, where his people dwelt, to whom he vouchsafed his presence, and where the temple was in which he took up his residence; and his “evil” neighbours, because they often distressed and afflicted his people.

That touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; meaning not only that they bordered on the land of Canaan, and so might be said to touch it, but that they did hurt unto it; in which sense the word touch is used, (^{CRASIS} Psalm 105:15), the land of Canaan was an inheritance which was distributed by lot to the children of Israel, who were a people dear unto the Lord, as this shows; and therefore they that touched

them, or their inheritance, as to do them any harm, touched the apple of his eye, and which he resented greatly, (^{<3018>}Zechariah 2:8).

Behold, I will pluck them out of their land; cause them to be carried captive into other lands, or be destroyed in their own; see Jeremiah chapters forty six through forty nine: and pluck out the house of Judah from among them; such of the Jews they had formerly carried captive, or who had fled to them upon the Chaldean invasion; these the Lord would cause to come forth from among them, and return them to their own land.

Ver. 15. *And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out,* etc.] Not the Jews only, but more especially their neighbouring nations; after they have been plucked up and carried captive, and been in captivity some time:

I will return, and have compassion on them; or, “have compassion on them again”^{f250}; by returning their captivity, as is promised, (^{<2487>}Jeremiah 48:47 49:6,39):

and I will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land; this seems to respect the conversion of the Gentiles in the latter day, when the fulness of them shall be brought in; as the latter part of the preceding verse may more especially regard the conversion of the Jews at the same time, when they shall be gathered out of all nations where they are, and return to their own land.

Ver. 16. *And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people,* etc.] Not their evil ways of sin or superstition, they sometimes stray into; but the ways which God has prescribed to them, and has directed them to walk in, and in which they do walk; and which are to be learned of the Lord, by a diligent attendance with his people on his word and ordinances; (see ^{<2018>}Isaiah 2:3):

to swear by my name, the Lord liveth; that is, to worship and serve the living God, a self-existent Being, who has life in himself, and of himself, and not another; and is the fountain, author, and giver of natural life to all creatures, and spiritual and eternal life to his true worshippers: swearing is here put for the whole of religious worship, as in (^{<1613>}Deuteronomy 6:13):

(as they taught my people to swear by Baal;) to worship him, and other idols:

then shall they be built in the midst of my people; become part of the spiritual building the church; being laid upon the same foundation of the apostles and prophets, and built up a holy temple; a spiritual house for the Lord to dwell in; partaking of the same privileges and ordinances as the people of God; being fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the Gospel, (⁴⁰²⁰Ephesians 2:20,21 3:6), it denotes the settlement and establishment of the Gentiles with the Jews in a Gospel church state. So the Targum,

“and they shall be established in the midst of my people.”

Ver. 17. *But if they will not obey*, etc.] Or “hear”^{f251}; the word of the Lord, and hearken to the ministers of the Gospel, and be subject to the ordinances of it; or as the Targum,

“will not receive instruction:”

I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord: root it up from being a nation, strip it of all its privileges and enjoyments, and destroy it with an everlasting destruction; (see ³³⁴⁶Zechariah 14:16-18).

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 13

In this chapter, under the similes of a girdle and bottles of wine, the destruction of the Jews is set forth. Some exhortations are given them to repent and humble themselves, even men of all ranks and degrees among them; and their sins, the source of their calamities, are pointed out to them. An order is given to the prophet to get him a linen girdle, with instructions what to do with it, and which he observed, (^{<2413B>}Jeremiah 13:1,2), a fresh order to take it and hide it in the hole of a rock by the river Euphrates, which he accordingly did, (^{<2413B>}Jeremiah 13:3-5) and he is bid a third time to go and take it from thence, which he did; when he found it spoiled, and good for nothing, (^{<2413B>}Jeremiah 13:6,7), then follows the application of this simile, or the signification of this sign; that in like manner the pride of Judah and Jerusalem should be marred, and for their wickedness and idolatry should become good for nothing, like that girdle; whereas they ought to have cleaved to the Lord, as a girdle does to a man's loins, and to have been an honourable people to him, (^{<2413B>}Jeremiah 13:8-11). By the simile of bottles filled with wine is signified that all the inhabitants of the land, king, priests, prophets, and common people, should be like drunken men, that should dash one against another, and destroy each other, which the mercy of God would not prevent, (^{<2413D>}Jeremiah 13:12-14), some exhortations are made to the people in general, to be humble, and confess their sins, and give glory to God, before it was too late; which are enforced by the prophet's affectionate concern for them, (^{<2413E>}Jeremiah 13:15-17) and to the king and queen in particular, since their crown and kingdom were about to be taken from them; the cities, in the southern parts, going to be shut up, and not opened; and even the whole land of Judea, and all its inhabitants, in a little time would be carried captive, (^{<2413B>}Jeremiah 13:18,19), and, to certify them of the truth of these things, they are bid to look to the north, from whence the enemy was coming to carry them captive, even the beautiful flock committed to their care, (^{<2413D>}Jeremiah 13:20), and to consider what they could say for themselves, when their punishment should come upon them suddenly, as the sorrows of a woman in travail, (^{<2413D>}Jeremiah 13:21) and should they ask the reason of this, it

was owing to the multitude of their iniquities, and to their habit and custom of sinning, which made their case desperate, (²⁴³²Jeremiah 13:22,23), wherefore a resolution is taken to disperse them among the nations, and that this should be their lot and portion, because of their many abominations, and yet not without some concern that they might be purged from their iniquities, (²⁴³⁴Jeremiah 13:24-27).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord unto me*, etc.] In a vision, and by the spirit of prophecy: when this was said is not certain, very likely in the reign of Jehoiakim; the prophet gives an account of what had been done, the present tense is put for the past.

Go and get thee a linen girdle; or, “a girdle of linens”^{f252}; a girdle made of flax or fine linen, which the prophet had not used to wear; and having none, is bid to go, perhaps from Anathoth to Jerusalem, to “get” one, or “buy” one: this girdle represents the people of the Jews in their more pure and less corrupted state, when they were a people near unto the Lord, and greatly regarded by him, and had a share in his affections; when they cleaved unto him, and served him, and were to his praise and glory: “and put it upon thy loins”; near the reins, the seat of affection and desire, and that it might be visible and ornamental; denoting what has been before observed: “and” or

but put it not in water or, “bring it not through it”^{f253}; meaning either before he put it on his loins; and the sense is, that he was not to wash it, and whiten it, but to wear it just as it was wrought, signifying that those people were originally taken by the Lord of his own mercy, and without any merits of theirs, rough, unwashed, and unpolished as they were: or else, after he had wore it, as Jarchi, when it was soiled with sweat; yet not to be washed, that it might rot the sooner: and so may design the corrupt and filthy state of this people, and the ruin brought thereby upon them, which was not to be prevented.

Ver. 2. *So I got a girdle*, etc.] Or, bought^{f254} a linen one, as directed:

according to the word of the Lord; his express order and command; the prophet was not disobedient to the heavenly vision:

and I put it on my loins; without washing it before or after, and wore it publicly for some time.

Ver. 3. *And the word of the Lord*, etc.] The Targum is,

“the word of prophecy from before the Lord:”

came unto me the second time, saying; what distance of time there was between this order and the former is not known.

Ver. 4. *Take the girdle which thou hast got, which is upon thy loins*, etc.] Either he is bid to take it off his loins, on which it was; or to go with it on them; seeing the taking it off does not seem absolutely necessary; and go with it to the place directed to in the following words:

and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock; by the river side, where the waters, coming and going, would reach and wet it, and it drying again, would rot the sooner. This signifies the carrying of the Jews captive to Babylon, by which city the river Euphrates ran, and the obscure state and condition they would be in there; and where all their pride and glory would be marred, as afterwards declared.

Ver. 5. *So I went and hid it by Euphrates*, etc.] Or, “in”^{f255} it; in a hole of the rock, upon the banks of it:

as the Lord commanded me: all this seems to be done not really, but visionally; it can hardly be thought that Jeremy should be sent on two such long journeys, on such an account, which would take up a considerable time to perform it in; but rather that he went and came in like manner as Ezekiel did, in the visions of God, from Chaldea to Jerusalem, and from thence to Chaldea again, (^{<418B>}Ezekiel 8:3 11:24), and so Maimonides^{f256} was of opinion, as Kimchi on the place observes, that all this was done in a vision of prophecy.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass after many days*, etc.] When the girdle had lain long in the hole, by the side of Euphrates; this denotes the length of the Babylonish captivity, which was seventy years:

that the Lord said unto me, arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there; which may denote the return of these people from captivity, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah; (see ^{<4251>}Jeremiah 25:11,12), though this seems to be visionally done, in order to express the wretched state and condition these people were in; either before the captivity, which was the cause of it; or at their return from it, when they were no better for it.

Ver. 7. *Then I went to Euphrates*, etc.] In a vision; this is the second journey, of which (See Gill on “^{<2435>}Jeremiah 13:5”),

and digged; the hole, in process of time, being stopped up with soil or sand, that were thrown up over it; this digging was in a visionary way; (see ^{<2435>}Ezekiel 8:8):

and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it; which he knew again by some token or another:

and, behold, the girdle was marred; or “corrupted”^{f257}; it was become rotten by the washing of the water over it, and its long continuance in such a place:

it was profitable for nothing; it could not be put upon a man’s loins, or be wore any more; nor was it fit for any other use, it was so sadly spoiled and so thoroughly rotten. It is in the Hebrew text, “it shall not prosper to all”^{f258} things; that is, not “to anything”^{f259}, as many render it.

Ver. 8. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*.] Or the word of prophecy from before the Lord, as the Targum; and now follows the application of this sign to the thing signified, and the whole intention of it is opened.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord, after this manner*, etc.] As this girdle has been hid in Euphrates, and has been marred and rendered useless; so in like manner, and by such like means,

will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem; or their glory, or excellency^{f260}; that which they gloried in, and were proud of; their city which was burnt, and their temple which was destroyed by the Chaldeans; their king, princes, and nobles, who were carried captive into Babylon, by the river Euphrates, and stripped of all their grandeur, honour, and glory; and so the Targum,

“so will I corrupt the strength of the men of Judah, and the strength of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which is much;”

and to which agrees the Syriac version, which renders it,

“the proud or haughty men of Judah, and the many haughty men of Jerusalem.”

Ver. 10. *This evil people, which refuse to hear my words*, etc.] Sent by the prophets, to whom they turned a deaf ear; and though they pressed them, and importunately desired them to give them a hearing, they refused it; and this showed them to be a bad people, very degenerate and wicked; and which further appears by what follows:

which walk in the imagination of their heart; which was evil, stubborn, and rebellious, (see ^{<407>}Jeremiah 7:24 9:14):

and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them; went to Egypt and Assyria to pay their adoration to those who were not by nature gods; and this was the cause of their ruin and destruction:

shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing: as they were corrupt in their practices, and were become useless and unserviceable to God; so they would be carried captive into a foreign country, where they would be inglorious, and unprofitable, uncomfortable in themselves, and of no use to one another.

Ver. 11. *For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man*, etc.] Being girt tight unto him:

so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah; whom he chose above all people, and caused to approach unto him, and dwell in his courts; whom he favoured with his presence, and encouraged them to follow after him, and cleave to him in faith and affection, and with full purpose of heart; so that they were a people near unto him as a man's girdle is to his loins: and the end of this was, and would have been, had they continued so,

that they might be unto me for a people; his own people, a special and peculiar people above all others, peculiarly favoured and blessed by him, and continue so, and in the enjoyment of all good things:

and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory; for a famous and renowned people, that should be to the praise and glory of God, and an honour to him, and an ornament to the profession of him; whereas they were the reverse:

but they would not hear; the words of the Lord, nor obey his voice; but served other gods, departed from the Lord, to whom they should have cleaved, and so became like this rotten girdle.

Ver. 12. *Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word*, etc.] The following parable:

thus saith the Lord God of Israel; what was to be said is prefaced with these words, to show that it was not a trifling matter, but of moment and importance, and not to be slighted and despised as it was:

every bottle shall be filled with wine; meaning every inhabitant of Judea and Jerusalem, comparable to bottles or earthen vessels, as the Jewish writers interpret it, for their being empty of all that is good, and for their frailty and brittleness being liable to be broke to pieces, and to utter ruin and destruction; these are threatened to be “filled with wine”; not literally taken, such as they loved; though there may be an allusion to their intemperance, and so this is a just retaliation for their sins; but figuratively, with the wine of divine wrath; and their being filled with it denotes the greatness of the calamities which should come upon them, and be around them on all sides:

and they shall say unto thee; upon hearing the above, and by way of reply to it:

do we not certainly know; or, “knowing do we not know”^{f261}; can we be thought to be ignorant of this,

that every bottle shall be filled with wine? every child knows this; what else are bottles made for? is this the errand thou art sent on by the Lord? and is this all the knowledge and information that we are to have by thy prophesying? or what dost thou mean by telling us that which we and everybody know? what is designed by this? surely thou must have another meaning in it than what the words express.

Ver. 13. *Then shall thou say unto them*, etc.] Explaining the above words:

thus saith the Lord, behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land; this is the application of the parable, and shows that by every bottle is meant every inhabitant of Judea:

even the kings that sit upon David's throne; or, “that sit for David on his throne”^{f262}; that succeed him one after another; more kings may be meant than one, as Jehoiakim and Zedekiah; or the present reigning king, and the princes of the brood, are designed; who, though of David's family, and on his throne, yet this could not secure them from the calamity threatened:

and the priests; who ministered in holy things; their sacred office and function would not preserve them from ruin:

and the prophets; the false prophets, as the Targum, that prophesied smooth things, and prophesied them peace and safety, these should be involved in the common destruction:

and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with drunkenness; with tribulation, as the Targum interprets it; and adds,

“and shall be like a drunken man;”

giddy, stupid, unable to help themselves, or to advise one another.

Ver. 14. *And I will dash them one against another*, etc.] As drunken men fall foul on one another, and quarrel and fight; or in allusion to bottles and earthen vessels they are before compared to; and may denote the internal broils and contentions among themselves, that instead of assisting each other in their distress, they would be destroying one another; which was notorious in the last siege of Jerusalem:

even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord; no relation, nor even age nor sex, being regarded:

I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them: the Lord’s hand was in all this; everything was by his permission, and according to his will; he would not prevent the enemy’s invading, besieging, and taking them, nor hinder themselves from destroying one another; but suffer a general calamity to come upon them, without showing the least mercy to them, so great were their sins, and such the provocation.

Ver. 15. *Hear ye, and give ear*, etc.] Both to what goes before, and what follows after. The words doubled denote the closest and strictest attention:

be not proud; haughty, scornful, as above all instruction, and needing no advice and counsel, self-conceited, despising the word of God, and his messages by his prophets; or, “do not lift up yourselves”^{f263}; above others, and against God:

for the Lord hath spoken; it is not I, but the Lord; and what he has said shall certainly come to pass; so the Targum,

“for in the word of the Lord it is so decreed;”

it is in vain to oppose him; his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; none ever hardened themselves against him, and prospered.

Ver. 16. *Give glory to the Lord your God*, etc.] By confessing sin unto him; by humiliation for it before him; by believing what he says, hearkening to his word, and obeying his commands, and living to his honour and glory; (see ^{<117D>}Joshua 7:19), especially by believing in Christ, the true God, and true Messiah, embracing his Gospel, and his ordinances:

before he cause darkness; before the Lord brings on the dark dispensation threatened, the calamity before spoken of; repent while space is given, before it is too late; so the Targum,

“before tribulation comes upon you, and ye be like to those that walk in darkness.”

The Babylonish captivity may be meant, which was a dark day with the Jews, as is their present case, and which may be included; and it is applicable to any dark state of the church of God, such as may be now apprehended as near, through the spread of Popery, the growth of errors and heresies, the persecution of the saints, the slaying of the witnesses, the cessation of the Gospel ministry and ordinances for a while; which is that day of darkness and gloominess, that hour of temptation that shall come upon all the earth, to try its inhabitants; happy those that give glory to God by their faith in him, and by keeping the word of his patience:

and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; or, “of twilight”; or, “of the evening”; or rather, “upon the mountains in the evening”^{f264}; at eventide; at which time it is troublesome and dangerous travelling on mountains. These may design either the mountains to which they would flee for shelter, (^{<1216>}Matthew 24:16), or those which lay in the way to Babylon, over which they should travel when carried captive; or rather the kingdoms of Babylon and Media, whither they should be carried, and where they should endure much affliction and hardship; it being usual to signify kingdoms by mountains; so Babylon itself is, (^{<1525>}Jeremiah 51:25 ^{<341E>}Zechariah 4:7), perhaps there may be some allusion, as Sanctus thinks, to Babylon itself, which being situated in a marshy place, might be generally covered with a cloud or mist, and, together with the smoke of the city, might look like a dark mountain; and especially the hanging gardens in it looked at a distance like^{f265} mountains with forests on them. It may be applied to the eventide of the latter day, when many shall stumble and fall

through mountains of difficulties and discouragements in the way of religion; of professing the pure Gospel and ordinances of it, through the prevailing darkness of the age, and the persecution of men; and to the evening of life, and the dark mountains of death and eternity, on which men may be said to stumble and fall when they die; and when their everlasting state will appear to be fixed as immovable as mountains; and there will be no more means of grace, of faith, repentance, and conversion, but blackness of darkness for evermore, outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth; wherefore, before this time comes, it behooves persons to be concerned for the glory of God, and the everlasting welfare of their souls:

and while ye look for light; prosperity and happiness, as the false prophets gave out they should have; or for help and assistance from the Egyptians, to whom they sent:

he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness; that is, the Lord, who would disappoint them, and, instead of having that relief and comfort they were promised, would bring upon them such shocking calamities, which would be as terrible as death itself, or at least as the shadow of death, and be like gross darkness, even such as was in Egypt, which might be felt; (see ^{<340>}Isaiah 49:9).

Ver. 17. *But if ye will not hear it*, etc.] The advice and exhortation now given, to repent of sin, be humble before God, and glorify him:

my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; he would no more act in a public character; but, laying aside his office as a prophet and public instructor, would retire to some corner, where he might not be seen or heard, and there lament the sins of the people, particularly their “pride”, which had been the cause of their ruin; or mourn on account of their glory and excellency, as the word may be rendered, which would depart from them; their city and temple would be burnt; and their king, princes, and nobles, and the flower of the nation, carried into Babylon; so the Jews^{f266} interpret it of the glory of Israel, which should cease from them, and be given to the nations of the world; (See Gill on “^{<243>}Jeremiah 13:9”);

mine eyes shall weep sore; or, “shedding tears it shall shed tears”^{f267}; in great abundance, being, as he wished his eyes might be, a fountain of tears to weep night and day, (^{<240>}Jeremiah 9:1):

and run down with tears; or, “mine eye let down tears”^{f268}; upon the cheek in great plenty. The phrases are expressive of the sorrow of his heart for

the distresses of his people, and of the certainty of them; the reason of which follows:

because the Lord's flock is carried away captive: that is, the Lord's people, as the Targum; to whom he stood in the relation of a shepherd, and they to him under the character of a flock; and this was what so sensibly touched the heart of the prophet, that they were a people that the Lord had an interest in, a regard unto, and among whom he had been formerly glorified; wherefore it was to the loss of his honour and interest that these should be given into the hands of their enemies, and be carried captive; and this troubled him, for nothing lies nearer the heart of a good man than the glory of God.

Ver. 18. *Say unto the king, and to the queen,* etc.] Jehoiachin, and his mother Nehushta, as it is generally interpreted by the Jewish commentators, and others; who, with many princes and officers, were carried captive into Babylon, (^{<12412>}2 Kings 24:12-15) or rather Zedekiah and his wife; since the captivity after threatened is a perfect and complete one, which Jehoiachin's was not:

humble yourselves, sit down; or, "sit down humbled"^{f269}; come down from your thrones, and sit in the dust; humble yourselves before the Lord for your own sins, and the sins of the people; in times of general corruption, and which threatens a nation with ruin, it becomes kings and princes to set an example of repentance, humiliation, and reformation; though it may be this is rather a prediction of what would be, that they should descend from their throne, and lose their grandeur, and be in a low and abject condition, than an exhortation to what was their duty; since it follows:

for your principalities shall come down; their royal state and greatness, and all the ensigns of it; and especially such as they had upon their heads, as the word used denotes, and as the following explanation shows:

even the crown of your glory; or glorious crown, which should fall from their heads, or be taken from them, when they should be no more served in state, or treated as crowned heads.

Ver. 19. *The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open them,* etc.] Meaning the cities of Judah, which lay in the southern part of the land of Israel, and to the south of Babylon; which might be said to be shut up, and not in the power of any to open, when besieged by the Chaldean army; or rather when destroyed, that there were none to go in

and out; though some think the cities of Egypt are intended, which lay south of Judea, from whence the Jews should not have the relief they expected, and where they should find no refuge; but the former sense seems best:

Judah shall be carried away captive all of it; it was in part carried away in Jehoiachin's time, and wholly in Zedekiah's; which seems to be here respected:

it shall be wholly carried away captive; or, in perfections^{f270}; most perfectly and completely; the same thing is meant as before, only in different words repeated, to express the certainty of it.

Ver. 20. *Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north*, etc.] There are a Keri and a Cetib of the words "lift up" and "behold"; they are written in the singular number, and may be considered as directed to the king, as the words following are; and they are read in the plural number, the state and whole body of the people being called upon to observe the Chaldean army, which came from the north; and is represented as on the march, just at hand to invade, besiege, take, and carry them captive. The Septuagint version renders it, "lift up thine eyes, O Jerusalem"; and the Arabic version, "O Israel: where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" that is, the people, as the Targum interprets it, which were committed to the care and charge of the king, as sheep into the hands of a shepherd; and were a fine body of people, chosen of God and precious, distinguished above all others by wholesome and righteous laws and statutes, and special privileges; a people who were a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, and a peculiar people, the glory of the whole earth; but now carried, or about to be carried, captive. It is no unusual thing to represent a king as a shepherd, and his people as a flock, guided, governed, and protected by him, and who is accountable for his trust to the King of kings; (see ⁴⁹⁸⁷Psalm 78:71,72).

Ver. 21. *What will thou say when he shall punish thee?* etc.] Or, "visit upon thee"^{f271}; that is, either when God shall punish thee for thy sins, thou canst bring no charge of injustice against him, or murmur and repine at the punishment inflicted on thee; so Jarchi; to which agrees the Targum,

"when he shall visit on thee thy sin;"

or else, to which the following words seem to incline, when the enemy shall visit upon thee; so Kimchi and Abarbinel, when the Chaldeans shall come

upon thee, and pay thee a visit, an unwelcome one; yet who wilt thou have to blame but thyself? so the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “when they shall visit thee”; these words are directed, not to the king, nor to the queen neither; but to the body of the people, the Jewish state, represented as a woman; who, upon consideration of things past, would have a great deal of reason to reflect upon themselves for what they had done in former times, which had led on to their ruin and destruction:

(for thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee;) the Jews showed the Assyrians the way into their country, used them to come thither, and taught them how to conquer them, and be masters over them; or, “hast taught them against thee”^{f272}; to thy hurt and detriment, to be captains or governors;

for an head, to have the rule over them: this was done by Ahaz, when he sent to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria to come and save him out of the hands of the kings of Syria and Israel, (^{<2K>}2 Kings 16:7) and by Hezekiah, when he showed the messengers of the king of Babylon all his treasures; these were invitations and temptations to come and plunder them:

shall not sorrows take thee as a woman in travail? denoting the suddenness of their calamities; the sharpness and severity of them; and that they would be inevitable, and could not be prevented.

Ver. 22. *And if thou say in thine heart,* etc.] Not daring to express it with the mouth; and which, notwithstanding, God, that knows the heart, was privy to, and could discern all the secret workings of it; putting such a question as this:

wherefore come these things upon me? all these calamities, the invasion and siege of the enemy, famine, sword, captivity, etc.: the answer returned is,

for the greatness of thine iniquity; the enormous crimes the Jews were guilty of, such as idolatry, blasphemy, etc. which were attended with aggravated circumstances: or, “for the multitude of thine iniquity”^{f273}; their sins being so many, as well as great:

are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare; being obliged to walk naked and barefoot, their buttocks uncovered, and their legs and feet naked, without stockings or shoes, as captives used to be led, to their great shame and disgrace; (see ^{<31D>}Isaiah 20:2-4). The phrases are expressive of

captivity, and the manner of it; the cause of which was the greatness and multitude of their sins. The Targum is,

“because thy sins are multiplied, thy confusion is revealed, thy shame is seen.”

Ver. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin?* etc.] Or, “the Cushite”; either, as the Arabic version, the “Abyssine”, the inhabitant of the eastern Ethiopia; properly an Ethiopian, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it; or, the “Chusean Arabian”; the inhabitant of Arabia Chusea, which was nearer Judea than the other Ethiopia, and better known, and which were of a dark complexion. The Targum renders it, the Indian; and so does the Syriac version. In the Misna^{f274} mention is made of Indian garments, with which the high priest was clothed on the day of atonement; upon which the gloss^{f275} is, that they were of linen of the country of India; and which is the land of Cush (or Ethiopia), as Jonathan Ben Uzziel interprets (^{חֵצְוֹן}Jeremiah 13:23)

“can the Cushite, the Indian, change his skin?”

and it is highly probable, that, in the time of Jeremiah, no other India was known by the Jews but Ethiopia, or Arabia Chusea, and no other black people but the inhabitants thereof, or any other than the Arabians; and, as Braunius^{f276} observes, it need not be wondered at, that with the Jews, in those times, Ethiopia and India should be reckoned the same country; when with the ancients, whatever was beyond the Mediterranean sea, as Arabia, Ethiopia, and even Judea itself, was called India; so Joppa, a city of Phoenicia, from whence Andromeda was fetched by Perseus, is by Ovid^{f277} said to be in India; so Bochart^{f278} interprets the words of the Saracens or Arabians, who are of a swarthy colour, and some black; and indeed have their name from the same word the raven has, which is black; and particularly the inhabitants of Kedar were black, one part of Arabia, to which the allusion is in (^{צִוְמוֹ}Song of Solomon 1:5). Jarchi interprets the word here by “the moor”, the blackamoor, whose skin is naturally black, and cannot be changed by himself or others; hence to wash the blackamoor white is a proverbial expression for labour in vain, or attempting to do that which is not to be done:

or the leopard his spots? a creature full of spots, and whose spots are natural to it; and therefore cannot be removed by any means. Some think a creature called “the ounce”, or “cat-a-mountain” is meant, whose spots are

many, and of a blackish colour; but the description well agrees with the leopard, which is a creature full of spots, and has its name in the eastern languages, particularly the Chaldee and Arabic, from a word^{f279} which signifies “spotted”, “variegated”, as this creature is; so the female is called “*varia*” by Pliny^{f280}, because, of its various spots; and these spots are black, as the Arabic writers in Bochart^{f281}. The word here used signifies such marks as are made in a body beat and bruised, which we call black and blue; hence some render it “livid”, or black and blue spots^{f282}; and these marks are in the skin and hair of this creature, and are natural to it, and cannot be changed; and it is usual with other writers^{f283} to call them spots, as well as the Scripture:

then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil; signifying that they were naturally sinners, as blackness is natural to the Ethiopian, and spots to the leopard; and were from their birth and infancy such, and had been so long habituated to sin, by custom founded upon nature, that there was no hope of them; they were obstinate in sin, bent upon it, and incorrigible in it; and this is another reason given why the above calamities came upon them. The metaphors used in this text fitly express the state and condition of men by nature; they are like the Ethiopian or blackamoor; very black, both with original and actual sin; very guilty, and very uncomely; and their blackness is natural to them; they have it from their parents, and by birth; it is with them from their infancy, and youth upwards; and very hard and difficult to be removed; it cannot be washed off by ceremonial ablutions, moral duties, evangelical ordinances, or outward humiliations; yea, it is impossible to be removed but by the grace of God and blood of Christ. Their sins are aptly compared to the leopard’s spots, which are many and natural, and difficult to get clear off. What is figuratively expressed in the above metaphors is more plainly signified by being “accustomed” or “taught to do evil”^{f284}; which denotes a series and course of sinning; a settled habit and custom in it, founded on nature, and arising from it; which a man learns and acquires naturally, and of himself, whereby he becomes void of fear and shame; and there is a good deal of difficulty, and indeed a moral impossibility, that such persons should “do good”: nothing short of the powerful and efficacious grace of God can put a man into a state and capacity of doing good aright, from right principles to right ends, and of continuing in it; for there is no good in such men; nor have they any true notion of doing good, nor inclination to it, nor any ability to perform it: in order to it, it is absolutely necessary that they should first be

made good men by the grace of God; that they should be regenerated and quickened by the Spirit of God; that they should be created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and have faith in him; all which is by the grace of God, and not of themselves.

Ver. 24. *Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passeth away,* etc.] Because of their many sins, and continuance in them, their habits and custom of sinning, they are threatened with being carried captive into other nations, where they should be dispersed and separated one from another, which would make their state and condition very uncomfortable; and this would be as easily and as swiftly done as the light stubble which is blown away by every puff of wind; nor would they be able any more to resist the enemy, and help themselves, than the stubble is to stand before the wind; as follows:

by the wind of the wilderness; which blows freely and strongly; so the Chaldean army is compared to a dry wind of the high places in the wilderness, even a full wind that should scatter and destroy, (²⁰⁴¹¹Jeremiah 4:11,12); or, “to the wind of the wilderness”^{f285}; and so may denote the wilderness of the people, or the land of Babylon, whither they should be carried captive, and from whence the wind should come that should bring them thither. Kimchi and Ben Melech make mention sea wilderness between Jerusalem and Babylon, as what may be intended.

Ver. 25. *This is thy lot,* etc.] Meaning not the king’s, or the queen’s only, but the lot of the whole Jewish state:

the portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord; which were divided and distributed, and measured out to them by the Lord, who appointed these calamities to befall them, and brought them upon them, and that in righteous judgment. The Targum is,

“and the portion of thine inheritance;”

who, instead of having the land of Canaan for their inheritance, to which the allusion is, and of which they boasted, the land of Babylon was assigned them, not to be possessors of it, but captives in it; and instead of having God to be their portion and inheritance, they were banished from him, and this was but righteous measure; they had measure for measure:

because thou hast forgotten me; their Maker and Benefactor; the goodness he had shown them, the mercies and benefits he had bestowed upon them;

or, “my law”, as the Arabic version; or, “my worship”, as the Targum; therefore he forgot them, took no notice of them, hid his face from them, and gave them up into the hands of their enemies:

and trusted in falsehood; either in the Egyptians and Assyrians, who deceived them; or in their idols, which were falsehood and lying vanities, and could not help them.

Ver. 26. *Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face*, etc.] Turn them up, or throw them over the head or face; that is, expose to public shame and disgrace; which was done when their city and temple were burnt, and they were carried captive; hence it follows:

that thy shame may appear; that their sins might appear to themselves and others, of which they had reason to be ashamed. The allusion is to the treatment which captive women sometimes meet with, or adulterous women, to which the Jews are here compared. The Targum is,

“and I also will reveal the confusion of thy sin upon thy face, and thy shame shall be seen.”

Ver. 27. *I have seen thine adulteries*, etc.] Not literally such, though they were greatly guilty of that sin; but figuratively, their idolatries:

thy neighings; expressive of their strong desires after other gods, like that of adulterers and adulteresses after one another; and both which are like the neighing of horses. Kimchi thinks this designs their rejoicing in their evil works:

the lewdness of thy whoredom; their sinful thoughts, and wicked desires, which were continually after their idols and idolatrous practices:

and thine abominations on the hills in the fields; their idols, which were abominable to God, and ought to have been so to them; and which they placed on high hills, and there worshipped them; all which were seen and known by the Lord, nor could it be denied by them; and this was the reason of their being carried captive, and therefore could not complain they had been hardly dealt with; yea, notwithstanding all this, the Lord expresses a tender and compassionate concern for them:

woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! sad will be thy case, dreadful are the calamities coming upon thee, unless thou repentest:

wilt thou not be made clean? wilt thou show no concern, and make use of no means to be cleansed, nor seek for it, where it is to be had? neither repent of sin, nor reform from it, nor seek to God for his grace, signified by clean water; or to the blood of Christ, the fountain opened, which cleanses from it:

when shall it once be? some instances there were of it in the times of Christ and his apostles; but it will not be completely done until they seek the Lord, and his Christ, and fear him, and his goodness, in the latter day; when they shall turn unto him, and all Israel shall be saved; or, “thou wilt not be cleansed after a long time”^{f286}; this the Lord foresaw, and therefore pronounces her case sad and miserable.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 14

This chapter contains prophecy of a drought, which produced a famine, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 14:1), and is described by the dismal effects of it; and general distress in the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, (²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 14:2), even the nobles were affected with it, whose servants returned without water ashamed, when sent for it, (²⁴⁴³Jeremiah 14:3), the ploughmen could not use their plough, their ground was so hard, (²⁴⁴⁴Jeremiah 14:4) and the very beasts of the field suffered much, because there was no grass, (²⁴⁴⁵Jeremiah 14:5,6), upon this follows a prayer of the prophet to the Lord, that he would give rain for his name's sake; he confesses the sins of the people, that they were many, and against the Lord; and testified against them, that they deserved to be used as they were; and he addresses the Lord as the hope and Saviour of his people in time past, when it was a time of trouble with them; and expostulates with him, why he should be as a stranger and traveller, and like a mighty man astonished, that either had no regard to their land any more than a foreigner and a traveller; or no heart to help them, or exert his power, than a man at his wits' end, though he was among them, and they were called by his name; and therefore he begs he would not leave them, (²⁴⁴⁷Jeremiah 14:7-9), but he is told that it was for the sins of the people that all this was, which the Lord was determined to remember and visit; and therefore he is bid not to pray for them; if he did, it would not be regarded, nor the people's fasting and prayers also; for they should be consumed by the sword, famine, and pestilence, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 14:10-12), and though the prophet pleads, in excuse of the people, that the false prophets had deceived them; yet not only the vanity and falsehood of their prophecies are exposed, and they are threatened with destruction, but the people also, for hearkening unto them, (²⁴⁴³Jeremiah 14:13-16), wherefore the prophet, instead of putting up a prayer for them, has a lamentation dictated to him by the Lord, which he is ordered to express, (²⁴⁴⁷Jeremiah 14:17,18), and yet, notwithstanding this, he goes on to pray for them in a very pathetic manner; he expostulates with God, and pleads for help and healing; confesses the iniquities of the people; entreats the Lord, for the sake of his name, glory, and covenant, that he

would not reject them and his petition; and observes, that the thing asked for (rain) was what none of the gods of the Heathens could give, or even the heavens themselves, only the Lord; and therefore determines to wait upon him for it, who made the heavens, the earth, and rain, (²⁴⁴⁹Jeremiah 14:19-22).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth.*] Or, “concerning the words of straits”^{f287}; that is, concerning the businesses of a drought, as the Targum; concerning the Lord’s restraining rain from the earth, and forbidding the heavens dropping it down; the consequence of which is a drought, or dryness of the earth; and the effect of that a famine; when this was it is not anywhere said; it could not be the famine at the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, because that only affected the city; this all Judea. Some think it was in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, long before the siege; and others, that it was in the reign of Jehoiakim, since we read of a fast in his time, (²⁴⁴⁹Jeremiah 36:9), which might be on this occasion; and it appears that there was one at this time, though not acceptable to God; (see ²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 14:12).

Ver. 2. *Judah mourneth*, etc.] That is, the inhabitants of Judah; those of the house of Judah, as the Targum; these mourned because of the drought and famine that were upon the land:

and the gates thereof languish; the cities of Judah, as the Targum; the inhabitants of them, which used to be supplied from the field, and out of the country; gates may be mentioned, because through the gates the provisions were brought into the city; but now none; and therefore are said to languish; or else those that sat in the gates are meant, the elders of the people, the senators, the judges, and civil magistrates; these shared in the common calamity:

they are black unto the ground; that is, the inhabitants of the cities, and those that sit in the gates, their faces are black through famine; (see ²⁴⁴⁸Lamentations 4:8 5:10), so the Targum,

“their faces are covered with blackness, they are black as a pot;”

and which they turned to the ground, and looked downwards, not being able to lift them up through the sorrow and distress they were in, and through faintness of spirit for want of food:

and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up: meaning the cry and lamentation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem because of the famine, for that city was not exempted from it, it having its supply from the country; or the prayer of them, and of the people from all parts got together there, which went up to heaven for rain: it being usual, in times of common distress, for the people in the country to come up to Jerusalem to the temple to pray to God, and particularly for rain, when there was a want of it.

Ver. 3. *And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters*, etc.] To places where water used to be; to the pools, the upper and the lower, particularly to the fountain of Shiloah, which, Jerom says, was the only one the city of Jerusalem used. The meaning either is, that the nobles in Jerusalem sent their own children to get water for them, they having no servants to attend them, these being put away because they could not support them, the famine being so sore; or rather that they sent their menial servants, their subjects, as the Targum renders it, to fetch them a little water to refresh themselves with:

they came to the pits and found no water; their servants came according to order to the pools and cisterns, or to the deep wells, and to such places where there used to be a great confluence of water, and plenty of it, but now they could find none:

they returned with their vessels empty; just as they came:

they were ashamed and confounded; either the servants that were sent, or rather their masters that sent them, when they saw them come with their empty vessels; having been looking out and longing for their return, expecting they would have brought water with them for their refreshment; but to their great disappointment and confusion brought none:

and covered their heads; as persons ashamed, or as mourners used to do, being full of anguish and distress because of the drought.

Ver. 4. *Because the ground is chapt*, etc.] Through the violent heat of the sun, and want of rain; or, is broken^{f288}; and crumbles into dust. The Targum is,

“because of sins, the inhabitants of the earth are broken:”

for there was no rain in the earth; this was the reason of the dearth, and of the famine, and why there was no water in the pits, and the ground was

parched. It is to be understood of the land of Judea only, not of the whole earth:

the ploughmen were ashamed; because they could not work the earth with their plough; were obliged to sit still, could do no work, or go on with their husbandry; nothing could be done for want of rain: they covered their heads; as before; (See Gill on “^{<244B>}Jeremiah 14:3”).

Ver. 5. *Yea, the hind also calved in the field*, etc.] Or brought forth her young in the field; of which (see ^{<830>}Job 39:1-4), and which they sometimes did through fear, particularly when frightened with thunder and lightning; and which are common in a time of heat and drought, which is the case here; (see ^{<920>}Psalm 29:9) of these sort of creatures there were great plenty in Judea and the parts adjacent. Aelianus^{f289} says, the harts in Syria are bred on the highest mountains, Amanus, Lebanon, and Carmel; which were mountains on the borders of the land of Canaan; and the flesh of these was much used for food by the Jews; (see ^{<525>}Deuteronomy 12:15,22 14:4,5 15:22):

and forsook it; which, as it is a loving creature to its mate, so very careful of its young, and provident for it, and nourishes it, as Pliny^{f290} observes. The reason of such uncommon usage follows:

because there was no grass; for the hind to feed upon, and so had no milk to suckle its young with; and therefore left it to seek for grass elsewhere, that it might have food for itself, and milk for its young.

Ver. 6. *And the wild asses did stand in the high places*, etc.] To see where any grass was to be had, or where the wind blows more freely and coolly, to draw it in; as follows. The Targum renders it, “by the brooks”; and so Jarchi interprets it brooks of water; whither they came as usual to drink, and found them now dried up; and where they stood distressed and languishing, not knowing where to go for any:

they snuffed up the wind like dragons: which, being of a hot nature, open their mouths, and draw in the wind and air to cool them. Aelianus^{f291} reports of the dragons in Phrygia, that they open their mouths, and not only draw in the air, but even birds flying. The word used for dragons signifies large fishes, great whales; and some understand it of crocodiles, who will lift up their heads above water to refresh themselves with the air:

their eyes did fail; in looking about for grass; or for want of food, being quite starved and famished:

because there was no grass; for their food and nourishment. With great propriety is the herb or grass mentioned, this being the proper food of asses, as Aristotle^{f292} observes; and with which agrees the Scripture; which represents them as content when they have it; and as ranging about the mountains for it when they have none; being creatures very impatient of hunger and thirst; (see ^{<808>}Job 6:5 39:8) wherefore the Greek writers surname this animal dry and thirsty; and hence the lying story of Tacitus^{f293}, concerning Moses and the children of Israel; who, he says, being ready to perish for want of water, Moses observed a flock of wild asses going from their pasture to a rock covered with trees, and followed them, taking it for herbage, and found large fountains of water. And very pertinently are their eyes said to fail for want of food, and the sight of them grow dim, which is more or less the case of all creatures in such circumstances; but the rather is this observed of the wild ass, because, as an Arabic writer^{f294} suggests, it is naturally very sharp and clear sighted.

Ver. 7. *O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us*, etc.] That we deserve such judgments to be inflicted on us; and that God is righteous in bringing them; and we are altogether undeserving of the favour now about to be asked. These are the words of the prophet interceding for his people, and confessing their sins and his own:

do thou it for thy name's sake; that is, give rain; which was the thing wanted, and which none but God could give, (^{<2442>}Jeremiah 14:22) though we are not worthy to have it done for our sakes, do it for thine own sake; for the honour and glory of thy name, of thy goodness, power, and faithfulness:

for our backslidings are many; and so had many witnesses against them; and which shows how unworthy they were, and that they had no reason to expect the mercy on their own account; and especially as it follows:

we have sinned against thee; as all sin is against God, contrary to his nature and will, and a transgression of his law; and what aggravates it is, that it is against him as a God of goodness, grace, and mercy.

Ver. 8. *O the hope of Israel*, etc.] The author, object, ground, and foundation of hope of all good things, both here and hereafter; in whom Israel had been used to hope in times past, and had great encouragement so

to do, (~~4007~~ Psalm 130:7) or, “the expectation of Israel”^{f295}; whom they looked for to come:

the Saviour thereof in time of trouble; the Saviour of all men in a way of providence, but especially of the true Israel of God, of them that believe; who, though they have their times of trouble and affliction, by reason of sin, Satan, and wicked men, and other things, yet the Lord saves and delivers them out of them all in due time:

why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land; or, a “sojourner”^{f296}; who abides but for a while; and it not being his native place, is not so solicitous for the welfare of it. Jerome interprets this of Christ when here on earth, who was as a stranger, and unknown by men; (see ~~4980~~ Psalm 69:9 ~~4083~~ Matthew 8:20 25:43) and the other characters;

of the hope of Israel, and the Saviour, well agree with him, (~~5001~~ 1 Timothy 1:1 ~~5007~~ Colossians 1:27 ~~4433~~ Acts 13:23)

and as a wayfaring man; or “traveller”^{f297}:

that turnest aside to tarry for a night? that turns into an inn to lodge there for a night, and that only; and so is unconcerned what becomes of it, or the people in it; he is only there for a night, and is gone in the morning. Thus the prophet represents the Lord by these metaphors, as if he was, or at least seemed, careless of his people; and therefore expostulates with him upon it, as the disciples with our Lord, (~~4038~~ Mark 4:38).

Ver. 9. *Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied*, etc.] Astonished, and so surprised as not to know what to say or do; or “asleep”, as the Septuagint; taking no notice of us, and being altogether unconcerned what becomes of us; or, as one “dumb”^{f298}; that will give no answer to our prayers:

as a mighty man that cannot save? who, though he is able to save, yet, through want of a heart or will, does not exert his power:

yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us; having his residence and dwelling in the temple at Jerusalem; and therefore was not a stranger and foreigner among them; and this carries in it an entreaty and an argument that he would not in his providence conduct towards them in such manner as though he was:

and we are called by thy name; the people of God, the Israel of God, and the like:

leave us not; in our distress and trouble, but deliver us out of it.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord unto this people*, etc.] Instead of answering the prophet directly and immediately, he first speaks to the people, and observes their sin is the cause of his conduct; and whom he does not vouchsafe to call his people; they having broken covenant with him, and so notoriously backslidden from him; but this people, this wicked and worthless people:

thus have they loved to wander; from the Lord, and out of the way of their duty, to Egypt and Assyria for help, and after strange gods, and the worship of them; and this they chose and delighted in; it arose from corrupt affections and a depraved heart:

they have not refrained their feet; from going into other lands, or into the temples of idols; wherefore, it ought not to be wondered at that the Lord was as a stranger in their land, and as a wayfaring man that tarried for a night; and hence it was that they should have enough of wandering to and fro, since they loved it; in seeking for water in their own land, and by their being carried captive into others; so the Targum,

“as they loved, so will I take vengeance on them, to cause them to be carried captive from the land of the house of my majesty; and as they have delighted themselves in the worship of idols, and from the house of my sanctuary have not refrained their feet, therefore before the Lord there is no delight in them:”

therefore the Lord doth not accept them; has no favour for them, no pleasure in them; does not accept either their persons or their services:

he will now remember their iniquity; their idolatry; their trust in others, and distrust of him; which might seem to be forgotten because he had taken no notice of them, in a providential way, to correct for them; but now he would let them know that they were had in remembrance, by causing his judgments to come upon them for them: this stands opposed to the forgiveness of sin; when God forgives sin he remembers it no more; but when he does not, but punishes for it, then he is said to remember it: and visit their; sins; or them for their sins; that is, punish them.

Ver. 11. *Then said the Lord unto me*, etc.] To the prophet; now the Lord gives a more direct answer to him, and to his prayers and intercession for the people; which he forbids, saying,

pray not for this people for their good; or “for good things”, as the Septuagint; for rain, that the famine might cease; and for deliverance from their enemies, that they might not go into captivity; for these things were determined upon by the Lord: he does not forbid him praying at all for them, or for their repentance and reformation; or for spiritual good things for them, for eternal life and salvation for the remnant of his own people among them; but not for external good things for the bulk of them.

Ver. 12. *When they fast, I will not hear their cry*, etc.] Or, “though they fast”^{f299}; very probably on account of the want of rain, and the dearth or famine, a fast was proclaimed; (see ²⁴⁹Jeremiah 36:9), when they prayed and cried aloud, and made a great noise; but their prayers being hypocritical, and not arising from a pure heart, or offered up in faith and love, were not heard and accepted by the Lord:

and when they offer burnt offerings and an oblation; or a meat or bread offering, which went along with the burnt offering; thinking by those outward things to atone for their sins, without true repentance for them, or faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ:

I will not accept them; neither their offerings, nor their persons:

but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; the Lord not only determines the continuance of the famine, notwithstanding the prayers of the prophet; but adds two other judgments, the sword and pestilence, by which he was resolved to consume them; and therefore it was to no purpose to pray to him on their behalf, he was inexorable.

Ver. 13. *Then said I, Ah, Lord God!* etc.] Being grieved at heart for the people, because he was forbid to pray for them, and because the Lord had resolved on the ruin of them; and the rather he pitied them, because they were deceived by the false prophets, and therefore he tries to excuse them, and lay the blame upon them, as follows:

behold, the prophets say unto them; that is, the false prophets, as the Targum; Jeremiah does not call them so, being willing to make the best of it:

ye shall not see the sword; the sword of the enemy drawn in your country, or fall by it:

neither shall ye have famine; by which it appears, that it was not yet come, only foretold; the contrary to which is here affirmed:

but I will give you assured peace in this place; so they spoke as from the Lord, and in his name, with all the confidence imaginable; assuring the people that they should have peace and prosperity, and be in the utmost safety in Jerusalem; and that neither famine nor sword would come to them, nor in the least hurt them. In the Hebrew text it is, “peace of truth”^{f300}; that is, true peace, firm and lasting. The Septuagint render it “peace and truth”; (see ²³⁰⁸Isaiah 39:8).

Ver. 14. *Then said the Lord unto me*, etc.] In reply to the above excuse, in favour of the people:

the prophets prophesy lies in my name; it is a wicked thing to tell lies; it is more so to foretell them, and that in the name of the Lord; pretending they have his authority, and are under the influence and guidance of his Spirit; and it was sinful in the people to give credit to them, and the more so in that they were forewarned of these prophets and their lies, and had the reverse told them by a true prophet of the Lord, and therefore were inexcusable.

I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke unto them; all which are requisite to a prophet, or to a man’s prophesying in the name of the Lord; he ought to have his mission from him, and his commission from him; his orders and credentials from him, and the things themselves which he delivers; neither of which those prophets had; nor were they able to make out those things to the people, of which they should have had satisfaction before they believed them, and therefore were highly to blame in giving heed unto them.

They prophecy unto you a false vision; or, “a vision of falsehood”^{f301}; pretending they had a vision from the Lord, when they had none:

and divination; soothsaying or astrology, as some interpret it, as Kimchi observes; foretelling things by the stars:

and a thing of nought; which is good for nothing, and comes to nothing:

and the deceit of their hearts; which flows from their deceitful hearts and vain imaginations, and by no means to be depended upon.

Ver. 15. *Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets*, etc.] The false prophets, as the following description shows:

that prophecy in my name, and I sent them not; made use of his name, pretending his authority, though they were not sent by him:

yet they say, sword and famine shall not be in the land; though the Lord by his true prophet had said there should be both; which proves that they were not sent by the Lord, since what they said was in direct opposition to the word of the Lord; wherefore their doom in righteous judgment follows:

by sword and famine shall these prophets be consumed; they should be some of the first, if not the first that should perish by these calamities; which would abundantly prove the falsehood of their predictions, and show that their lies could neither secure themselves nor others from the judgments which the Lord had said should come upon them.

Ver. 16. *And the people to whom they prophesy*, etc.] That is, such of them as gave credit to their prophecies:

shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword; they dying of the famine and of the sword, their carcasses should be cast out of their houses into the open streets, and there lie unburied, as a punishment for disbelieving the words of the Lord, and giving heed to the lies of the false prophets:

and they shall have none to bury them; either through want of ability of body or substance, or through want of affection; or rather through want of persons to do it for them, all their relations being cut off with them, as follows:

them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters; or rather, “they”^{f302}, “their wives, and their sons, and their daughters”; these shall die by the famine and the sword, and shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem; so that they and their relatives all dying, there would be none to bury one another; and that all should suffer by these calamities were but just and righteous, since all were guilty both of idolatry, and of despising the prophets, and listening to the false ones; (see ~~2478~~ Jeremiah 7:18):

for I will pour their wickedness upon them; or, “their evil upon them”^{f303}; not the evil of sin, but the evil of punishment; the meaning is, that he would abundantly punish them for their sins, and as they deserved, though not

exceeding the bounds of justice: the phrase denotes that their wickedness was great; and that in proportion to it the vials of his wrath would be poured out upon them.

Ver. 17. *Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them,* etc.] Instead of praying for the people, the prophet has a doleful lamentation put into his mouth, to pronounce in their hearing, in order to assure them of the calamities that were coming upon them, and to affect them with them.

Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: or “be silent”^{f304}; signifying that there would be quickly just reason and occasion for incessant grief and sorrow in them; and if they were so hardened as not to be affected with their case, he could not refrain shedding tears night and day in great abundance; which would have a voice in them, to call upon them to weeping and lamentation also. Some take these words to be a direction and instruction to the people; so the Septuagint,

“bring down upon your eyes tears night and day, and let them not cease;”

and the Arabic version,

“pour out of your eyes tears night and day continually;”

and the Syriac version is,

“let our eyes drop tears night and day incessantly.”

For the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow; cities are sometimes called virgins, which were never taken; and so Jerusalem here, it having never been taken since it was in the hands of the people of Judah; nor were its inhabitants as yet carried captive, but now would be; which, together with the famine and the sword, by which many should perish, is the great breach and grievous blow spoken of; and which is given as a reason, and was a sufficient one, for sorrow and mourning.

Ver. 18. *If I go forth into the field,* etc.] Without the city, where was the camp of the enemy besieging it

then behold the slain with the sword! the sword of the enemy; who by sallying out of the city upon them, or by endeavouring to make their escape into the country, fell into their hands, and were slain by them.

And if I enter into the city; the city of Jerusalem:

then behold them that are sick with the famine! just ready to die, being starved for want of provisions; and multitudes dead, and their carcasses lying in the streets unburied; the prophet does not make mention of the dead indeed, only of the sick with famine; the reason of which, Kimchi says, is because the sick were more than the dead.

Yea, both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they knew not; into the land of Chaldea, a strange and foreign country, whither they were carried captive, both in the times of Jehoiakim and of Zedekiah, and whither they might go in ways far about: and this seems to be understood of false prophets and wicked priests, that had led the people about, and had caused them to wander from the ways of God and his worship; and therefore, in righteous retaliation, they are led in round about ways to a land unknown to them: though some think that the true prophets and priests of the Lord may be meant, as Ezekiel and Daniel, who were carried captive into Babylon: others interpret them of such going about in the land of Judea seeking for bread and water, or food in the time of the famine;

but they know not^{f305}, as the last clause may be literally rendered, that is, men know them not, take no notice of them, show no regard to them, and give them no relief; the famine being so sore, that everyone was for himself, and could afford no help to others, even to the prophets and priests. Some render the words, “yea, the priest and the prophet make merchandise against the land”; or, “through the lands”^{f306}; by deceiving the people with their false prophecies: or rather, go about the land making merchandise^{f307}; of the souls of men; (see ~~Gen~~ 2 Peter 2:3), making a gain of their visions and prophecies:

and they know not; the people are not aware of their deception and falsehood. The Targum is,

“for even the scribe and the priest are turned to their own negotiations or merchandises, to that which is in the land, neither do they inquire;”

they minded their own affairs, and inquired not for, nor sought after, the people's good.

Ver. 19. *Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?* etc.] The prophet, though forbid, proceeds to prayers and expostulations on account of this people, the people of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin: or, “in rejecting hast thou rejected Judah?”^{f308} from being a nation, from being under thy care and protection? hast thou cast them away, and wilt thou suffer them to go into captivity as the ten tribes? what! Judah, whom the Lord hath chosen, and where was his dwelling place? what! Judah, from whom the chief ruler, the Messiah, was to come? what! Judah, from whom the sceptre was not to depart, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh came? and, what! wilt thou reject, and utterly reject, this tribe, upon which so many favours have been bestowed, and from which so much is expected?

Hath thy soul loathed Zion? whom thou hast formerly so much loved and delighted in, and chosen for thine habitation; Zion, the joy of the whole earth, and a perfection of beauty.

Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? brought upon them his judgments; or, however, was about to bring them upon them, famine, sword, and captivity; and there was no deliverance from them, no way to escape them, no relief, no remedy, or no healing, as in (⁴³¹⁶2 Chronicles 36:16).

We looked for peace: as the false prophets foretold; or through alliance with neighbouring nations, even all safety and prosperity; and had no notion of desolation and war:

and there is no good; as was promised and expected, but all the reverse:

and for the time of healing; national and civil disorders, from which might have been hoped for a train of blessings:

and behold trouble! fears, frights, perplexities, and distresses; trouble from without, and from within. The Targum is,

“a time of pardon of sins, and behold punishment of sins.”

Ver. 20. *We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers,* etc.] This is said by the prophet, in the name of the few faithful that were among this people, who were sensible of their own sins, the sins of their ancestors, and which they ingenuously confess; their fathers had

sinned, and they had imitated them, and continued in the same, and therefore might justly expect the displeasure of the Lord, and his controversy with them:

for we have sinned against thee; (^{<2447>}Jeremiah 14:7).

Ver. 21. *Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake,* etc.] Which was called upon them, and which they called upon; they deserved to be abhorred, they had done those things which might justly render them abominable, being what was abhorrent to him; and they deprecate this, not, for their own sake, who were unworthy of any favour, but for his own sake, for the sake of his honour and glory, which, as it is dear to the Lord, so to his people.

Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory; either Jerusalem, as Kimchi, which was the city of the great King, where he had his throne and palace, and which is called the throne of the Lord, (^{<2487>}Jeremiah 3:17) or the house of the sanctuary, the temple, as Jarchi; (see ^{<2472>}Jeremiah 17:12), respect seems to be had to the mercy seat upon the ark, over which were the cherubim of glory, between which the Lord dwelt; and they pray, that though they were worthy of disgrace themselves, and to be taken and carried captive into a strange land, yet they entreat that the Lord would not disgrace his own glorious habitation, by suffering the city and the temple, and the ark in it, to be destroyed:

remember; thy people, Zion, as before; or the promises made to them, the covenant, as follows:

break not thy covenant with us: God never breaks his covenant, though man does; it may sometimes seem to be broken, when his church and people are in distress and affliction; but he will never break the covenant he has made, or suffer his faithfulness to fail; yet, though he does not, it is proper and necessary oftentimes to pray in this manner to God, for the encouragement of faith in him, and expectation of good things from him.

Ver. 22. *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain?* etc.] The blessing wanted; none of the idols of the Gentiles, called vanities, because it was a vain thing to apply to them, or hope for anything from them, none of these could give a shower of rain; though the name of one of their idols was Jupiter Imbrius^{f309}, or Pluvius, the god of rain, yet he could not make nor give a single drop; as Baal, in the times of Ahab, when there was a drought, could not.

Or can the heavens give showers? from whence they descend, and which are the second causes of rain; even these could not of themselves, and much less Heathen deities.

Art not thou he, O Lord our God? the everlasting and unchangeable He, or I AM, our covenant God and Father, thou, and thou only, canst give rain; this is the peculiar of the great God himself; (see ~~4447~~ Acts 14:17).

Therefore we will wait upon thee; for rain, by prayer and supplication, and hope for it, and wait the Lord's own time to give it:

for thou hast made all these things; the rain and its showers, who have no other father than the Lord, (~~3838~~ Job 38:28), also the heavens from whence it descends, and the earth on which it falls, are made by him, who restrains and gives it at pleasure.

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 15

This chapter contains the Lord's answer to the prophet's prayers, in which he declares himself inexorable, and had resolved on the ruin of the Jewish nation for their sins; the prophet's complaint of the hardships he endured, notwithstanding his sincerity and integrity; and the Lord's promise of protection and deliverance, in case of his continuance in the faithful discharge of his office. The Lord denies the request of the prophet, by observing, that if even Moses and Samuel had been the intercessors for the people, he would not have regarded them, being determined upon casting them out, and sending them away captive, (^{<24151>}Jeremiah 15:1), their punishment is declared, which was resolved on; some for death, or the pestilence; others for the sword; others for famine; and others for captivity; and others to be devoured by dogs, and fowls, and wild beasts, (^{<24152>}Jeremiah 15:2,3), the cause of which were their sins, particularly their idolatry in the times of Manasseh, (^{<24153>}Jeremiah 15:4), wherefore they should have no pity from men, nor would the Lord any more repent of the evil threatened, of which he was weary, because of their many backslidings, (^{<24154>}Jeremiah 15:5,6), which destruction, being determined, is illustrated by a description of the instrument of it; by the multitude of widows, and the distress of mothers bereaved of their children, (^{<24155>}Jeremiah 15:7-9) on which the prophet takes up a complaint of his being born for strife and contention, and of his being cursed by the people, though no usurer, (^{<24156>}Jeremiah 15:10), when he is comforted with a promise of being used well by the enemy, both he and his remnant, (^{<24157>}Jeremiah 15:11), but as for the people of the Jews in general, they would never be able to withstand the northern forces, the army of the Chaldeans; their riches and substance would be delivered into their hands, and their persons also be carried captive into a strange land, and the prophet along with them, because of their sins, and the wrath of God for them, (^{<24158>}Jeremiah 15:12-14), upon which the prophet prays to the Lord, who knew him, that he would remember and visit him, and avenge him of his persecutors, and not take him away in his longsuffering; he urges, that he had suffered rebuke and reproach for his sake; that he was called by him to his office, which he

had cheerfully entered on; he had his mission, commission, and message, from him, which he received with the greatest pleasure, signified by eating his words with joy; and that he had not associated himself with mockers and scoffers at religion and the word of God; and therefore expostulates why he should be put to so much pain, and be used as he was, (^{<2415>}Jeremiah 15:15-18), wherefore the Lord promises that, upon condition of doing his work faithfully, he should be preserved, protected, and delivered, (^{<2419>}Jeremiah 15:19-21).

Ver. 1. *Then said the Lord unto me*, etc.] In answer to his expostulations and entreaties, (^{<2449>}Jeremiah 14:19-22),

though Moses and Samuel stood before me; to pray before me, as the Targum; to make intercession for the people. Standing is a prayer gesture. The Jews say there is no standing but prayer, or that is meant when it is mentioned; (see Gill on “^{<4065>}Matthew 6:5”). Moses and Samuel were named, because they were eminent for prayer, and had success in it, for the people of Israel. Of Moses, (see ^{<2321>}Exodus 32:11,31,32 ^{<0447>}Numbers 14:17-19) and of Samuel, (see ^{<0009>}1 Samuel 7:9) and of both, (^{<3906>}Psalms 99:6). The Arabic version reads “Moses and Aaron”, but wrongly. The Palmists make use of this text to prove the intercession of saints in heaven for those on earth; but the words are only a supposition, and not a fact. The meaning is, that supposing that Moses and Samuel were alive, and made intercession for the people, their prayers would not be regarded; and such a supposition, as it suggests that they were not alive, so that they did not stand before him, and make intercession for Judah; wherefore this is against, and not for, the intercession of saints in heaven:

yet my mind could not be towards this people; God could have no good will to them, no delight in them; could not be reconciled to them, or agree to it, that the favours asked for should be granted them, or that they should be continued in their own land; and therefore it was in vain for the prophet to solicit on their account; but, on the other hand, it is ordered as follows:

cast them out of my sight; or presence; as persons loathsome and abominable, not to be borne; I cannot look upon them, or have anything to say to them, in a favourable way:

and let them go forth; from my presence, from the temple, the city, and out of their own land; that is, declare that so it shall be.

Ver. 2. *And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee,* etc.] As doubtless they will, when this message is brought to them:

whither shall we go forth? in a jeering scornful manner, not believing that this would be their case:

then thou shall tell them, thus saith the Lord, such as are for death, to death; such as were appointed to death, or to die by the pestilence, which is often signified by death; they shall go forth unto it; or it shall meet them, and seize upon them, and take them away:

and such as are for the sword, to the sword; who are appointed to die by the sword of the enemy, into whose hands they should fall by attempting to escape out of the city, shall perish by it:

and such as are for the famine, to the famine; such as are appointed to die by that, shall die of it in the city, where they shall be besieged, and not be able to get out to fetch in any provisions, and where none can be brought, because of the enemy:

and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity; such as are spared from the pestilence, sword, and famine, and are designed to be carried captive into a strange land, shall be taken and carried thither; nor will it be in their power, or in any other's, to hinder any of the above things, to which they are appointed of God. According to the Jews, the latter of these is more grievous than the former; as the sword than death, and famine than the sword, so captivity than them all^{f310}.

Ver. 3. *And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord,* etc.] Or four families^{f311}, and these very devouring ones; that is, four sorts of punishment; and so the Targum,

“four evil punishments;”

which are after mentioned. These are represented as under God, and at his beck and command; servants of his, that go and come at his pleasure, and do his will; and as being over men, and having power and authority to kill and to destroy by a divine commission:

the sword to slay: the first and chief of the four families or punishments, which had a commission from the Lord to sheath itself in his people, the Jews; even the sword of the enemy, the Chaldeans, drawn against them by a divine order and appointment:

and the dogs to tear; the carcasses of those that are slain with the sword: or “to draw”^{f312}; as the word signifies; it being the usual way of dogs to draw and drag the flesh about they are feeding on; this is another of the four families, and a very voracious one it is:

and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy; or “to eat, and to corrupt”, the bodies of those that are slain by the sword. The meaning is, that such should not have a burial, but should be the food of fowls and wild beasts: these are the other two destroying families, which have their commission from the Lord for such service.

Ver. 4. *And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth*, etc.] Not only into Babylon, but into other countries; which has had its full accomplishment in this their last captivity by the Romans: or “I will give them for a commotion”^{f313}; shaking and trembling; they shall be like Cain, fugitives and vagabonds, and be in fear and trembling everywhere, for what is, or is about to come upon them: or “for horror unto all kingdoms”^{f314}; all that see the calamities and judgments that come upon them will be struck with dread and horror, plainly seeing the hand of the Lord in them:

because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah; because of the idolatry and murder committed by him; and which were the more aggravated, by having so good a parent, and so religious an education, and by his high office and dignity as king of Judah; and though these sins were personally forgiven him, yet, being imitated and continued in by the Jews, captivity is threatened them. The Targum is,

“because they turned not (or were not converted) as Manasseh;”

and so in the Talmud^{f315}, because Manasseh repented, and they did not; but this sense the words will not bear, because of what goes before, of which these are a reason; and because of what follows after, which are connected with them:

for that which he did in Jerusalem; the innocent blood he shed there, and the idolatrous worship he there set up; even where the temple was, the place of God’s worship, and which was the metropolis of the nation, and so set an example, which must influence the whole country.

Ver. 5. *For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem?* etc.] The inhabitants of it; their sins being so many, and so heinous, and so

aggravated, and so deserving of punishment, that none could pity their case, or have a heart of compassion towards them, or even spare reproaching them: or “who shall bemoan thee?” sympathize and condole with thee, or speak a comfortable word to thee, or seek to alleviate thy grief and sorrow: or “who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?” or “of thy peace?”^{f316} shall not think it worth their while to go a step out of their way, or turn into a house, and inquire of thy welfare, or salute thee.

Ver. 6. *Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord,* etc.] His worship, as the Targum; and had set up idols, and idol worship; and this was the cause of the sword, pestilence, famine, and captivity, and of all the evils that befell them:

thou art gone backward; from the law of the Lord, and from his pure worship and service, from his ways and from his ordinances; and therefore it was but just they should go into captivity; hence it follows:

therefore will I stretch out mine hand against thee, and destroy thee; his hand of power and vengeance, which when stretched out, and falls with weight, whether on particular persons, or on a nation, brings inevitable ruin and destruction with it:

I am weary with repenting; not that the Lord ever changes his mind, or the counsel of his will; in this sense he is without repentance; but the conduct of his providence, and the dispensations of it; not executing the threatenings denounced, but sparing them a little longer, showing mercy, and exercising patience and longsuffering; but now he was as one weary and tired out, and was determined to bear no longer with them, but stir up all his wrath against them, and destroy them.

Ver. 7. *I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land,* etc.] Either of their own land, the land of Judea; and so the Septuagint version, “in the gates of my people”; alluding to the custom of winnowing corn in open places; and by fanning is meant the dispersion of the Jews, and their being carried captive out of their own land into other countries: or of the land of the enemy, into their cities, as the Targum paraphrases it; gates being put for them frequently; whither they should be scattered by the fan of the Lord; for what was done by the enemy, as an instrument, is ascribed to him:

I will bereave them of children; which shall die of famine, or pestilence, or by the sword, or in captivity: I will destroy my people; which must be when

children are cut off, by which families, towns, cities, and kingdoms, are continued and kept up; and this he was resolved to do, though they were his people:

since they return not from their ways; their evil ways, which they had gone into, forsaking the ways of God, and his worship: or,

yet they return not from their ways^{f317}; though fanned with the fan of affliction, bereaved of their children, and threatened with destruction: it expresses their obstinate continuance in their evil ways, and the reason of God's dealing with them as above.

Ver. 8. *Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas*, etc.] Their husbands being slain; not in the times of Ahaz, when a hundred and twenty thousand men were slain in one day in Judah, by Pekah the son of Remaliah, (~~4RX6~~ 2 Chronicles 28:6), as Kimchi thinks; but in the times of Zedekiah, at the siege of Jerusalem, and the taking of it, and in the Babylonish captivity before predicted. The children of Israel were to be as the sand of the sea, and were very numerous; and here the widows are said to be so too, their husbands, who were numerous, being dead; and this, as it was of the Lord, so it was in his sight, and according to his counsel and will. Mention is made of "seas", in the plural, number, there being many in or near Judea, as the Red sea, the sea of Galilee, and the Mediterranean sea:

I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a spoiler, at noonday; that is he would bring upon the Jews, against the mother of the young men, or mothers of them; for the young men being destroyed by the spoiler, it was against them; a calamity upon them, and a distress unto them, who have generally a tender concern for them. The Targum is,

"against the company of their young men;"

the Jews; or against Jerusalem, the mother city, the metropolis of the nation, full of young men fit for war: or, "against the mother", that is, Jerusalem, a "young man"^{f318}; meaning Nebuchadnezzar, who came against Jerusalem in the first year of his reign; and, as some say, in the eighteenth year of his age; and who came not as a thief in the night, but as a spoiler at noonday; not in a secret insidious manner, but openly and with force of arms making his way through the land to Jerusalem, in defiance of the Jews, and in the face of them:

and I have caused him to fall upon it suddenly; that is, upon the city of Jerusalem: for though he came openly, his march was quick, and he was presently at Jerusalem, and laid siege to it at once:

and terrors upon the city; or, “city and terrors”,^{f319}; the city was immediately filled with terrors at the appearance of Nebuchadnezzar and his army. R. Joseph Kimchi interprets it, “an army and terrors”, from (^{<02816>}Samuel 28:16), the Babylonian monarch, at the head of his army, which spread terrors where he came. Some render the word, from (^{<20413>}Daniel 4:13,23), “a watcher and terrors”,^{f320}: meaning the Chaldean army, called watchers, (^{<20416>}Jeremiah 4:16). The Targum is,

“I will bring an army upon them suddenly, and destroy their cities;”

it should be rendered “alienation of mind and terrors”: from the use of the word, **ry**], in the Arabic language^{f321}.

Ver. 9. *She that hath borne seven languisheth*, etc.] Either the mother that has borne many children, seven being put for a large number, now being able to bear no more, and being bereaved of what she had, and who were her staff and support, and from whom she had her expectation, faints away, and dies through grief and trouble; or Jerusalem, which formerly abounded with young men, is now in a forlorn and destitute state; her children, the inhabitants of it, being slain with the sword, or dying of famine and the pestilence. In the Talmud^{f322}, this is interpreted of seven wicked kings of Israel, as Jeroboam, Baasha, Ahab, Jehu, Pekah, Menahem, and Hoshea; and elsewhere of seven kings of Judah, thus reckoned, Jehoram, Joash, Ahaz, Manasseh, Amon, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah^{f323}:

she hath given up the ghost; or, “blew out her soul”^{f324}; her breath departs; no life can be kept in her; she faints away at the calamities coming on her:

her sun is gone down while it was yet day; the darkness of affliction, and the evening of distress and calamity came upon her sooner than was expected, while in the midst of peace and prosperity that was promised, and hoped to be enjoyed for a long time to come; (see ^{<3019>}Amos 8:9):

she hath been ashamed and confounded; of her vain hope, trust, and confidence:

and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the Lord; that is; such who died not of the famine and pestilence, but

at the breaking up of the city endeavoured to make their escape, these fell into the hands of the enemy, and perished by the sword, as the Lord here predicts; for whatsoever he says certainly comes to pass.

Ver. 10. *Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife,* etc.] Not that the prophet was a quarrelsome and contentious man, but others quarrelled and contended with him, and that for no other reason than for his faithful discharge of his office, under which he ought to have been easy; but being a man of like passions with others, wishes he had never been born, than to meet with so much trouble; and seems to blame his mother for bearing him; or however looked upon himself to be a miserable man through his birth, and that he was destined from thence to this sorrow:

and a man of contention to the whole earth; or “land”; the land of Judea, the inhabitants of it, as the Targum; for with no other had Jeremiah to do; and it were these only that contended with him, because he brought a disagreeable message to them, concerning their captivity:

I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; which was not lawful with the Jews to do; and therefore such were cursed that did it: but this is not to be restrained to this particular branch of business, which was not usual; but has respect to all trade and commerce; and the meaning is, that the prophet did not concern himself with secular affairs, but attended to the duties of his office; he carried on no negotiations with men; he was neither a creditor nor a debtor; had nothing to do with pecuniary affairs; which often occasions strifes and contentions, quarrels and lawsuits; and yet, notwithstanding, could not be free from strife and debate:

yet everyone of them do curse me; that is, everyone of the inhabitants of the land of Judea, so much known were Jeremiah and his prophecies; these slighted and set light by both him and his predictions; and wished the vilest imprecations upon him for his messages to them. The word here used is compounded of two words, or derived from two roots, as Kimchi observes; the one signifies to make light or vilify, in opposition to honour and glory; and the other to curse, in opposition to blessing; and this is often the case of the ministers of the word, not only to be slighted and despised, but to be defamed and cursed; (see ^{<RH12>}1 Corinthians 4:12,13).

Ver. 11. *The Lord said,* etc.] In answer to the prophet’s complaint:

verily it shall be well with thy remnant: not with the remnant of his people, or those that should escape the threatened calamities; but the sense is, that it should be well with him in his latter end; the remainder of his days should be comfortable or be spent in peace and prosperity; and so the Targum,

“if thine end shall not be for good.”

The words are in the form of an oath, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; and the meaning is, that if it is not well with thee in thy last days, then say I am unfaithful, and not true to my word. According to Donesh, cited by Jarchi, the word translated “remnant” has the signification of loosing; and he renders it, “if I loose thee not for good”^{f325}; which accordingly was done, (^{240b}Jeremiah 40:4), and this sense is confirmed by the note of the Masorites: “verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well”; or, “if I do not”, etc. for it is also in the form of an oath, as before, as Jarchi notes; and so it was, Nebuchadnezzar gave charge to Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, to look well to him, and do him no harm; who, when he loosed him, gave him his choice to go with him to Babylon, or continue in the land, (^{239b}Jeremiah 39:11,12 40:4), or, “verily I will”, or, “shall I not entreat the enemy for thee?”^{f326} and make him gentle and humane, so that he shall use thee kindly. Jarchi interprets this of Zedekiah and his courtiers seeking to Jeremiah, in the time of their distress, to pray for them, (^{247b}Jeremiah 37:2), and to which sense the Targum inclines,

“if they shall not come and help thee, etc.”

in the time of evil, and in the time of affliction; when the city is taken, and the people carrying captive.

Ver. 12. *Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?*] Can iron break iron, especially that which comes from the north, which was harder than the common iron; or steel, the hardest of all? though the Jews were hard as iron, they could not prevail against and overcome Jeremiah, who was made an iron pillar and brasen walls against them, (^{241b}Jeremiah 1:18), and so these words are spoken for his comfort and encouragement: or they may respect the Jews and the Chaldeans; and the sense be, that the Jews, as mighty and as strong as they fancied themselves to be, and boasted that they were, they could not find themselves a match for the Chaldean army, which came out of the north; and may be said to be as hard as the northern iron, which came from the Chalybes, a people in the north, near Pontus,

from whom steel has its name in the Latin tongue; and this sense agrees with what follows.

Ver. 13. *Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price*, etc.] Not the prophet's substance and treasure; for it does not appear that he had any, at least to require so much notice; but the substance and treasure of the people of the Jews, to whom these words are directed; these the Lord threatened should be delivered into the hands of their enemies, and become a spoil and free booty to them, for which they should give nothing, and which should never be redeemed again:

and that for all thy sins, even in all thy borders; this spoiling of their substance should befall them because of their sins, which they had committed in all the borders of their land, where they had built their high places, and had set up idolatrous worship; or else the meaning is, that their substance and treasure in all their borders, in every part of the land, should be the plunder of their enemies, because of their sins.

Ver. 14. *And I will make thee to pass with thine enemies*, etc.] Not Jeremiah, but the Jews, to whom these words are continued. The meaning is, that they should go along with the Chaldeans out of their own land into theirs:

into a land which thou knowest not; the land of Babylon; and there is another reading of the words in the margin, "I will cause thee to serve thine enemies"^{f327}, in a land that thou knowest not"; which is followed by the Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions. Some render the words, "I will bring thine enemies from, or through, a land that thou knowest not"^{f328}; the place from whence they came, and those through which they came, being at a great distance:

for a fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you; meaning the wrath of God, compared to fire, which was kindled and excited by their sins, and which would continue upon them until it had destroyed them.

Ver. 15. *O Lord, thou knowest*, etc.] All persons and things; he knew the prophet and his heart, and all that was in it; his innocence and integrity; all his afflictions, and what he met with from his enemies; and he knew them, and all their malicious designs against him:

remember me; with the favour which he bore to his own people, his covenant with him, his promises to him, and the word on which he had

caused him to hope; because of his trials and troubles, he might seem to be forgotten by him:

and visit me; in mercy for good; and so the Targum adds,

“that thou mayest do well unto me:”

and revenge me of my persecutors; not so much for his own sake; unless this is to be attributed to his frailty and infirmity, to the warmth of his spirit, being a man of like passions with others; for private revenge ought not to be sought by good men, but for the sake of God and his glory, in whose cause he was engaged, and on whose account he was persecuted:

take me not away in thy longsuffering; while thou art bearing with others, do not take me away by death; or suffer them, whom thou dost forbear, to take me away, or give them an opportunity thereby so to do; or when thy longsuffering is at an end, do not involve me in the same calamity with them. The Targum is,

“do not give delay to my injury;”

or,

“length to my affliction;”

that is, do not delay to take vengeance on my persecutors; and to this sense Jarchi interprets it,

“do not take my cause, and leave it to thy longsuffering, but hasten and avenge me;”

and Deuteronomy Dieu proposes such a rendering of the words, “to thy longsuffering do not bring me”^{f329}; and which sense is favoured by the Septuagint version:

know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke; let it appear, and that even to mine enemies, that it is for thy sake that all this reproach is cast upon me; and all these afflictions are endured by me, by thy resentment of their carriage to me.

Ver. 16. *Thy words were found, and I did eat them*, &c.] The messages he was called to deliver unto others appeared to him to be of God, and they were as welcome to him as food is to a hungry man; he cheerfully received them, treasured them up in his memory, digested them in his mind, and

carefully retained them. So the doctrines of the Gospel, which are the words of God, and not of men, when by searching and close application they are found in the Scriptures, and under the ministry of the word, they are food to souls, sweet, savoury, wholesome, nourishing, and strengthening; not as merely heard externally, or only assented unto, or superficially tasted of; but when eaten, as Ezekiel's roll was by him; and which is done by faith, which receives, feeds upon, and digests the word; for, unless it is mixed with faith, it is not profitable:

and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; the messages which the prophet was sent with, even those which denounced grievous things against his people in case of impenitence, were gladly received by him, and he readily delivered them, hoping that they would be a means of bringing them to a sense of their sins, and to repentance for them, and so of preserving them from ruin; and especially those words or doctrines he had in commission to deliver, which respected the Messiah, his person, offices, kingdom, righteousness, and grace; the calling of the Gentiles, and the enlargement of the interest of Christ; the glory of his name, and the prosperity of his people in the latter day. The word of the Gospel, when received and eaten by faith, whether by ministers or people, is productive of spiritual joy and pleasure; the promises of it being exceeding precious; and the doctrines of it doctrines of grace, salvation, peace, pardon, and righteousness, by Christ, who is the sum and substance of them:

for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts; what added to his joy was, that the name of the Lord was called upon him, or that he was called a prophet of the Lord: this he looked upon as a high honour done him; and what still more increased his joy was, that he was a prophet, not of Baal, that could not hear nor help his prophets and worshippers; but of the Lord God of hosts and armies, who was able to uphold him, protect and defend him, against his enemies.

Ver. 17. *I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced*, etc.] With them, the mockers; or, “those that make merry”^{f330}; as the word is rendered in (^{2B19}Jeremiah 30:19 31:4), and so the Targum,

“those that sing;”

and dance and live jovially; with these the prophet did not associate himself; such levity being unsuitable to his character as a prophet, and to

those grievous messages he was charged with; and though he had joy, it was of another kind; it was not carnal, but spiritual; not outward, but inward; and what arose from the word of the Lord, being found and eaten by him. Moreover, there were some things which he was obliged by his office to deliver, that were very distressing to him, and made him very melancholy; so that he shunned all company and diversion, which might have been lawfully enjoyed: for this is not to be understood of the assembly or council of the wicked governors of the nation, and much less of the refuse of the people, that mocked at the word of God, and scoffed at the prophets and people of God; but of Jeremiah's friends and acquaintance, that met and made merry together; with whom he could not join, because of the sorrowful case in which he was, on account of the people he was sent unto:

I sat alone, because of thine hand; not because he was obliged to it, being deserted by men, but of choice; he withdrew from company, kept himself retired at home in his own house, there meditating upon the word of God, and mourning over the case of his people; and this he did, because the afflicting hand of God was upon him, or because the hand and spirit of prophecy was upon him, and he was charged to denounce very grievous things against the people; and because the hand of divine power and authority was over him, to which he ought to be subject, and was ready to obey:

for thou hast filled me with indignation; either with the indignation of the people against him, because of his prophecies; or with indignation against them, because of their sins; or with denunciations of wrath he was to deliver to them; and so the Targum,

“for thou hast filled me with a prophecy of cursing.”

Ver. 18. *Why is my pain perpetual*, etc.] The pain of his mind; his uneasiness for the good of his people, which was likely to last, having no hope of a change for the better: or it may design the pain which they gave him by their reproaches and persecutions of him, which seemed as if they would have no end:

and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? the same thing is meant as before. The allusion is to an old ulcer, or obstinate wound, which no medicine can affect, is desperate and deadly; and such the prophet

reckoned his case to be, or however deprecates it, and expostulates with God why it should be so:

wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail? such God cannot be, nor did the prophet think he was; he knew that he was God that could not lie, and that he was faithful to his promises, and would not disappoint the faith, hope, and expectations of his people; but he feared he would be thought to be so by others, by his enemies, who would triumph over him, and say, where is thy God? did he not promise to make thee a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brasen walls? is he as good as his word? is he not like a dry brook, whose waters fail? are not thy hope and expectation in vain, who hast been trusting to him, and depending on him? and it is as if the prophet should say, Lord, let them have no occasion to speak after this manner; nor suffer my faith in thy promises to fail; show thyself to be as thou art, a covenant keeping God, and whose faithfulness never fails: to which an answer is returned in the following verses.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, if thou return,* etc.] From thine unbelief, diffidence, and impenitence, and repent of them; expressed in the preceding verses:

then will I bring thee again; or, “restore thee^{f331}”; pardon his sin, and return him to his post and place, to his office and ministry in it, and confirm and establish him therein:

and thou shalt stand before me; not only as a petitioner for the people; (see ²⁴¹⁵Jeremiah 15:1), but as a servant of the Lord, attending to his word, and waiting his orders, and ready to execute them. It denotes his stability in his office:

and if thou wilt take forth the precious from the vile; take precious truths, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; truths more valuable and desirable than thousands of gold and silver, from those doctrines which are worthless and contemptible, comparable to wood, hay, and stubble, and everything that is mean and vile; these faithful ministers should separate one from the other, and not mix and blend them together: or precious souls, truly gracious ones, who are precious in the sight of God, are redeemed by Christ, by his precious blood, and are adorned with the graces of the Spirit; these are to be distinguished from the vile, from sinners impenitent and unbelieving, that live in sin, in defiance of the law, and in contempt of the Gospel; a difference is to be made between them;

delivering out comfortable words to the one, and denouncing severe threatenings to the other; doing the reverse of the false prophets, (^{<412>}Ezekiel 13:22):

thou shalt be as my mouth; to the people; speak what I command thee, and whatsoever thou sayest shall be as if I had spoken it myself:

let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them; this is said of the people of the Jews, to whom the prophet was sent; and the sense is, that he should not at all comply with them, or conform to their humours, or flatter and sooth them in their sins, as the false prophets did; but if they returned to him, attended on his ministry, received his words and messages, and agreed and conformed to him, and followed his directions and example, it would be very well; but otherwise he was not in the least to give way to them, or go into any sinful compliance with them, either with respect to doctrine or practice,

Ver. 20. *And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall*, etc.] As he had promised him, when he first called him to his office, (^{<4018>}Jeremiah 1:18), and so would not be as a liar to him:

and they shall fight against thee; by words and blows, by menaces and imprisonment:

but they shall not prevail against thee; so as to cause him to call in his words, and contradict his prophecies; or so as to take away his life:

for I am with thee, to save thee, and deliver thee, saith the Lord; the presence of God with his ministers is sufficient to save and deliver them out of all their troubles, and to protect and defend them against all their enemies; (see ^{<4181>}Matthew 28:20).

Ver. 21. *And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked*, etc.] The wicked Jews, Zedekiah and his courtiers, who imprisoned him:

and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible; as kings and great men of the earth seem to be; or, “the violent”, or “strong”^{f332}, and mighty; that were stronger than he, that would use him with violence, and inject terror into him.

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 16

In this chapter the ruin and destruction of the Jews is set forth, and confirmed by the prophet's being forbid to be merry, or to go into the house of feasting or mourning, with the reasons thereof; also the sins of the people, the cause of it, are pointed at; and afterwards a promise of their restoration is made; and the chapter is concluded with a prayer of the prophet, pressing his faith in the divine protection, and in the calling of the Gentiles. After the preface or introduction, (²⁴¹⁴¹Jeremiah 16:1), the prophet is forbid to take a wife, or have any children, with the reason of it; because that parents and children would die of grievous deaths unlamented, and not be buried, (²⁴¹⁴²Jeremiah 16:2-4) and he is also forbid to go into the house of mourning, because peace, lovingkindness, and mercy, were taken from the people, and both great and small would die, and no lamentation be made for them, nor have any burial also, (²⁴¹⁴³Jeremiah 16:5-7), nor might he go into the house of feasting, because the voice of joy and gladness would cease out of the land, (²⁴¹⁴⁴Jeremiah 16:8,9), and upon the people's inquiring the reason of all this, the prophet is bid to tell them, that it was for their forsaking the Lord and his worship, and for their idolatrous practices; of which they were more guilty than their forefathers, and therefore would be cast out of the land, and carried captive into a strange country, (²⁴¹⁴⁵Jeremiah 16:10-13) but, after all this, they should be restored again to their own land, and have a greater deliverance than that out of Egypt, as they themselves would own, (²⁴¹⁴⁶Jeremiah 16:14,15) but before this would be, fishers and hunters should be sent to distress them, and all because of their iniquities, which God's eye was upon, and would recompense, (²⁴¹⁴⁷Jeremiah 16:16-18), and the chapter is closed with the prophet's prayer, in which he expresses his faith in the Lord, and in the conversion of the Gentiles, who would be convinced of their idolatry, and made to know the power and name of the Lord, (²⁴¹⁴⁸Jeremiah 16:19,20).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The Targum is, the word of prophecy from the Lord: whether this is a new prophecy, or the

former continued, is not certain; the latter seems probable. This introduction is omitted in the Septuagint and Arabic versions.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt not take thee a wife*, etc.] Not because it was unlawful; for it was lawful for prophets to marry, and they did; but because it was not advisable, on account of the calamities and distresses which were coming upon the nation; which would be more bearable by him alone, than if he had a wife, which would increase his care, concern, and sorrow.

Neither shall thou have sons nor daughters in this place; in Anathoth, says Kimchi; but it is most likely that Jerusalem in particular is meant, though the whole land of Judea in general may be designed; and though nothing is more desirable than to have children to build up the family, and bear and continue a man's name for futurity, yet in times of public calamity these do but add to the affliction.

Ver. 3. *For thus saith the Lord concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place*, etc.]. This is a reason given why the prophet should not have, and why he should not be desirous to have, sons and daughters in such a place and country, devoted to destruction:

and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land: the land of Judea; which shows what is meant by the place before mentioned; both the one and the other, parents and children, should die there; this is what was determined by the Lord concerning them; and therefore it could not be a desirable thing for a man to have wife and children, whom he must part with in such an uncomfortable manner, as is after described; and to show the certainty of which the prophet is forbid to do as above.

Ver. 4. *They shall die of grievous deaths*, etc.] Such as the sword, famine, and pestilence. The Targum particularly adds famine. It may be rendered, "deaths of diseases, or sicknesses"^{f333}; such as are brought on by long sickness and lingering distempers; by which a man consumes gradually, as by famine, and is not snatched away at once; and which are very grievous to bear.

They shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried; which two offices are usually done to the dead by their surviving relations; who mourn for them, and express their grief by various gestures, and which especially were used by the eastern nations; and take care that they have a decent burial: but neither of these would now be, which is mentioned as an

aggravation of the calamity; that not only the deaths they should die of would be grievous ones, but after death no regard would be shown them; and that either because there would be none to do these things for them; or they would be so much taken up in providing for their own safety, and so much in concern for their own preservation, that they would not be at leisure to attend to the above things:

but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth; lie and rot there, and be dung to the earth; which would be a just retaliation, for their filthy and abominable actions committed in the land:

and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; the grievous deaths before mentioned; the sword without, and the famine within; the one more sudden, and at once, the other more lingering; and therefore may be more especially designed by the death of lingering sicknesses referred to:

and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; lying unburied; (see ^{<4073>}Jeremiah 7:33).

Ver. 5. *For thus saith the Lord, enter not into the house of mourning,* etc.] On account of his dead relations or neighbours; since they were taken away from the evil to come, and therefore no occasion to mourn for them: moreover, this was to show the certainty of what is before and after said; that, at the time of the general calamity predicted, there would be no lamentation made for the dead. R. Joseph Kimchi says the word here used signifies, in the Arabic ^{f334} language, a lifting of the voice, either for weeping, or for joy ^{f335}; and Jarchi, out of the ancient book Siphri, interprets it a “feast”; and it is rendered a “banquet” in (^{<3007>}Amos 6:7), and so may here design a mourning feast, such as were used at funerals, called by the Greeks *περιδειπνεα*, and by the Latins “parentalia”, as Jerom observes. Neither go to lament nor bemoan them; neither go to the house of mourning, or the mourning feast; to the houses of the deceased, to condole the surviving relations, and to express sorrow for the dead, by shedding tears, and shaking the head, or by any other gesture or ceremony after mentioned,

For I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the Lord; all peace or prosperity is of God, and therefore called his, and which he can take away from a people when he pleases; and having determined to take it

away from this people because of their sins, he is said to have done it, it being as certain as if it was done:

even lovingkindness and mercies; all benefits, which flowed from his favour, love, and mercy, as the whole of their prosperity did.

Ver. 6. *Both the great and the small shall die in this land*, etc.] The nobles as well as the common people, high and low, rich and poor; none shall be exempted from the grievous deaths by the sword, famine, and pestilence.

They shall not be buried, neither shall men lament for them; as before, (^{<2464>}Jeremiah 16:4), this shall be the common case of them all; the great and the rich shall have no more care and notice taken of them than the poor:

nor cut themselves; their flesh, with their nails, or with knives, to show their grief for the dead, and to alleviate the sorrow of surviving friends, by bearing a part with them:

nor make themselves bald for them; by plucking off the hair of their heads, or by shaving them, and between their eyes; which though forbidden the Jews by the law of God, as being Heathenish customs, yet obtained in the times of Jeremiah, and were usually done; (see ^{<6540>}Deuteronomy 14:1).

Ver. 7. *Neither shall men tear themselves*, etc.] Either their flesh, or their clothes: or, “stretch out”^{f336}; that is, their hands, and clap them together, and wring them, as persons in great distress do: or “divide”, or “break”, or “deal unto them”^{f337}; that is, bread, as at their funeral feasts. Thus the Septuagint version, neither shall bread be broken in their mourning; and to the same sense the Targum; so the word is used in (^{<2367>}Isaiah 63:7), a practice that obtained among the Heathens; (see ^{<6544>}Deuteronomy 26:14) and now with the Jews, as it seems: which they did

for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; they used to carry or send food to the surviving relations, and went and ate with them, in order to comfort them for the loss of their friends; but this now would not be done, not because an Heathenish custom, but because they would have no heart nor leisure for it: (see ^{<5317>}Ezekiel 24:17).

Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother: not give them a cup of good liquor to comfort and cheer their spirits, overwhelmed with sorrow, on account of the death

of a father or mother; which was wont to be done, but now should be omitted; the calamity would be so great, and so universal, that there would be none to do such offices as these; (see ²⁸⁰⁶Proverbs 31:6,7).

Ver. 8. *Thou shall not also go into the house of feasting*, etc.] Which it was lawful to do, and which the prophet doubtless had done at other times; but now a time of calamity coming on, it was not proper he should; and the rather he was to abstain from such places, and from pleasant conversation with his friends, to assure them that such a time was coming, and this his conduct was a sign of it; for which reason he is forbid to attend any entertainment of his friends, on account of marriage, or any other circumstance of life, for which feasts were used:

to sit with them to eat and to drink: which not only expresses the position at table, but continuance there; for at feasts men not only eat and drink for necessity, or just to satisfy nature, but for pleasure, and unto and with cheerfulness; which may lawfully be done, provided that temperance and sobriety be preserved; but the prophet is not allowed to do that now, which at other times he might do, and did; and that on purpose that his friends might take notice of it, and inquire the reason of it, the distress that was coming upon them, as the words following show.

Ver. 9. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] Who is able to do what he here threatens he will, and which he will do, notwithstanding his being the God of Israel; their hearts not being right with him, nor they steadfast in his covenant.

Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place, in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness: upon any account whatsoever, civil or religious; and that out of Jerusalem, where their religious feasts were kept, as well as where were often expressions of joy made on civil accounts; and this should be in their sight, it should be notorious and remarkable, that they could not but observe it; and it should be in a short time, in their days, though they were very desirous of putting these evil days far from them, and were not willing to believe they should be at all, or, however, not in their days:

the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; the epithalamiums, or marriage songs, sung at the celebration of nuptials; these should cease, marrying and giving in marriage being over; the consequence of which

must be ruin to the nation, a lawful succession of mankind being not otherwise to be kept up.

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt show this people all these words*, etc.] Or, “all these things”^{f338}; which he was forbid to do; as marrying and having children, going into the house of mourning or feasting, with the reasons of all, because of the calamities coming upon them:

and they shall say unto thee, wherefore hath the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? as if they were quite innocent, and were not conscious of anything they had done deserving such punishment, especially so great as this was threatened to be inflicted on them; as their dying grievous deaths, parents and children, great and small, and be unlamented, and unburied: or “what is our iniquity?” or “what is our sin that we have committed against the Lord our God?” supposing we have been guilty of some weaknesses and frailties; or of some few faults; which though they cannot be justified, yet surely are not to be reckoned of such a nature as to deserve and require so great a punishment: thus would they either deny or lessen the sins they had been guilty of, and suggest that the Lord was very hard and severe upon them.

Ver. 11. *Then shalt thou say unto them*, etc.] In answer to their questions; not in a general way, but by observing to them particular sins, and those gross ones, they had been guilty of:

because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord; that is, his worship, as the Targum; they had quitted his service, and left attending on his word and ordinances; and therefore it was but just with him to forsake them, and give them up into the hands of their enemies:

and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them; were guilty of gross idolatry, serving and worshipping the creature more than and besides the Creator; even idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and wood, and stone, which were no gods; for there is no other true God besides the Lord; and which they were well informed of, and therefore their sin was the greater to leave him and worship them; and which sin, because of the heinousness of it, is repeated:

and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; they forsook his worship, as the Targum, and did not observe the law of the decalogue or ten commandments; especially the two first of them, which required the

worship of the one true God, and forbid the worshipping of others; and which threatened the visiting such iniquities of fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation, of such that hated the Lord; and such were these persons, as follows.

Ver. 12. *And ye have done worse than your fathers*, etc.] Not only committed the same sins, but greater, or, however, attended with more aggravating circumstances; they were wilfully and impudently done, and obstinately persisted in; and therefore deserving of the great evil of punishment pronounced against them.

For, behold, ye walk everyone after the imagination of his evil heart; they walked not as the word of God directs, but as their own evil heart dictated; the imagination of which was evil, and that continually, (^{כֹּזֵבִים}Genesis 6:5).

That they may not hearken unto me; to the word of the Lord, and obey that; their minds being blinded, and their hearts hardened, and they obstinately bent on their own evil ways.

Ver. 13. *Therefore will I call you out of this land*, etc.] By force, and against their wills, whether they would or not, and with abhorrence and contempt: it is to be understood of their captivity, which was but a just punishment for the above sins; for since they had cast off the Lord and his worship, it was but just that they should be cast off by him, and cast out of their land, which they held by their obedience to him:

into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; a foreign country, at a great distance from them; with which they had no alliance, correspondence, or commerce; and where they had no friends to converse with, or show them any respect; and whose language they understood not; all which was an aggravation of their captivity in it:

and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; should have their fill of idolatry, even to loathsomeness; and what they had done willingly in their own land, following the imagination of their own evil hearts, now they should be forced to; and what they did for their own pleasure, and at certain times, when they thought fit, now they should be obliged to attend tonight and day. The Targum is, “and there shall ye serve people that worship idols day and night”; that as they had served idols, now they should serve the people, the worshippers of those idols; the former was their sin, the latter their punishment:

where I will not show you favour; or, “not give you grace”^{f339}; the favour and mercy of God serve to support persons in distress; but to be denied these is an aggravation of it, and must needs make the captivity of those people the more afflicting. Some understand this of the Lord’s not suffering their enemies to show them any favour or mercy; so Kimchi,

“the enemy shall have no mercy on you, but make you serve with rigour;”

and to the same purpose the Targum, connecting them with the people, the idol worshippers, and paraphrasing them thus,

“who shall not be merciful to you;”

and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, “who shall not give you mercy”; or “rest”, as the Vulgate Latin. The Jews^{f340} interpret this of the Messiah, whose name, they say, is Chaninah, the word here used, whom the Lord would not give them where they were.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or nevertheless, “notwithstanding”^{f341} their sins and iniquities, and the punishment brought upon them for them: or “surely”, verily; for Jarchi says it is an oath, with which the Lord swore he would redeem them, though they had behaved so ill unto him:

that it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; this was the form of an oath with the Jews, when a man, as Kimchi observes, used to swear by the living God that brought Israel out of Egypt; or this was a fact which they used frequently to make mention of, and relate to their children; and observe to them the power and goodness of God in it; and so the Targum,

“there shall be no more any declaring the power of the Lord who brought up, etc.”

Ver. 15. *But the Lord liveth*, etc.] Or they shall swear by the living Lord; or declare his power, as the Targum: “that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north”; that is, from Babylon, which lay north of Judea. The Jews^{f342} gather from hence, that the land of Israel was higher than all other lands, because it is said, that “brought up”, or “caused to ascend”; as out of the land of Egypt as before, so out of all other lands. The meaning is, that the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity was a

greater blessing and mercy than the deliverance out of Egypt; the hardships they endured in Babylon being in some respects greater than those they endured in Egypt; and especially the favour being recent, and fresh upon their mind, it would swallow up the remembrance of the former mercy; that would be comparatively forgotten, and not be so frequent and common in the mouths of men; so great would be the sense of this deliverance; wherefore this prophecy both expresses the grievousness of their captivity in Babylon, as exceeding their bondage in Egypt, and the greatness of their salvation from it; when they should be not only brought out of Babylon, but also

from all the lands whither he had driven them; from Egypt, Media, and Persia, and other places: or, “whither they were driven”: by the kings of the earth, as Kimchi interprets it; though it is certain the Lord’s hand was in it; it was according to his will, and by his providence, that they were scattered about among the nations:

and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers; which had its accomplishment at their return from the Babylonish captivity; and will be more fully accomplished in the latter day, when the Jews shall be converted, and return to their own land. Kimchi says this refers to the days of the Messiah, and the gathering of the captives; and some following passages manifestly belong to Gospel times. So Jarchi and Abarbinel understand this and the following of the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 16. *Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them*, etc.] Which some understand of the Egyptians, who lived much on fish, and were much employed in catching them, to which the allusion is thought to be; but rather the Chaldeans are intended, whom God, by the secret instinct of his providence, brought up against the Jews; who besieged Jerusalem, and enclosed them in it, and took them as fishes in a net; (see ³⁰¹⁴Habakkuk 1:14-17), though some interpret this, and what follows, of the deliverance of the Jews by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus, who searched for them in all places, and sent them into their own land; or of Zerubbabel, and others with him, who used all means to persuade the Jews in the captivity to go with them, and build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem; and there are not wanting others, who by the “fishers” think the apostles are meant; who were fishers by occupation, and whom Christ made fishers of men, and sent forth to cast and spread the net

of the Gospel in the several parts of Judea, for the conversion of some of that people; (see ^{<4018>}Matthew 4:18,19 ^{<3570>}Ezekiel 47:9,10):

and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks; either the same persons, the Chaldeans, are meant here, as before; who, as they should slay those they took in Jerusalem with the edge of the sword, as fishes taken in a net are killed, or presently die, which is the sense of the Targum, and other Jewish commentators; so those that escaped and fled to mountains, hills, and holes of the rocks, to hide themselves, should be pursued by them, and be found out, taken, and carried captive: or, the Romans^{f343}. So Nimrod, the beginning of whose kingdom was Babel, being a tyrant and an oppressor, is called a mighty hunter, (^{<4008>}Genesis 10:8-10).

Ver. 17. *For mine eyes are upon all their ways,* etc.] Not only which they may take to hide themselves from their enemies, and where they should be directed to find them; but their evil ways in which they walked, and which were the cause of their calamities; these, how secret soever they were, were under the eye of God, whose eyes are in every place, and upon all the ways of men, good and bad; though they might flatter themselves, as wicked men sometimes do, that the Lord sees them not, and does not take notice of their iniquities: but, that they might be assured of the contrary, it is added,

they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes; neither their ways nor their works, their persons nor their actions, could be concealed from the Lord; none can hide himself in secret places, that they should not be seen by him; the darkness and the light are both alike to an omniscient God. The Targum is,

“their iniquities are not hid from before (or from, or the sight of) my Word;”

the essential Word of God; (see ^{<8012>}Hebrews 4:12,13).

Ver. 18. *And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double,* etc.] Or, “but first I will recompense”, etc.^{f344}; meaning, before he showed favour to them, and returned their captivity, (^{<2165>}Jeremiah 16:15), he would punish them according to their sins; not double to what they deserved, but to what they were used to have, or he was used to inflict upon them, punishing them less than their sins deserved; but now he would reward them to the full, though not beyond the measure of justice, yet largely and

abundantly, and with rigour and severity. Some understand this of God's gathering together all their sins and iniquities "from the beginning"^{f345}, as they render the word; the sins of their fathers and their own, and punishing them for them all at once; or first their fathers' sins, and then their own, in which they imitated their fathers, and filled up the measure of their iniquity. So the Targum,

"and I will render to the second as to the first, for everyone of both, their iniquities and their sins."

Because they have defiled my land; out of which he cast the Canaanites for the same reason; and which he chose for the place of his residence and worship, and settled the people of Israel for that purpose in it: that they might serve him in it, and not do as the Heathens before them had done, and which yet they did; and this was what was provoking to him.

They have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things; with their idols, which were not only lifeless, but stinking, loathsome, and abominable; or unclean creatures, which were sacrificed unto them; and some think human sacrifices, the bodies of men, are meant: places of idolatrous worship were set up everywhere in the land, and therefore it is said to be filled therewith; and it was an aggravation of their wickedness, that this was done in a land which the Lord had chosen for his own possession, and had given to Israel as an inheritance.

Ver. 19. *O Lord, my strength and my fortress*, etc.] These are the words of the prophet, rising out of the temptation which beset him; casting off his impatience, diffidence, and unbelief; calling upon God, and exercising faith in him; having received the promise of the restoration of his people to their land, and a view of the future conversion of the Gentiles; which were a means of recovering his spiritual strength, of invigorating grace in him, and of encouraging him to exercise it in a lively manner; to go on in his duty constantly, and to bear affliction cheerfully and patiently; "strength" to do which he had from the Lord; and to whom he ascribes it; and whom he calls his "fortress", or strong hold; and such the Lord is to his people, a strong hold to prisoners of hope, and a strong tower or place of defence to all his saints:

and my refuge in the day of affliction; in which he now was, or saw was coming upon him, when he should be carried captive into Babylon; but God was his refuge, shelter, and protection, and to him he betook himself,

where he was safe; and which was infinitely better to him than the mountains, hills, and holes of rocks, others would fly unto, (²⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 16:16).

The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth; not the Jews, who were like to the Gentiles for their idolatries, and other wicked practices, and therefore so called, who should return from the several distant countries where they had been scattered, to their own land, and to the worship of God in it; but such who were really Gentiles, that should be converted, either at the time of the Babylonish captivity, and should come along with the Jews when they returned, and worship the Lord with them; or rather in Gospel times. And so Kimchi says this belongs to the times of the Messiah; when the Gospel was to be, and was preached among them, even to the ends of the earth; and many savingly came to Christ for righteousness and strength, for peace, pardon, salvation, and eternal life; and turned to him as to a strong hold, and fled to him for refuge, and laid hold on him, the hope set before them.

And shall say, surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanities, and [things] wherein [there is] no profit; meaning their idols, which did not give what their priests, and the abettors of them, promised; and so deceived their votaries, and disappointed them of their expectations, which became vain, and so were of no profit and advantage to them; a poor inheritance this, which they had possessed and enjoyed for many generations, which their children, now being convinced of, relinquish; for a false religion is not to be retained on this score, because the religion of ancestors, and of long possession with them.

Ver. 20. *Shall a man make gods unto himself,* etc.] Can a man make his own gods? a poor, weak, mortal man? can he make gods of gold, silver, brass, wood, or stone? can he put deity into them? and when he has made images of these, can he be so stupid as to account them gods, and worship them? can he be so sottish, and void of understanding, as to imagine that anything that is made by himself or any other, can be God?

and they are no gods; that are made by men; he only is the true God, that is the Maker and Creator of all things; or they are no gods themselves that pretend to make them, and therefore how should they make gods? can they give that which they have not? or impart deity to others which they have not themselves? These words are a continuation of the speech of the Gentiles, and contain their reasonings, exposing the folly of their idolatrous

ancestors: though some take them to be the words of God, or of the prophet, inveighing against the Jews for their stupidity in worshipping idols; when the Gentiles were convinced of the folly and vanity of such practices, and acknowledged it.

Ver. 21. *Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know*, etc.] Or, “at this time”, as the Targum; when the Gentiles shall be convinced of the idolatry they have been brought up in, and of the vanity and falsehood of their idols; they shall be made to know the true God, God in Christ, Christ himself, whom to know is life eternal, and to know the way of life and salvation by him; and all this through the ministry of the Gospel that should be brought among them, the Spirit of God accompanying it; by means of which they should come to Christ from the ends of the earth, before predicted.

I will cause them to know my hand and my might; to experience the power and efficacy of his grace in conversion; quickening their dead souls, softening their hard hearts, taking away the stony heart, and giving a heart of flesh; and making them willing in the day of his power to be saved by Christ, and to serve him; to relinquish their idols, and turn to and worship the living God in spirit and in truth: though most understand this not as a promise of grace to the Gentiles, but as a threatening of punishment to the idolatrous Jews; that because of their idolatry they should once for all, or by this one and grievous calamity, captivity in Babylon, be made to know what they could not be brought to know by all the instructions and warnings of the prophets; they should now feel the weight of the Lord’s hand, the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his wrath; and so the Targum,

“I will show them my vengeance and the stroke of my power.”

And they shall know that my name is the Lord; the Jehovah, the self-existent Being, the Being of beings, the everlasting and unchangeable I AM; who is able to make good his promises, or perform his threatenings; a name incommunicable to creatures, which do not belong to the idols of the Gentiles, is peculiar to the true God, who is the most High in all the earth; (see ⁴³³⁸Psalm 83:18).

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 17

This chapter is a further prophecy of the destruction of the Jews, with the causes of it, their sins, as their idolatry, which was notorious; of which their own consciences, their altars, and their children, were witnesses, (²⁴¹⁷⁰Jeremiah 17:1,2) for which they are threatened with the spoil of their substance and treasure, and discontinuance in their land, (²⁴¹⁷³Jeremiah 17:3,4) as also their confidence in an arm of flesh, which brought the curse of God upon them, when such are blessed that trust in him; and the difference between those that trust in men and those that trust in the Lord is illustrated by very apt similes, (²⁴¹⁷⁵Jeremiah 17:5-8), the source of which vain confidence is the wicked heart of man, known to none but God, (²⁴¹⁷⁹Jeremiah 17:9,10) and the vanity of it is exposed by a partridge sitting on eggs without hatching them, (²⁴¹⁷¹Jeremiah 17:11), and their departure from God, by trusting in the creature, and in outward things, is aggravated by their temple being the throne and seat of the divine Majesty; by what God is to his people that trust in him; and by the shame and ruin that follow an apostasy from him, (²⁴¹⁷²Jeremiah 17:12,13), wherefore the prophet, sensible of his own backslidings, prays to be healed and saved by the Lord, who should have all the praise and glory, (²⁴¹⁷⁴Jeremiah 17:14) and then relates the scoffs of the people at the word of God by him, another cause of their ruin; declares his own innocence and integrity; prays for protection and security from fear in a time of trouble; and for confusion, terror, and destruction to his persecutors, (²⁴¹⁷⁵Jeremiah 17:15-18), then follows an order to him from the Lord, to go and stand in the gate of the city, and exhort all ranks of men to the observation of the sabbath, with directions how to keep it, which had not been observed by their fathers, and which was another cause of their ruin, (²⁴¹⁷⁹Jeremiah 17:19-23), and the chapter is closed with promises of blessings in city, court, and country, in church and state, should they religiously observe the sabbath day; but if they profaned it, the city of Jerusalem, and its palaces, should be burnt with fire, (²⁴¹⁷⁴Jeremiah 17:24-27).

Ver. 1. *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron*, etc.] Or an iron tool, such as engravers use in working on hard matter:

[*and*] *with the point of a diamond*; such as glaziers use in cutting their glass; though this is not the word used for a diamond in (^{<12318>}Exodus 28:18), this word is elsewhere translated an adamant, (^{<3180>}Ezekiel 3:9 ^{<3172>}Zechariah 7:12). Bothart^{f346} takes it to be the smiris, which jewellers use in polishing their gems. Jarchi makes mention of a Midrash, or exposition, which explains the iron pen of Jeremiah, and the point of the adamant, or diamond, of Ezekiel, because of what is said of them, (^{<3118>}Jeremiah 1:18 ^{<3180>}Ezekiel 3:9). Kimchi thinks the word “shamir”, rendered “diamond”, is expressive of the subject matter on which their sin is said to be written, and not of the instrument with which; and then it is to be read thus,

“the sin of Judah is written with an iron pen (with an iron claw, or nail, of which mention is made in some Jewish writings) upon “shamir”, or an adamant stone;”

which is no other than their stony heart, as it follows:

it is graven upon the table of their heart; where it is so fixed that it cannot be rooted out, and will never be forgotten by them, but always remembered and desired; for which they have the strongest affections, having a place, and having made deep impressions there: or this may denote the evidence of it in their own consciences, which bore witness to it, and which they could not deny:

and upon the horns of your altars; on which the names of their idols were engraven or inscribed, (^{<4173>}Acts 17:23), so that their idolatry was notorious; their consciences within, and their altars without, were testimonies of it and besides, the blood of the sacrifices was poured upon the horns of the altar, (^{<1847>}Leviticus 4:7) and which, as it was done at the offering of sacrifices appointed of God, so very probably at the offering of sacrifices to idols, and which made their sin notorious; yea, even all the sacrifices of the ceremonial law were a standing testimony of their being sinners, and carried in them a confession of sin, and that they were deserving of death, and so were a handwriting against them; for there is no need to limit the sin of Judah here to idolatry, but it may include all their sins; and so the Targum expresses it in the plural number,

“the sins of Judah;”

though, if any particular sin is intended, it seems to be idolatry, by what follows.

Ver. 2. *Whilst their children remember their altars*, etc.] Which is a further proof of their long continuance in idolatrous practices, and a fresh witness against them; they trained up their children in them; who, when grown up, could not forget them, but imitated them, and went on in the same evil ways. Some render the words, “as they remember their children, so they remember their altars”^{f347}, and their groves, by the green trees upon the high hills”; they had the same love to their idols, and the worship of them, as they had to their children. This sense is received by Kimchi;^{f348}; yea, they had a greater affection for their idols than for their children; since they made their children pass through the fire to Moloch, and burnt their sons and their daughters to Baal. The Targum renders it, “their groves under every green tree”: (see ^{<2422>}Jeremiah 2:20 3:6). Kimchi and Ben Melech connect green trees not with groves but with altars; and take the sense to be, that their altars were by green trees; since groves and green trees were the same, and which altars also were upon high hills.

Ver. 3. *O my mountain in the midst of the field*, etc.] Meaning either the temple, called the mountain of the house, and of the Lord’s house, (^{<3382>}Micah 3:12 4:1), or else Jerusalem, which stood on a hill in the midst of a plain, surrounded with fruitful fields and gardens; or in the midst of a land like a field. The Targum is,

“because thou worshippst idols upon the mountains in the field:”

I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil; all the riches of the city and temple to be the spoil and plunder of the enemy; (see Gill on ^{<2453>}Jeremiah 15:13”).

and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders. The sense is, that all their substance and treasure throughout their borders, the riches of the whole land, as well as of the city and temple, (^{<2453>}Jeremiah 15:13) and all their high places throughout the land, which were used for sin, for idolatrous practices, on account thereof, should become the spoil of the enemy.

Ver. 4. *And thou, even thyself*, etc.] Or, “thou, and in thee”^{f349}; that is, thou and those that are in thee, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea; or, “thou even through thyself”^{f350}; through thine own fault, by reason of thy sins and iniquities:

shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; be removed from it, and no longer enjoy it: or, “shalt intermit from thine heritage”^{f351}; shall not till the land, plough and sow, and reap, and gather the fruits of it: this was enjoined on every seventh year, when the land was to have its rest, or sabbath, (^{<1230>}Exodus 23:10,11), but this law they did not observe; and now, therefore, whether they would or not, the land should be intermitted, and not tilled and enjoyed by them. The Targum takes in the whole of the sense,

“and I will bring an enemy upon your land; and it shall be desolate as in the year of intermission: and I will take vengeance of judgment upon you, until I remove you from your inheritance which I have given unto you;”

the land of Canaan, which was given them for an inheritance:

I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not; the Babylonians in Chaldea; or, as Jerom thinks; the Romans. Of the different reading of these words, (see Gill on “^{<2453>}Jeremiah 15:13”):

for ye have I kindled a fire in mine anger; or by their sins had caused the anger of the Lord to burn like fire:

which shall burn for ever; as it will in hell, and therefore called everlasting fire: here it only means until these people and their country were consumed by the enemy; perhaps some reference is had to the burning of the city and temple by the Babylonians, or Romans, or both. These first four verses are left out by the Septuagint interpreters, Jerom thinks, to spare their own people.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Here begins a new discourse, or part of one; or, however, another cause or reason of the ruin and destruction of the Jews is suggested; namely, their trust in man, or confidence in the creature, which is resented and condemned:

cursed be the man that trusteth in man; as the Jews did in the Egyptians and Assyrians; (see ^{<2419>}Jeremiah 2:36,37), and in Abraham their father, and in being his seed, as they did in Christ’s time; and which was trusting in the flesh; and as all such may be said to do who trust in their natural descent from good men, (^{<4109>}Matthew 3:9 ^{<4083>}John 8:33,39 ^{<4104>}Philippians 3:4,5), they also trusted in Moses, in the law of Moses, and in their having, hearing, and obeying it; which pronounces every man cursed that does not

perfectly perform it: they trusted in themselves, and in their own righteousness; despised others, and rejected Christ and his righteousness; and brought an anathema upon them, (⁴⁰⁵John 5:45 ⁴⁰⁹Luke 18:9) and all such that trust in their own hearts, and in their own works, trust in man, in the creature, in creature acts, and involve themselves in the curse here denounced. The Jews also, to this day, expect the Messiah to come as a mere man, and so trust in him as such; and all those that call themselves Christians, and take Christ to be a mere creature, as the Arians, and a mere man, as the Socinians, may be said to trust in man, and entail a curse upon themselves; though we trust in Christ, yet not as a man, but as he is the true and living God:

and maketh flesh his arm; or his confidence, as the Targum, to lean upon, and be protected by; man is but flesh, feeble, weak and inactive; frail and mortal; sinful and corrupt; and so very unfit to make an arm of, or to depend upon: God, and an arm of flesh, are opposed to each other; as are also rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having confidence in the flesh, (⁴⁰⁸2 Chronicles 32:8 ⁴⁰⁹Philippians 3:3):

and whose heart departeth from the Lord: as men's hearts may, under the greatest show of outward religion and righteousness; and as they always do, when they put their trust in such things; every act of unbelief and distrust of the Lord, and every act of trust and confidence in the creature, carry the heart off from God; every such act is a departing from the living God; (see ⁴⁰⁹Isaiah 29:13 ⁴⁰⁹Hebrews 3:12).

Ver. 6. *For he shall be like the heath in the desert*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "myrice": and so the Latin interpreter of the Targum; but the word that paraphrase makes use of according to R. Hai, mentioned by Kimchi, signifies something that is thorny without, and eatable within; but this is not likely to be intended here. The Septuagint version renders it, "wild myrice"; it seems to be the same that is called "erice", or "ling", and "heath"; which delights to grow in wild and waste places; hence such with us are called "heaths", whether this grows upon them or not. It is a low shrub, fruitless and useless; and, because neither bears fruit nor seed, is reckoned by Pliny^{f352} among unhappy plants, and such as are condemned or forbid religious uses; and very fit to represent such persons as truest in men and in themselves, and not in the Lord:

and shall not see when good cometh; perceive or receive any advantage by rain coming upon it; as such persons do not receive any good by the pure

ministration of the word, compared to rain; and so the self-righteous Jews did not see when the Messiah came, who is goodness itself; nor see him, and embrace him, nor his righteousness; but rejected him and that; went about to establish their own, and did not submit to his; nor did they attain to righteousness, or enjoy eternal life; as is the case of all self-justiciaries:

but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited: which became literally true of the land of Judea, for the rejection of the Messiah, and trust in themselves; (see ^{<6223>}Deuteronomy 29:23) and may fitly represent the barren pastures of a man's own works of righteousness, which such as trust in themselves feed upon. All the characters are expressive of barrenness, as a wilderness, places parched with heat, and where salt is; for, as Pliny^{f353} says, where salt is found, it is barren, and produces nothing.

Ver. 7. *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord,* etc.] In the Word of the Lord, as the Targum, in Christ the essential Word of God; (see ^{<8122>}Psalm 2:12,6,7 85:11,12) who have a spiritual knowledge of him, and so trust in him, (^{<8990>}Psalm 9:10) who have seen the vanity and emptiness of all other objects of trust, there being no salvation in them, only in him; who betake themselves to him as their only refuge; lay hold, rest, and rely upon him, as their Saviour; commit their all unto him; trust him with all their concerns, respecting life and salvation, and with their immortal souls; and expect all from him, grace here, and glory hereafter: who trust in his person for their acceptance with God; in his righteousness for their justification; in his blood for the pardon of their sins; in his fulness for the supply of their wants; in his power for protection and preservation; and in all for eternal life and happiness: and such are blessed persons; for they are in the utmost safety; they are as Mount Zion, which can never be removed; they shall want no good thing, temporal or spiritual, proper for them; they enjoy great peace now, and in the world to come everlasting glory:

and whose hope the Lord is; the Word of the Lord, according to the Targum, as before: Christ, who is the Hope of Israel, our hope, and Christ in us the hope of glory, (^{<2448>}Jeremiah 14:8 ^{<5000>}1 Timothy 1:1 ^{<5127>}Colossians 1:27), whose hope is from the Lord, of which he is the author and giver; and is a good hope, through his grace; and which has the Lord Jesus Christ for its object; who turn in to him as prisoners of hope; and lay hold on him, the hope set before them; and do hope in him for pardoning mercy,

salvation, and eternal life. Blessed men! their hope shall not make them ashamed; they shall not be disappointed, (^{<486>}Psalm 146:5).

Ver. 8. *For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters*, etc.] Not as a “heath or shrub”, but as a “tree”, a green olive tree, a palm tree, a cedar in Lebanon, a fruitful flourishing tree; and he is one that really is a tree of righteousness, that is filled with the fruits of righteousness; and not like one of the trees of the wood, that grows wild, or as a wild olive tree, but as one “planted” in a garden, vineyard, or field; and is one that is planted in Christ, in the likeness of his death and resurrection, and in the house of the Lord; and that not only by means of the ingrafted word, and of Gospel ministers, who plant and water instrumentally; but by the Lord himself, as the efficient cause; and therefore called “the planting of the Lord”; and such plants as shall never be plucked up, (^{<231>}Isaiah 60:21 61:3) and not like the earth in the wilderness, or trees in dry and barren soils; but like such that are planted “by the waters”, which run about their roots, and make them fruitful; by which may be meant the love of God, and the streams of it; the fulness of grace in Christ, and the word and ordinances, the still waters of the sanctuary, (^{<492>}Psalm 23:2 46:4 ^{<2115>}Song of Solomon 4:15):

and that spreadeth out her roots by the river; and which is the cause of the spreading of them: such an one is rooted in Christ, and in the love of God, which is as a river; with which being watered, he casts out his roots as Lebanon, as the cedars there; and is both firm and fruitful; (see ^{<345>}Hosea 14:5):

and shall not see when heat cometh; shall perceive it, nor be affected with it, being planted so near a river: or “shall not fear”; which is the Cetib, or writing of the Hebrew text; and is followed by the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; though the Keri, or marginal reading, is, “shall not see”; which is followed by the Targum, and by us, and others. The man that trusts in the Lord, he is not afraid of the heat of persecution when it comes, nor is he hurt by it; he does not perceive it, but grows the more under it; when a hypocrite and formal professor is withered by it; (see ^{<406>}Matthew 13:6,20,21):

but her leaf shall be green; neither fail, nor lose its colour: a profession of faith is held without wavering; there being a radical moisture, the truth of grace, a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life, to supply and support it:

and shall not be careful in the year of drought; for lack of moisture, having a sufficiency. The man that trusts in the Lord is, or ought to be, and may he, careful for nothing, but cast all his care on the Lord, that careth for him: whether this year of drought is to be understood of famine, in a literal sense; of carelessness in which, or strength of faith, Habakkuk is a famous instance, (^{<3817>}Habakkuk 3:17-19) or of a famine of the word, in a spiritual sense, through the persecutions of men; yet even the believer is not solicitous, or in anxious distress; God provides food for him, and nourishes him, as he does his church, though forced to fly into the wilderness:

neither shall cease from yielding fruit; the fruits of grace and righteousness, the fruits of good works, and which are brought forth by the good man, the believer in Christ, even unto old age, (^{<9214>}Psalms 92:14,15) with the whole compare (^{<3003>}Psalms 1:3), to which there seems to be an allusion.

Ver. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things*, etc.] This is the source of the idolatry and creature confidence of the Jews, sins which were the cause of their ruin; and though what is here said is particularly applicable to their hearts, yet is in general true of the heart of every man; which is “deceitful”, and deceiving; and puts a cheat upon the man himself whose it is: it deceives him with respect to sin; it proposes it to him under the notion of pleasure; it promises him a great deal in it, but does not yield a real pleasure to him; it is all fancy and imagination; a mere illusion and a dream; and what it gives is very short lived; it is but for a season, and ends in bitterness and death: or it proposes it under the notion of profit; it promises him riches, by such and such sinful ways it suggests; but, when he has got them, he is the loser by them; these deceitful riches choke the word, cause him to err from the faith, pierce him through with many sorrows, and endanger the loss of his soul: it promises honour and preferment in the world, but promotes him to shame; it promises him liberty, but brings him into bondage; it promises him impunity, peace, and security, when sudden destruction comes: it deceives him in point of knowledge; it persuades him that he is a very knowing person, when he is blind and ignorant, and knows nothing as he ought to know; and only deceives himself; for there is no true knowledge but of God in Christ, and of a crucified Christ, and salvation by him; (see ^{<4181>}1 Corinthians 3:18 8:1,2 ^{<4003>}Galatians 6:3) it deceives in the business of religion; it makes a man believe that he is a very holy and righteous man, and in a fair way for heaven, when he is far from that, and the character it gives him; in order to this, it suggests to him that

concupiscence or lust, or the inward workings of the mind, are not sin; and it is only on this principle that it can be accounted for, that Saul, before conversion, or any other man, should be led into such a mistake, as to conclude that, touching the righteousness of the law, he was blameless: it represents other sins as mere peccadillos, as little sins, and not to be regarded; and even puts the name of virtue on vices; profuseness and prodigality it calls liberality, and doing public good; and covetousness has the name of frugality and good economy: it directs men to compare themselves and their outward conduct with others, that are very profane and dissolute; and from thence to form a good character of themselves, as better than others; and as it buoys up with the purity of human nature, so with the power of man's freewill to do that which is good, and particularly to repent at pleasure; and it puts the profane sinner upon trusting to the absolute mercy of God, and hides from him his justice and holiness; and it puts others upon depending upon the outward acts of religion, or upon speculative notions, to the neglect of real godliness; (see ^{<4022>}James 1:22,26). The man of a deceitful heart, the hypocrite, tries to deceive God himself, but he cannot; he oftentimes deceives men, and always himself; so do the profane sinner, the self-righteous man, and the false teacher; who attempts to deceive the very elect, but cannot; yea, a good man may be deceived by his own heart, of which Peter is a sad instance, (^{<4033>}Matthew 26:33,35,70,72,74). The heart is deceitful to a very great degree, it is superlatively so; "above all", above all creatures; the serpent and the fox are noted for their subtlety, and wicked men are compared to them for it; but these comparisons fall short of expressing the wicked subtlety and deceit in men's hearts; yea, it is more deceitful to a man than the devil, the great deceiver himself; because it is nearer to a man, and can come at him, and work upon him, when Satan cannot: or "about", or "concerning all things"^{<354>}; it is so in everything in which it is concerned, natural, civil, or religious, and especially the latter. The Septuagint version renders it "deep"; it is an abyss, a bottomless one; there is no fathoming of it; the depths of sin are in it; (see ^{<4016>}Psalms 64:6) and, seeing it is so deceitful, it should not be trusted in; a man should neither trust in his own heart, nor in another's, (^{<4035>}Proverbs 28:26 25:19), "and desperately wicked": everything in it is wicked; the thoughts of it are evil; the imaginations of the thoughts are so; even every imagination, and that only, and always, (^{<4015>}Genesis 6:5) the affections are inordinate; the mind and conscience are defiled; the understanding darkened, so dark as to call evil good, and good evil; and the will obstinate and perverse: all manner of sin and wickedness

is in it; it is the cage of every unclean bird, and the hold of every foul spirit; all sin is forged and framed in it; and all manner of evil comes out of it, (~~681~~ Revelation 18:1 ~~4059~~ Matthew 15:19) yea, it is wickedness itself, (~~918~~ Psalm 5:9), it is so even to desperation; it is “incurably wicked”,^{f355}, as it may be rendered; it is so without the grace of God, and blood of Christ:

who can know it? angels do not, Satan cannot; only the spirit of a man can know the things of a man within him; though the natural man does not know the plague of his own heart; the Pharisee and perfectionist do not, or they would not say they were without sin; such rant arises from the ignorance of their own hearts; only a spiritual man knows his own heart, the plague of it, the deceitfulness and wickedness in it; and he does not know it all; God only knows it fully, as is expressed in the next words, which are an answer to the question; (see ~~461~~ 1 Corinthians 2:11 ~~1088~~ Kings 8:38 ~~992~~ Psalm 19:12).

Ver. 10. *I the Lord search the heart*, etc.] The inward parts of it, every room and corner in it; and know the thoughts of it; all its intents, purposes, designs, contrivances, and imaginations; all the secret motions of it, and the wickedness that is in it; so that this is an answer to the question in the preceding verse; and therefore, though the heart is deceitful, it cannot deceive him, because he judges not according to outward appearance; he sees and knows the heart; and none but the Lord, or he who is Jehovah, can so search the heart as thus to know it; wherefore, since Christ is said to search the reins and the heart, and to know the thoughts of men, and to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, he must be Jehovah, and the true God, (~~6023~~ Revelation 2:23 ~~4094~~ Matthew 19:4 ~~8012~~ Hebrews 4:12,13):

I try the reins; the most inward and remote parts, covered with fat, and out of sight: these are the seat of the affections; and the Lord tries these, whether they are towards him or not; and whether sincere or hypocritical; Christ the omniscient God knew Peter’s love to him, and the sincerity of it; for which he appeals to him as such, (~~4217~~ John 21:17):

even to give every man accordions to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings; to do which it is necessary to search the heart, and try the reins, the fountain of all actions; and in which the principles of them are, and according to which they are denominated and judged of: in the future judgment every secret thing will be brought into account; the counsels of the heart will be made manifest; the book of conscience will be opened; and

out of it, as well as other books, men will be judged according to their ways and works; and therefore it is requisite that the Judge should be the Lord God omniscient, the searcher and trier of the hearts and reins, as Christ is.

Ver. 11. *As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not,* etc.]

Here seems to be another sin pointed at, as the cause of the ruin of the Jews; as idolatry and trust in the creature before mentioned; so riches unjustly got, and these boasted of and trusted in; the folly of which is illustrated by the simile of a bird sitting on eggs, and not hatching them; being either addled, or broke by the male through lust, or by the foot of man or beast, being laid on the ground; Or by a bird which “gathers”^{f356}, as some; or “hatches”, as others, eggs it has not laid; which being hatched, run away from it, and so not enjoyed by it. The Targum is,

“as the partridge, or “koraah”, which gathers eggs that are not its own, and nourishes young ones which will not follow it, so, etc.”

whether the partridge is meant by “kore”, the word here used, is uncertain. Bochart^{f357} thinks the “woodcock”, or “snite” or “snipe”, is intended. Jarchi interprets it, by the “cuckoo”, which is not likely; since that does not take away another’s eggs, and sit on them; but lays its own eggs in another’s nest, and leaves them to be hatched by it; but it must be understood rather of such an one that gets the eggs of another, and hatches them, but cannot keep the young when hatched; and this is said of the partridge, that when its own eggs are broke, it will get others, and sit upon them, and hatch them; but being hatched, knowing her not to be their dam, and hearing the voice of that which is, run from her to it^{f358}:

so he that getteth riches, and not by right; but by fraud, rapine, and oppression; such are they that will be rich, that are resolved upon it at any rate, right or wrong; and such persons may succeed, and become rich by illicit methods; but then, as such riches may be truly called “mammon of unrighteousness”; so they will not profit in a time to come, in a day of wrath; neither are they of long continuance now: for such a man

shall leave them in the midst of his days; which, according to the common term of life, and course of nature, he might hope to arrive to; he shall die, and not enjoy what he has got together; while he is promising himself much and long happiness, his soul is required of him; and whose his substance shall be, he knows not; the riches he has heaped up together, he knows not

who shall gather; nor to whom he leaves them, whether a wise man or a fool: however, this is certain as to himself,

and at his end shall be a fool; he shall appear to be one for getting riches in an unlawful way; for trusting in uncertain riches; for promising himself a great deal of pleasure and felicity in them for a long time, which he could not secure; and for neglecting the true riches of grace and glory; (see ~~2129~~ Luke 12:19-21). The Targum is,

“at his end he is called a wicked man;”

because of the unjust manner in which he has got his riches, and which appears by his end; every wicked man is a fool. The word here used is “Nabal”; and as is his name, so is he.

Ver. 12. *A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.*] The temple, which was a sanctified place, where the holy God dwelt, his holy worship was observed, and his holy people met together. Here, from the beginning of its erection, from the time of its dedication, the Lord took up his residence; the glory of the Lord filled the house; he set up his throne in it, a high and glorious one; he dwelt between the cherubim, over the mercy seat, typical of the throne of grace. Kimchi and Ben Melech observe that R. Samuel Ben Tibbon is of opinion that the “caph” of similitude is here wanting; and that it should be interpreted thus, “as a glorious high throne”, etc.: heaven is the high and glorious throne, where the Lord sits and reigns; and the temple or sanctuary bore some likeness and resemblance to it; it was a figure of it; and every place where God is worshipped, and grants his presence, is no other but “the house of God, and the gate of heaven”; and therefore it was great wickedness and ingratitude in the Jews, who were so highly favoured of God, to forsake him, his house, his worship, his word and ordinances, as the following verses show; and which suggest another reason of their destruction. The words in connection with the following verse may be read thus,

“and thou, whose glorious high throne the place of our sanctuary [is], O Lord, the Hope of Israel, etc.”

Ver. 13. *O Lord, the Hope of Israel,* etc.] Of all true Israelites; such as are regenerate persons, and true believers in him; Christ is the author and giver of that hope that is in them; the door of it unto them; the object on which it is exercised; the ground and foundation of it, or what gives encouragement to it; and the person they are hoping for; Old Testament saints hoped,

waited for, and expected his first coming; and New Testament saints are hoping for his second coming, and to be for ever with him^{f359}:

all that forsake thee shall be ashamed; who forsake him as the Hope of Israel, and place their hope elsewhere; in the creature, in themselves, in their riches, in their righteousness, and profession of religion; such shall be ashamed of their vain hope; whereas a true hope, a hope upon the right object, on Christ the Hope of Israel, makes not ashamed; nor shall the man that has it be ashamed of that. The Targum paraphrases it,

“all who forsake thy worship shall be ashamed;”

for they forsake their own mercies, who forsake the house and ordinances of God, and the assembling of themselves together:

and they that depart from me; the prophet; refusing to hear the word of the Lord by him, which was all one as departing from the Lord. Some render it, “from thee”, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions; and so the Targum,

“and the ungodly that transgress thy word;”

whose heart departed from the Lord, as in ^{ארו}*Jeremiah 17:1* notwithstanding their show of devotion and religion. Some render the words, “that are chastised by me”; but repent not, and are not reformed thereby; reading not *yrwsw*, as the Masorites direct, and we, and many others, follow; but according to the letters, and retaining them, *yrwsy*^{f360}:

shall be written in the earth; have a name among earthly and carnal men, and be called so, being sensual and carnal, and minding nothing but earth and earthly things; and shall not be written among the living in Jerusalem, or have a name and a place among spiritual men: or they shall be of a short continuance; their memory shall rot; their names be put out for ever; and their memorial perish with them; for things written in the dust do not continue, but are presently destroyed by a puff of wind, or by the treading of the foot upon them; or they shall die, and return to the earth, and be laid in the grave, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; or shall perish eternally, die the second death, being not written in the Lamb’s book of life. The Targum is,

“into hell shall they fall.”

The phrase is opposed to a being written, or having names written in heaven, (^{<2101>}Luke 10:20 ^{<8122>}Hebrews 12:22); which is the same as to be written in the book of life, or to be ordained unto eternal life, (^{<3013>}Philippians 4:3 ^{<4138>}Acts 13:48); and what is the case of such who are not written in heaven, but in earth, may be seen in (^{<6015>}Revelation 20:15 21:27);

because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters; (see Gill on "^{<2403>}Jeremiah 2:13").

Ver. 14. *Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed,* etc.] These are the words of the prophet, sensible of his own sins and backslidings, and of the part which he himself had in these corrupt and declining times; and being conscious of his own impotency to cure himself; and being fully satisfied of the power of the Lord to heal him; and being well assured, if he was healed by him, he should be thoroughly and effectually healed; therefore he applies unto him. Sins are diseases; healing them is the forgiveness of them; God only can grant this: or this may have respect to the consolation of him, whose soul was distressed, grieved, and wounded, with the consideration of the sins of his people, and the calamities coming upon them on that account:

save me, and I shall be saved; with a temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; save me from the corruptions of the times, from the designs of my enemies; preserve me to thy kingdom and glory; there are none saved but whom the Lord saves, and those that are saved by him are saved to a purpose; they can never perish:

for thou [art] my praise; the cause of it, by reason of mercies bestowed; the object of it, whom he did and would praise evermore, because of his favours, particularly the blessings of healing and salvation by him; (see ^{<9A01>}Psalms 103:1-4).

Ver. 15. *Behold, they say unto me,* etc.] Or, "they are saying unto me"^{f361}, continually; these were their daily flouts and jeers:

Where [is] the word of the Lord? that thou hast so often talked of? thou hast for a long time threatened us with a siege, and famine, pestilence, and the sword, and captivity, but none of these come to pass; where is the accomplishment of them? thou hast pretended to have the word of the Lord for all this; but where is it, or the fulfilment of it? so the Targum,

“where is that which thou hast prophesied in the name of the Lord?”

the judgments, as punishments for sin, he prophesied of. This has been always usual in all ages, that when God’s judgments threatened have not been immediately executed, scoffers and mockers have rose up, suggesting they would never come; (see ^{<3027>}Malachi 2:17 ^{<608B>}2 Peter 3:3,4);

let it come now; immediately, or we shall not believe it ever will; a very impudent, daring, and wicked expression: this is like that in (^{<2359>}Isaiah 5:19). The Targum is,

“let it now be confirmed;”

or fulfilled; declaring as their impiety, so their infidelity; not believing it ever would be fulfilled.

Ver. 16. *As for me, I have not hastened from [being] a pastor to follow thee*, etc.] Though he had met with so much ill usage, and was hated by the people for bringing such messages to them, and was jeered and scoffed at because his prophecies were not accomplished; yet he had not been hasty, and solicitous, and importunate with the Lord to dismiss him from his service; but was willing to continue in his office as a pastor or prophet, and to follow the Lord fully, and faithfully perform the work he had called him to, whatever difficulties and discouragements attended him, or reproaches were cast upon him. Some render the words, “I hastened not”, or “I have not urged”, or “pressed to be a pastor after thee”^{f362}; to which the sense of Kimchi agrees,

“I did not press myself, or was anxious about the matter, that I should be a shepherd after thee, or a prophet;”

he did not run before he was sent; he did not thrust himself into this office; he was not forward, but backward to it, as appears from (^{<2406>}Jeremiah 1:6); a pastor of the Lord is an under shepherd; one that has his mission and commission from the Lord; who obeys him in all things; follows his directions; goes where and with what he sends him; and such an one was Jeremiah; though it was not what he sought after, and was pressing for; and this he says to take off the edge of the people’s resentment against him; to which agree the following words:

neither have I desired the woeful day, thou knowest; he foresaw that reproaches and calumnies would be cast upon him, and that bonds and afflictions would abide him wherever he went with his messages and prophecies; he knew it would be a woeful and miserable day to him, whenever he was sent as a prophet to this people; and that he should meet with nothing but sorrow, and trouble, and vexation of spirit; and therefore it could not be desirable to him, as a man, to be in such an office, or to be sent on such an errand; to be a messenger of such terrible things, and to denounce such woeful judgments; and much less did he desire the execution of them, even though he had prophesied of them; having not so much regard to his own honour and credit, as an affection to the people, and a compassionate concern for their welfare; and for all this he could appeal to the heart searching and rein trying God. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Arabic versions, render it, “man’s day”; (see ^{<401B>}1 Corinthians 4:3); but the Targum paraphrases it agreeably to the sense given,

“and the evil day which thou shall bring upon them, I have not desired:”

that which came out of my lips was [right] before thee; as he could appeal to the omniscient God for the truth of the above, so for this, that he delivered nothing by way of prophecy but what he had from the Lord; and that he delivered out truly and faithfully whatever he had from him; and it was all done openly and publicly, and in his sight, with all sincerity and truth; (see ^{<4017>}2 Corinthians 2:17).

Ver. 17. *Be not a terror unto me*, etc.] By deserting him, and leaving him in the hands of his enemies; or by denying him supports under their reproaches and persecution; or by withdrawing his gracious presence from him, than which nothing is more terrible to a good man; or by withholding the comfortable influences of his Spirit; or by suffering terrors to be injected into him from any quarter; and more is meant than is expressed; namely, that God would be a comforter of him, and bear him up under all his troubles:

thou [art] my hope in the day of evil: the author and object of his hope; the ground and foundation of it, from whom he hoped for deliverance, when it was a time of distress with him, from outward as well as from inward enemies; he was his hope in a time of outward calamity, and in the hour of death and day of judgment.

Ver. 18. *Let them be confounded that persecute me*, etc.] With words with reproaches, with scoffs and jeers, saying, “where is the word of the Lord?” (^{<4174>}Jeremiah 17:14); let such be ashamed that scoffingly put such a question, by seeing the accomplishment of it:

but let not me be confounded; who have delivered it out as the word of the Lord, that should be surely fulfilled; let not me be brought to shame by the failure of it and be reckoned as a false prophet:

let them be dismayed; terrified and affrighted when they shall see the judgments of God coming upon them, which they have jeeringly called for:

but let not me be dismayed; by their not coming, or when they shall come; but preserve and protect me:

bring upon them the day of evil; of punishment; which they put far away, and scoff at; though the prophet did not desire the woeful day to come upon the people in general, yet upon his persecutors in particular. Jarchi interprets it of the men of Anathoth alone; and which desire of his did not arise from malice towards them, but from indignation at their sin and for the glory of the divine Being, whose name was blasphemed by them:

and destroy them with double destruction; not with two sorts of judgments, sword and famine, as Jerom; but with an utter destruction, with breach after breach, destruction after destruction, until they were entirely destroyed; unless it should have regard to the two times of destruction, first by the Chaldeans, and then by the Romans.

Ver. 19. *Thus said the Lord unto me*, etc.] Here begins a new sermon or discourse, concerning the sanctification of the sabbath, and a very proper place to begin a new chapter:

Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people; where there were great numbers of people passing and repassing; and whither the people resorted upon one account or another; or where they dwelt. Some particular gate of the city of Jerusalem seems to be meant; and not the gate of the temple, as Abarbanel. Some think the sheep gate, and others the water gate, (^{<4181>}Nehemiah 3:1,26); perhaps rather the latter, since the Nethinims dwelt near it, who were the Gibeonites, so called, because given to the congregation of Israel, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water to it; and these were “the children of the people”, of the nations of the world, the old Canaanites, as well as they were the servants of the people

of Israel: but what particular gate is intended is not certain; it is very likely it was one that was near the court, by what follows:

whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by which they go out; when they went out to war and returned; or went to their country houses and came back; or on any business and occasion whatever. This shows a reason why the prophet was to go and stand in this gate first; because his message was to be first delivered to these great personages, who had a personal concern herein, and who could influence others by their authority and example:

and in all the gates of Jerusalem; after he had been in the former, and delivered his message; for it concerned all the inhabitants of the city, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, young and old; and therefore he was to go to every gate, and stand and proclaim there, as being the most public places of resort and concourse, and where people were continually going and coming.

Ver. 20. *And say unto them, hear ye the word of the Lord*, etc.]

Concerning the sanctification of the sabbath; for this was not of human, but of divine institution:

ye kings of Judah; which must be understood either, as Kimchi thinks, of the then present king and his sons, so called because they would reign after him; for, there was but one king at a time; and who, perhaps, at this time, was Josiah: or else the king and his nobles, the princes of the land, are meant:

and all Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates; the people in the several parts of the land of Judea, that came to Jerusalem either for trade and merchandise, or for worship, and all that dwelt in the metropolis; for the business the prophet had to charge them with concerned them all.

Ver. 21. *Thus saith the Lord, take heed to yourselves*, etc.] That ye sin not against the Lord, by breaking the sabbath, and so bring wrath and ruin upon yourselves: or “to your souls”^{f363}; to the inward frame of them, that they be in disposition for the work of that day; and that they be wholly engaged therein, even all the powers and faculties of them; and that they be not taken up in thoughts and cares about other things:

and bear no burden on the sabbath day; as no worldly thoughts and cares should, cumber the mind, and lie heavy thereon, to the interruption of

spiritual exercises of religion; so neither should any weight or burden be borne by the body, or carried from place to place; as not by themselves, so neither by their servants, nor by their cattle, nor in carts and wagons, nor by any instrument whatever; in short, all servile work was forbidden:

nor bring [it] in by the gates of Jerusalem; to be unloaded and sold there, as wine, grapes, figs, and fish, were, in the times of Nehemiah, (^{<16315>}Nehemiah 13:15,16,19).

Ver. 22. *Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day*, etc.] Not of dirt and soil only, as some restrain the sense; but of any ware or merchandise, in order to be sold in the city or elsewhere:

neither do ye any work; any servile work, any kind of manufacture, either within doors or without; or exercise any kind of trade, or barter and merchandise, or do any sort of worldly business; nothing but what was of mere necessity, for the preservation of life; (see ^{<12110>}Exodus 20:10);

but hallow ye the sabbath day; or, “sanctify it”^{f364}; by separating it from all worldly business, and devoting it to the worship of God in public and private, spending it wholly in acts of religion and piety:

as I commanded your fathers; not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but those that came out of Egypt, to whom, and to their posterity after them, this commandment was enjoined, (^{<12118>}Exodus 20:8-10 31:13-17); so that this was not a novel injunction, but what was commanded from the beginning of their civil and church state; from the time of their coming out of Egypt, and becoming a separate people and nation, under a theocracy, or the government of God himself; being chosen and set apart to be a special, peculiar, and holy people to himself, of which the sanctification of the sabbath was a sign; and was to be observed unto the Messiah’s coming, the sum and substance of it, (^{<51216>}Colossians 2:16,17).

Ver. 23. *But they obeyed not*, etc.] Or, “heard not”^{f365}; so as to observe and do; that is, their fathers did not; this command was very early disobeyed, and more or less in all intervening times:

neither inclined their ear; or listened attentively to what was said to them; but if they heard at all, it was in a very indifferent and careless manner, as if they cared not whether they heard or not; whereas persons intent on hearing bow the head, and turn the ear; and if they have one better than

another, will turn that, in order to take in what they are attentive to; but so did not the Jewish fathers:

but made their neck stiff; or “hard”^{f366}; and would not bend it, to take upon them the yoke of the commandments: a metaphor taken from untamed oxen, that will not submit the neck to the yoke, but draw back from it. The Septuagint and Arabic versions understand all this, not of the Jewish fathers of old, but of their children, even of the then present generation, rendering the words, “but hardened their neck more than their fathers”; they were more stiffnecked, refractory, and disobedient than they were; this was always the character of this people; as were the fathers, so were the children, if not worse; (see ^{<4075>}Acts 7:51);

that they might not hear nor receive instruction; about the command of the sabbath, or any other: or “correction”, or “discipline”^{f367}; the yoke of which they were as unwilling to bear as the yoke of the commandments, (^{<2318>}Jeremiah 31:18).

Ver. 24. *And it shall come to pass*, etc.] Or, “yet it shall come to pass”^{f368}; so it shall be, notwithstanding all former disobedience and rebellion:

if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord; or, “in hearing hear”^{f369}; hearken attentively, and readily obey the command given, before mentioned, so as

to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day; to be bought or sold, or to be wrought on or with; and so likewise to carry nothing out of their houses or city, which, though not expressed, is understood as before; and this respects not only the city of Jerusalem, but all other cities and towns in Judea; for the word of the Lord, concerning this matter, was sent to all Judah, the whole land of Judea, (^{<2473>}Jeremiah 17:20);

but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; one part of the sanctification of the sabbath lay in a cessation from all servile work, though not wholly, but also in the observance of religious worship, and the one was in order to the other; for, unless they abstained from worldly business, they could not be at leisure to attend divine service.

Ver. 25. *Then shall there enter into the gates of this city*, etc.] In a very public and splendid manner:

kings and princes, sitting upon the throne of David; that is, kings, with the princes of the blood, or with their nobles, who shall be of the house and line of David; and in a continual succession shall sit upon his throne, and possess the kingdom of the house of Judah, and rule over them in great glory, peace, and prosperity:

riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; some riding in chariots, and some on horses; the king, with some of the princes of the blood, in one chariot; his nobles in others, or on horseback; with great numbers of the citizens of Jerusalem, and people from all parts, flocking to see them, and join in the procession, and so make it more grand and august:

and this city shall remain for ever; or, “be inhabited for ever”^{f370}; a long time, and not be destroyed, as has been threatened, or its inhabitants carried captive.

Ver. 26. *And they shall come from the cities of Judah*, etc.] That is, men shall come from all parts of the land of Judea to the city of Jerusalem, and to the temple; especially at the times of their solemn feasts, three times a year, as the law directed:

and from the places about Jerusalem; and from all the towns and villages adjacent to it, such as Bethany and Bethphage, and many others:

and from the land of Benjamin; which tribe continued with the tribe of Judah when the rest revolted, and was now with it, and still would continue with it, and join with it in religious worship, were they careful to observe what the Lord commanded them:

and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south; these respect the several parts of the land of Judah, which, the Jews^{f371} say, was divided into three parts, the mountain, plain or champaign country, and the valley: the “plain” was that part where Lydda and other cities were; the “mountain” is the same with the hill country of Judea, (~~4013~~ Luke 1:39,65); and the “south” the southern part of the land, that which is called the wilderness of Judea, of which (see ~~4050~~ Joshua 15:20-63). The above Jewish writers say^{f372}, that from Bethhoron to Emmaus was the mountain or hill country; from Emmaus to Lydda the plain; and from Lydda to the sea the valley; now, from all these places should persons come to the temple:

bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, and meat offerings and incense; sacrifices and offerings of all sorts, according to the law; hereby signifying, that if the sabbath was observed, as it would go well with the kings and princes of Judah, they would keep a splendid court, and have a numerous retinue, so it would be well with the priests that served at the altar; sacrifices would be brought to them; of which they would have their part, as well as God have glory by an obedience to his laws; and, besides these, other sacrifices would also be brought, as follows:

and bringing sacrifices of praise unto the house of the Lord; thank offerings for mercies received and deliverances wrought, as well as sacrifices for sins committed; and this was one sort of the peace offerings, (^(R71)Leviticus 7:11-15).

Ver. 27. *But if ye will not hearken unto me,* etc.] With respect to this particular point, more especially:

to hallow the sabbath day; to keep it holy to the Lord in a religious way, in the exercise of the duties of religion, both public and private:

and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; or, “and go through”; or, so as “to go through”^{f373} &c; and may intend either one and the same thing, namely entering in at the gates with a burden upon the shoulders; or two things, bearing a burden, and carrying it any where in or out of the city; and an unnecessary passing and repassing through the gates of the city, whether a man has or has not a burden upon him, since the sabbath might be violated either way:

then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof; where the prophet was to publish all this, and where the people sinned by passing and repassing, and carrying burdens in and out on the sabbath day:

and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem; the king’s palace, and the palaces of the princes and nobles, as well as the cottages of the poorer sort:

and it shall not be quenched; until it has utterly destroyed the city: this was fulfilled by the Chaldeans, (⁽²⁶²³⁾Jeremiah 52:13). The Jews say there is no fire kindled but where the sabbath is profaned; and that Jerusalem was destroyed because they profaned the sabbath^{f374}.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 18

This chapter expresses the sovereign power of God over his creatures, and his usual methods of dealing with them; it threatens destruction to the Jews for their idolatry; and is closed with the prophet's complaint of his persecutors, and with imprecations upon them. The sovereign power of God is expressed under the simile of a potter working in his shop, and making and marring vessels at pleasure, (^{<2480>}Jeremiah 18:1-4); the application of which to God, and the house of Israel, is in (^{<2485>}Jeremiah 18:5,6); and is illustrated by his usual dealings with kingdoms and nations; for though he is a sovereign Being, yet he acts both in a kind and equitable way; and as the potter changes his work, so he changes the dispensations of his providence, of which two instances are given; the one is, that having threatened ruin to a nation, upon their repentance and good behaviour he revokes the threatening, (^{<2487>}Jeremiah 18:7,8); and the other is, that having made a declaration of good to a people, upon their sin and disobedience he recalls it, and punishes them for their wickedness, (^{<2489>}Jeremiah 18:9,10); then follows a prophecy of the destruction of the Jews in particular, in which they are exhorted to repentance to prevent it; their obstinacy is observed; their folly in departing from God, and worshipping idols, is exposed; and they are threatened with utter ruin, (^{<2491>}Jeremiah 18:11-17); the conspiracy and evil designs of the Jews against the prophet, their malice and ingratitude, are complained of by him, (^{<2493>}Jeremiah 18:18-20); his imprecations upon them, and prayers for their destruction, are delivered out in (^{<2495>}Jeremiah 18:21-23).

Ver. 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying.*] The word of prophecy, as the Targum: this is a distinct prophecy from the former, though it may be connected with it; it referring to the destruction threatened in the latter part of the preceding chapter.

Ver. 2. *Arise, and go down to the potter's house,* etc.] Which, no doubt, was well known to the prophet; but where it was is not certain. Some think Jeremiah was in the temple, and this house was beneath it, and therefore he is bid to go down to it; but of this there is no certainty, nor even

probability: it is most likely that this house was without the city, perhaps near the potter's field, (^{f370}Matthew 27:10); and which lying low, he is ordered to go down to it:

and there I will cause thee to hear my words; there the Lord would tell him what he had further to say to him, and what he should say to the people; and where by lively representations, by sensible objects before him, he would cause him to understand more clearly what he said and designed to do: as God sometimes represented things to the minds of the prophets in dreams and visions, setting before them mental objects, and raising in their minds ideas of things; so sometimes he represented things to them by real visible objects, and, by similes taken from thence, conveyed unto them a clear and distinct knowledge of his mind and will, and they to the people; which was the case here.

Ver. 3. *Then I went down to the potter's house*, etc.] He did as the Lord commanded him; he was obedient to the divine will; he went to hear what the Lord had to say to him there, and to observe such things, from whence he might learn instruction for himself and others:

and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels; the Targum renders it "upon a seat"; or "his seats", as Junius and Tremellius; but it signifies not the instrument on which the potter sat while he worked, but that on which he did his work. The Septuagint version renders it, "on stones"^{f375}; and R. Jonah^{f376} says, that in some countries the potter's instrument is in the likeness of two millstones, the lowermost is the greatest, and the uppermost is the least. Or rather the word may signify "frames", or "moulds"^{f377}, made of stone, in which the potter put his clay, and fashioned it: though I see no reason to depart from the signification of "wheels", which are used in the potter's work, even two of them; and so the word here is of the dual number; though one is more properly called the "wheel", and the other the "lathe", and are described as follows:

"The "potter's wheel" consists principally in its nut, which is a beam or axis, whose foot or pivot plays perpendicularly on a free stone sole, or bottom; from the four corners atop of this beam, which does not exceed two feet in height, arise four iron bars, called the spokes of the wheel; which forming diagonal lines with the beam, descend, and are fastened at bottom to the edges of a strong wooden circle, four feet in diameter, perfectly like the felloes of a coach wheel; except that it hath neither axis nor radii; and is

only joined to the beam, which serves it as an axis, by the iron bars. The top of the nut is flat, of a circular figure, and a foot in diameter. On this is laid a piece of the clay, or earth, to be turned and fashioned. The wheel thus disposed is encompassed with four sides of four different pieces of wood, sustained in a wooden frame: the hind piece, which is that whereon the workman sits, is made a little inclining towards the wheel: on the fore piece are placed the pieces of prepared earth: lastly, the side pieces serve the workman to rest his feet against; and are made inclining, to give him more or less room, according to the size of the vessels to be turned; by his side is a trough of water, wherewith from time to time he wets his hands, to prevent the earth sticking to them.----The potter having prepared his clay or earth, and laid a piece of it suitable to the work he intends on the top of the beam, sits down; his thighs and legs much expanded, and his feet rested on the side pieces, as is most convenient. In this situation he turns the wheel round, till it has got the proper velocity; when, wetting his hands in the water, he bores the cavity of the vessel, continuing to widen it from the middle; and thus turns it into form, turning the wheel afresh, and wetting his hands from time to time.----The potter's "lathe" is also a kind of "wheel", but simpler and slighter than the former; its three chief members are an iron beam or axis, three feet and a half high, and two inches in diameter; a little wooden wheel, all of a piece, an inch thick, and seven or eight in diameter, placed horizontally atop of the beam, and serving to form the vessel on; and another larger wooden wheel, all of a piece, three inches thick, and two or three feet broad, fastened to the same beam at the bottom, parallel to the horizon. The beam, or axis, turns by a pivot at bottom, in an iron stand. The workman gives the motion to the lathe with his feet, by pushing the great wheel alternately with each foot; still giving it a lesser or greater degree of motion, as his work requires^{f378}."

Thus Jeremiah saw the potter work, or somewhat like this; for, no doubt, pottery, as other things, has been improved since his time.

Ver. 4. *And the vessel that he made of clay*, etc.] Which is the matter the vessel is made of:

was marred in the hand of the potter; while he was working it; either it fell, as the Septuagint version renders it, out of his hands, or from the beam on

which it was laid; or was spoiled by some means or other, so that it was not fit for the purpose he first intended it: or the words should be read, according to some copies, “and the vessel was marred which he made, as clay in the hand of the potter”^{f379}; while it was clay; or moist, as Jarchi interprets it; and while it was in his hands, forming and fashioning it:

so he made it again another vessel; put it into another form and shape it would better serve:

as seemed good to the potter to make [it]; just as he pleased, and as his judgment in his art directed him; he having power over the clay to mould it as he would, and as it best answered so to do.

Ver. 5. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] While he was in the potter’s house, and after he had observed his manner of working, and the change he had made in his work, the Lord spoke to him, and applied it in the following manner.

Ver. 6. *O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord*, etc.] Make, and mar, and remake at pleasure? certainly he could. God is a sovereign Being, and has a sovereign and uncontrollable power over his creatures; he has an indisputable right unto them, and can dispose of them as he pleases; he has as good a right to them, and as great power over them, as the potter has to and over his clay, and a better and greater; since they are made by him, and have their all from him, their being, life, and motion; whereas the clay is not made by the potter; it is only the vessel that is made of the clay by him, which has its form from him; if therefore the potter has such power over the clay, which he did not make, as to cast it into another form as it pleases him, and especially when marred; the Lord has an undoubted power over men, and a just right to change their, state and circumstances as he pleases; nor have they any reason to complain of him, especially when they have marred themselves by their own sins and transgressions; which was the present case of the house of Israel, or the Jews; (see ^{<29>}Isaiah 29:16 45:9 ^{<30>}Romans 9:20,21);

behold, as the clay [is] in the potter’s hand; and he can form and fashion it as he pleases, and it is not in the power of the clay to resist and hinder him:

so [are] ye in mine hand, O house of Israel; and I can dispose of you as I please, and put you in what circumstances it seems good unto me, drive you from your land, and scatter you among the nations; nor can you hinder me from doing this, or whatever else is my pleasure. And this his sovereign

power and pleasure, and as exercised in a way of mercy and equity, are exemplified in the following cases.

Ver. 7. [*At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom*, etc.] By way of threatening: or, “the moment I shall speak”^{v380}, &c; as soon as ever I have declared concerning any people whatever, Jews or Gentiles; that if they go on in their sins, and remain impenitent, and do not turn from them, that they must expect I will quickly come out against such a nation and kingdom in a providential way, as threatened:

to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy [it]; as the proprietor of a garden, when it do not turn to his account, plucks up the plants, and pulls down the fences, and lets it go to ruin.

Ver. 8. [*If that nation against whom I have pronounced*, etc.] Such a sentence as this, should immediately, upon the above declaration, do as Nineveh did:

turn from their evil; their evil of sin, their evil ways and works, as an evidence of the truth of their repentance for former sins:

I will repent of the evil that one thought to do unto them; as they change their course of life, God will change the dispensations of his providence towards them, and not bring upon them the evil of punishment he threatened them with; in which sense repentance can only be understood of God, he doing that which is similar to what men do when they repent of anything; they stop their proceedings, and change their outward conduct; so God proceeds not to do what he threatened to do, and changes his outward behaviour to men; he wills a change, and makes one in his methods of acting, but never changes his will.

Ver. 9. [*And [at what] instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom*, etc.] By way of promise on the other hand: or, “and the moment I shall speak”, etc. as in (~~SHU7~~ Jeremiah 18:7); in favour to a people; signifying, that if they do that which is right and good, and continue therein, it may be expected that I will appear for and among such a nation and kingdom:

to build and to plant [it]; to build up its fences that have been broken down, and to plant it with pleasant plants, and make it prosperous and flourishing, and protect and defend it, and keep it safe, and in a secure

condition; so that it shall be in very thriving circumstances, and be out of the power of its enemies to hurt it.

Ver. 10. *If it do evil in my sight*, etc.] What is sinful, contrary to the law and will of God, openly and publicly, in a bold and daring manner:

that it obey not my voice: in my word, and by my prophets, but turn a deaf ear to them, and slight and despise all instructions, admonitions, and reproofs:

then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them; or, “do them good”^{f381}; that is, withhold it from them, and not bestow it on them; but, on the contrary, correct or punish them according to their deserts. Thus, though God is a sovereign God, yet, in the dispensations of his providence towards kingdoms and nations, he deals with them in such a merciful and equitable manner, that there is no just reason to complain of him; and yet he maintains and keeps up his power and authority, such as the potter exercises over the clay.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore go to*, etc.] This is the application of the above general rules of procedure to the people of the Jews, and particularly that which relates to the destruction of a nation or kingdom, and the declaration of it in order to reclaim them:

speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, thus saith the Lord; or, “to the man of Judah”^{f382}; the body of the Jewish nation, and especially the inhabitants of the metropolis of it; which was the source of sin to the whole kingdom, and on which the calamity threatened would chiefly come, if not prevented by a reformation:

behold, I frame evil against you; as the potter frames his clay upon the wheel, to which the allusion is; which is to be understood of the evil of punishment, but not of any secret purpose, and settled determination, in the mind of God to bring it upon them; for that is never disannulled by himself or others, or ever changed; but some operation in Providence, which began to work towards their destruction; some providential step which God had taken, and which threatened their ruin:

and devise a device against you; the same as before; by which it looked as if he had thought of the matter, and had contrived a scheme, which if he went on with, would issue in the subversion of their whole state:

return you everyone from his evil way; that so the reformation may be as general as the corruption was: it supposes a sense of the evil of their former conduct, and repentance for their sins, of which their forsaking and abstaining from them would be an evidence:

and make your ways and your doings good; for it is not sufficient barely to abstain from sin, which is only a negative holiness; but there must be a performance of good works, a walking in them, a constant series and course of obedience to God, according to the rule of his word.

Ver. 12. *And they said, there is no hope*, etc.] Or, “but they said”^{f383}; not that there was no hope of the grace and mercy of God, upon their repentance and reformation, for that is before declared; but that they were so hardened in their sins, so fixed in their wicked courses, and so determined to go on in them, that there was no room for the prophet to hope of ever reclaiming them; signifying, that it was to little purpose to talk to them, or exhort them; his labour would be in vain; for they were at a point, and resolved to continue in their evil practices, let the consequences be what they would. Jarchi’s note is,

“but I know that they will say to thee concerning thy words, that we do not care for them;”

no, not a rush; you may as well hold your peace and say nothing; we are in no pain about future judgments, these give us no uneasiness. The Targum is,

“we are turned from thy worship;”

and we are resolved to continue as we are, and not to return to say what you will:

but we will walk after our own devices; God may take his way, and we will take ours; he has devised evil against us, you say, and he may bring it if he pleases; we have devised sin, and we shall go on in it:

and we will do everyone the imagination of his evil heart; whatsoever our hearts suggest to us as pleasant and agreeable, that we shall do, let the issue be what it will: it is not to be thought that these people expressed themselves in so many words; but this was the language of their hearts, and of their actions, known unto the Lord, and are put into this form by him, or by the prophet, expressing the real sentiments of their minds.

Ver. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*, etc.] This being the case of the people of the Jews, and they so resolutely bent on their own ways:

ask ye among the Heathen; inquire among the nations of the world, the Gentiles that know not the true God, and have not the external revelation of his will, only the dim light of nature to guide them; and see if anything like this is to be found among them, as with this people, favoured with the law of God, his word and ordinances to direct them, and his prophets to teach and instruct them; suggesting that they were worse than the Heathens, and that it would be more tolerable for them, one day, than for these people:

who hath heard such things? as expressed in the preceding verses; such desperate words, such bold and daring expressions, such impious resolutions; for generally, when persons are reprov'd and threatened for sin, they promise amendment; or what is after related concerning their idolatries; intimating that nothing like it was ever heard of among the Gentiles; (see ²⁴²⁰Jeremiah 2:10,11);

the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing; the congregation of Israel, as the Targum; the people of the Jews, ironically so called; because they had been espoused to the Lord as a chaste virgin, and ought to have remained so, pure and incorrupt in the worship of him; but had committed spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry; even very gross acts of it; horrible to hear and think of; enough to make a man's hair stand an end to be told of; or what was very filthy and abominable, and to be loathed and detested, which is explained, (²⁴⁸⁵Jeremiah 18:15); unless it can be thought to refer to what goes before, concerning their dreadful resolution to continue in their evil ways.

Ver. 14. *Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon, [which cometh] from the rock of the field?* etc.] Lebanon was a mountain on the borders of Judea, the top of which was covered in the summertime with snow, from the whiteness of which it had its name, Lebanon; as the Alps, for the same reason, which lie between France and Italy: now, the snow being dissolved by the heat, ran in flowing streams down the rocks into the field and plain, where they might be easily come at, and drank of; and would a thirsty traveller, on a summer's day, pass by such streams as these, and not drink of them? certainly he would not leave them, but stop and drink; he must be an unwise man that should do otherwise; and yet this was what the people of the Jews did; they forsook the Lord, "the fountain of living waters"; and

who, because of the plenty of good things in him, and flowing from him to them, were as streams from Lebanon; and yet they left these crystal streams for the black and muddy waters of Sihor, or idols of Egypt, (²⁰¹⁵Song of Solomon 4:15 ²¹²³Jeremiah 2:13,18); or the words may be rendered, “will a man leave [what comes] from the rock of the field [for] the snow of Lebanon”^{f384}? that is, will a man neglect to drink of the water that comes out of a rock in his field, pure and clear, and is near at hand, and choose to go to Mount Lebanon to drink of the snow water, which runs down the mountain, and can never be thought so clear as what comes out of the rock? surely he will not; he must act an unwise part if he does; and such a part, and worse, did the people of the Jews act, in forsaking God:

[or] shall the cold flowing waters which come from another place be forsaken? or, “strange waters”^{f385}; which come from far, from some distant rock, being conveyed in pipes, in; which they come cool, and in flowing streams, for the service of a city and its inhabitants; and who, having such a privilege, would neglect them, and drink of standing water in a pond or puddle? or, the words, as the former, may be rendered, “shall for strange frozen waters, be left flowing ones?” see Grotius.

Ver. 15. *Because my people hath forgotten me*, etc.] Or, “that they have forgotten me”^{f386}; this is the horrible thing they have done, which was unheard of among the Gentiles, who were always tenacious of their gods, and the worship of them; and that foolish and unwise thing, which was like leaving pure flowing streams of water for dirty puddles. This is to be understood of their forsaking the worship of God, as the Targum interprets it, and following after idols:

they have burnt incense to vanity; to idols, which are vain empty things, and which cannot give their worshippers what they expect from them: or, “in vain they burn incense”^{f387}; even to the true God, while they also sacrificed unto idols; which to do was an abomination to the Lord, (²¹¹³Isaiah 1:13); and especially burning incense to idols must be a vain thing; and so the Targum,

“to no profit a they burn incense or spices:”

and they have caused them to stumble in their ways; that is, either the idols they worshipped, or the false prophets caused the professing people of the Jews to stumble and fall in the ways into which they led them: and

[from] the ancient paths; or, “the paths of eternity”^{f388}; which lead to eternal life; or which were of old marked out by the revealed will of God for the saints to walk in; and in which the patriarchs and people of God, in all former ages, did walk; and which were appointed from everlasting, and will remain for ever; and these are the good old paths in (^{<2456>}Jeremiah 6:16);

to walk in paths, [in] a way not cast up; a new way, unknown in former times; an unbeaten track, which the saints had never walked in; a rough path, unsafe and dangerous; and hence they stumbled, and fell, and came to ruin; as follows:

Ver. 16. *To make their land desolate*, etc.] Not that this was the intention either of those that led them out of the right way into those wrong paths, or of them that went into them; but so it was eventually; this was the issue of things; their idolatry and other sins were the cause of their land being desolate; through the ravage of the enemy, let in upon them by way of judgment; and through the destruction of men by them; so that there were few or none to cultivate and manure it:

[and] a perpetual hissing; to be hissed at perpetually by the enemy, whenever they passed by it, and observed its desolation; thereby expressing their hatred at its inhabitants; their joy at its desolation; and their satisfaction in it, which would be for ever; or, as Kimchi interprets, a long time. This is the present case of the Jews; and has been ever since their destruction by the Romans; and will be until the fulness of the Gentiles is gathered in:

everyone that passeth thereby shall be astonished: to see the desolations made, and the strange alterations in a place once so famous for fruitfulness and number of inhabitants:

and wag his head; either out of pity, or rather in a way of derision and exultation; (see ^{<2415>}Lamentations 2:15,16).

Ver. 17. *I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy*, etc.] As the east wind, which is generally strong and boisterous, drives the chaff and stubble, and anything that is light, before it, and scatters it here and there; so the Lord threatens to scatter the people of the Jews over the face of the earth, before their enemies, whom they should not be able to withstand. It denotes the power of the enemy God would make use of; the ease with

which this should be done; and the utter dispersion of them; and is their present case:

I will show them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity; that is, will not look upon them in a favourable way, nor with any pity and compassion for them, nor hear their cries; but turn his back upon them, and a deaf ear unto them, and give them no help and relief, or deliver them out of their calamities; but suffer them to continue upon them, and them to sink under them; (see ²⁰²⁵Proverbs 1:26-28); which refers to the same time of calamity as here.

Ver. 18. *Then said they, come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah,* etc.] Being enraged at the judgments threatened them, they propose to enter into a confederacy and consultation together, to think of ways and means to stop the mouth of the prophet, and even to take away his life; since he had told them that God had devised a device against them, they were for devising devices against him; that so they might walk after their own devices, without being teased and tormented with this prophet:

for the law shall not perish from the priest; whose business it is to teach it; we have other priests besides Jeremiah, and we shall seek the law at their mouths, and not at his; and perhaps these are the words of the priests themselves, the men of Anathoth; so Jarchi thinks; pleasing themselves with their character and office, and the perpetuity of it; that, notwithstanding what Jeremiah had said, there would be a constant succession of this order of them; nor should the law ever cease from being taught by them, to whose instruction men ought to listen, and not to such a prophet:

nor counsel from the wise; we have wise rulers and governors, counsellors of state, and members of the sanhedrim, and judges of all controversies, and who are capable of giving advice upon any occasion; nor shall we ever want such, to whose prudent counsel we do well to attend, and not to what this babbling man says; does he think to know better than our statesmen and sages, our counsellors in church and state?

nor the word from the prophet; we have prophets among us, that prophesy as well as he, and better things; and whose words of prophecy shall be fulfilled, when his will not; who assure us that we shall have peace and prosperity; and therefore let us not regard what this man says, or be intimidated by his threatenings:

come, and let us smite him with the tongue; by saying all the evil we can of him: by threatening him with pains and penalties; by loading him with reproaches and calumnies; by taking away his good name, and lessening his character and reputation among the people; and so the Targum,

“let us bear false witness against him;”

or, “let us smite him in the tongue”^{f389}; cut it out, as Abarbinel; or stop his mouth, and hinder him from speaking any more in this manner to the people; or, “let us smite him for the tongue”^{f390}; because of the words he says, or the prophecies he delivers out:

and let us not give heed to any of his words; or, “to all his words”^{f391}; all which they reckoned his own, and not the words of the Lord. The Septuagint version is, “and we shall hear all his words”; we shall provoke him to say all he has to say, and shall hear and have enough out of his mouth to condemn him; and in all this, and in many other things that follow, Jeremiah was a type of Christ, to whom Jerom applies the whole passage.

Ver. 19. *Give heed to me, O Lord*, etc.] To his prayer, since his enemies would not give heed to his prophecies; and God does give heed to the cries and complaints of his ministers, when men will not give heed to their words and doctrines; they have a God to go to, who will hear them, when men despise them:

and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me; hear their reproaches and rantings, their blasphemies and evil speakings, their lies and falsehoods, and judge between me and them; let it appear who is in the right; vindicate my cause, and plead with them that plead against me.

Ver. 20. *Shall evil be recompensed for good?* etc.] For all the good that I have done them, shall this be all the recompence I shall have, to be evilly treated by them, to have my good name, and even life, taken away by them? shall this be suffered to be done? and, if it is, shall it go unpunished? the prophet taxes the people with ingratitude, which he afterwards instances in, and proves:

for they have digged a pit for my soul; or “life”; they lay in wait to take it away; or they had formed a design against it, and brought a charge and accusation against him, in order to take it away, under colour of law and

justice. Kimchi interprets it of poison, which they would have had him drink of:

remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, [and] to turn away thy wrath from them; he was an intercessor for them with God; pleaded with him on their behalf, that good things might be bestowed upon them, and that wrath might be averted from them; so Christ did for the Jews that crucified him, (~~Q234~~ Luke 23:34); this is an instance of their ingratitude; that though he had been an advocate for them, stood in the gap between God and them, and was importunate for their good, yet this was all the recompense he had from them; they sought his life to take it away. This kindness of his for them was forgotten by them; but he trusts the Lord will remember it, and not suffer them to act the base part they intended; and now he determines no more to plead their cause, but to imprecate evils upon them, as follows:

Ver. 21. *Therefore deliver up their children to the famine*, etc.] To be starved, and perish by it, as they were in the siege of Jerusalem, both by the Chaldeans, and the Romans:

and pour out their [blood] by the force of the sword: or, “upon the hands of the sword”^{f392}; by means of it; that is, the blood of the parents of the children; let the one perish by famine, and the other by the sword; which, when thrust into a man, blood gushes out, and runs upon the sword to the handle of it:

and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and [be] widows; let them have neither husbands nor children; which latter might be a comfort to them, when they had lost their husbands; but being stripped of these also, the affliction and distress must be the greater:

and let their men be put to death; or “slain with death”^{f393}; with the pestilence, as Kimchi rightly interprets it; (see ~~Q118~~ Revelation 6:8); Jarchi understands it of the angel of death; (see ~~S124~~ Hebrews 2:14);

[let] their young men [be] slain by the sword in battle; such being commonly employed in military service, as being the most proper persons for it.

Ver. 22. *Let a cry be heard from their houses*, etc.] A shrieking of women and children, not only for the loss of husbands and parents, but because of

the entrance of the enemy into the city, and into their houses, to take away their lives and their substance; as follows:

when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them; or an army, as the Targum; either the Chaldean army, or rather the Roman army:

for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet: and therefore it was a just retaliation, that a troop or army should suddenly come upon them, and seize their persons and substance; though Kimchi understands it, as before, of poison, which they would have given him; but Jarchi, of a suspicion and vile calumny they raised of him, that he was guilty of adultery with another man's wife; a "whore" being called a "deep ditch" by the wise man, (³¹²⁷Proverbs 23:27); and so it is in the Talmud^{f394}.

Ver. 23. *Yet, Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay [me]*, etc.] However deep they had laid them; and however unknown they were to him; or however private and secret they might be thought to be by them; God is an omniscient God, and knows and sees all things; the thoughts of men's hearts, and all their secret designs in the dark against his ministers, people, and interest:

forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight; they had sinned the unpardonable sin; or, however, a sin unto death; for which prayer for the forgiveness of it was not to be made, (⁶¹⁵⁶1 John 5:16); this the prophet knew: what he here imprecates, and both before and after, must be considered, not as flowing from a private spirit, or from a spirit of malice and revenge; but what he delivered out under a spirit of prophecy, as foretelling what would be the sad estate and condition of these persons; for, otherwise, the temper and disposition of the prophet were the reverse; and he was inclined to sue for mercy for these people, as he often did; wherefore this is not to be drawn into a precedent and example for any to follow:

but let them be overthrown before thee; by the sword, famine, and pestilence: or, "let them be made to stumble before thee"^{f395}; and fall into perdition; they having made others to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths of truth and goodness; so that it was but a righteous thing that they should be punished after this manner; (see ⁴¹⁸⁵Jeremiah 18:15);

deal [thus] with them in the time of thine anger; the set time for his wrath to come upon them to the uttermost; then do unto them according to all

the imprecations now made; which the prophet foresaw, and believed he would do; and therefore thus spake.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 19

In this chapter is foreshadowed, represented, and confirmed, the destruction of Jerusalem, by the breaking of a potter's vessel the prophet had in his hand; and by the place where he was bid to do this, and did it. The order for it, and the witnesses of it, and the place where it was done, are declared in (^{2490b}Jeremiah 19:1,2); the proclamation there of Jerusalem's ruin is made, (^{2491b}Jeremiah 19:3); the cause of it, their apostasy, idolatry, and shedding of innocent blood, (^{2492b}Jeremiah 19:4,5); the great slaughter of them by the sword and famine, (^{2493b}Jeremiah 19:6-9); and how easy, and irresistible, and irrecoverable, their destruction would be, are signified by the breaking of the bottle, (^{2494b}Jeremiah 19:10,11), when Jerusalem for its idolatry would become as defiled a place as Tophet, where the prophet was, (^{2495b}Jeremiah 19:12,13); from whence he came to the temple, and there repeated the proclamation of the evil that should come upon that city, and all the towns around it, (^{2496b}Jeremiah 19:14,15).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, go and get a potter's earthen bottle, etc.]*

From the potter's house, where he had lately been; and where he had been shown, in an emblematic way, what God would do in a short time with the Jews; and which is here further illustrated by this emblem: or, "go and get", or "buy, a bottle of the potter, an earthen one"^{f396}; so Kimchi; called in Hebrew "bakbuk", from the gurgling of the liquor poured into it, or out of it, or drank out of it, which makes a sound like this word^{f397}:

and [take] of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests; the word "take" is rightly supplied by our translators, as it is by the Targum, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; for these words are not to be connected with the former, as in the Vulgate Latin version; as if the prophet was to get or buy the earthen bottle of the elders of the people, and of the priests; but those who were the greatest and principal men of the city, and of which the Jewish sanhedrim consisted, were to be taken by the prophet to be witnesses of what were said and done, to see the bottle broke, and hear what Jeremiah from the Lord had to say; who, from their years, it might be reasonably thought, would seriously attend to those

things, and would report them to the people to great advantage; and the Lord, who sent the prophet to them, no doubt inclined their hearts to go along with him; who, otherwise, in all probability, would have refused; and perhaps would have charged him with impertinence and boldness, and would have rejected his motion with contempt, as foolish or mad.

Ver. 2. *And go forth into the valley of the son of Hinnom*, etc.] To whom it formerly belonged, and so it was called as early as Joshua's time, (⁻⁰⁸⁵⁸⁻Joshua 15:8); from the faith and abomination of the place, and the shocking torments here exercised, "hell", from hence, in the New Testament, is called "Gehenna": here the prophet with the elders were to go, for reasons after mentioned; because here their cruel idolatries were committed, and Jerusalem was to be made like unto it for pollution and bloodshed:

which [is] by the entry of the east gate; the way to it out of Jerusalem lay through the east gate of the city. The Targum calls it "the dung gate"; through which the filth of the city was carried out, and laid near it, and where lay the potter's sherds; hence some render it the "potsherd" gate^{f398}; or rather it should be the potter's gate; for that reason, because the potter's field and house lay near it, from whence the prophet had his earthen bottle; others call it the "sun gate"^{f399}, because it lay to the sun rising; but seeing the valley of Hinnom was to the south of Jerusalem, this seems rather to be the south gate; and a proper situation this was for the potters to dry and harden their pots. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, leave it untranslated, and call it the gate Harsith or Hadsith:

and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee; for as yet it was not made known to him what he should do with his bottle, or say to the elders, until he came to the place he was ordered to.

Ver. 3. *And say, hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah*, etc.] The king and his queen; or the king and his sons; or the king and his princes, and nobles; for there was but one king reigning at a time in Judah, and the present king was Zedekiah; (see ⁻²²⁰¹⁻Jeremiah 21:1);

and inhabitants of Jerusalem; the elders of which, and of the priests, were now before him; to whom he said the following things, that they might tell them to the persons mentioned:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; who is able to do whatsoever he pleases in the armies of the heavens, and among the

inhabitants of the earth, and will do so among his own people, notwithstanding his being the God of Israel:

behold, I will bring evil upon this place; the evil of punishment for the evil of sin; such as the sword, famine, and captivity; meaning not on that spot of ground where the prophet with the elders were, but upon the city of Jerusalem, and on all the land of Judea:

the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle; it shall be astonishing and surprising to him; it shall even stun him; he shall stand as one thunderstruck or be so affected with it as a man is at a violent clap of thunder, or at some exceeding vehement sound, which leaves such an impression upon him, and continues with him, that he cannot get rid of it; but seems to be continually sounding in his ears, and they even echo and ring with it; (see ^{<ORBI>}1 Samuel 3:11). The phrase denotes the greatness of the calamity, and the surprise which the bare report of it would bring with it.

Ver. 4. *Because they have forsaken me*, etc.] My worship, as the Targum; they had apostatized from God, relinquished his service, neglected and despised his word and ordinances, and left the religion they had been brought up in, and was agreeable to the will of God. This, with what follows, contain reasons of the Lord's threatening them to bring evil upon them, as before:

and have estranged this place; or made a strange place of it, so that it could scarcely be known to be the same, nor would the Lord own it as his; meaning either the city of Jerusalem, to which the prophet was near, and could point to it; or the temple, which was in sight, and which they had strangely abused, by offering strange sacrifices to strange gods; or the valley of Hinnom, the spot he was upon, and which they had alienated from its original use:

and have burnt incense in it unto other gods; to strange gods, the gods of the Gentiles; and this they did both in the city of Jerusalem and in the temple, and very probably in the valley of Hinnom, where they sacrificed their children: gods

whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah; of whose wisdom, power, and goodness, neither they nor their fathers before them, nor any of their kings, had had any instance; and whose help and assistance, in times of danger and difficulty, they had had no

experience of; and, till now, neither they nor their ancestors had ever owned them, or acknowledged them; nor scarce had heard of their names; nor any of their pious kings, as David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah:

and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; young children that were sacrificed here to idols, as they were in the valley of Hinnom, which seems to be the place principally intended; so that they were not only guilty of idolatry, but of murder; and of the murder of innocent creatures, and even, of their own babes; which was shocking and unheard of cruelty!

Ver. 5. *They have also built the high places of Baal*, etc.] Or, they have even built, etc. and so the words explain what is before suggested of their idolatry; these were the temples in which they placed his image, and the altars on which they sacrificed to him; as follows:

to burn their sons with fire, [for] burnt offerings unto Baal; the same idol that is sometimes called Moloch, the names being much of the same signification; the one signifying a “lord” or “master”; the other a king; and to the idol under each name they burned their children with fire, and offered them as burnt offerings unto it; which was a most cruel and barbarous way of sacrificing. Some think they only caused them to pass through two fires; but the text is express for it, that they burnt them with fire, and made burnt offerings of them, as they did with slain beasts. It seems very likely that they did both:

which I commanded not; in my law, as the Targum adds; and which was intimation enough to avoid it; though this was not all, he expressly forbid it, (⁴⁰⁰Leviticus 20:2-5);

nor spake [it], neither came [it] into my mind; and it is marvellous it should ever enter into the heart of man; none but Satan himself could ever have devised such a way of worship.

Ver. 6. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”⁴⁰⁰; a little while and it will come to pass, what follows; to which a “behold” is prefixed, as calling for attention and admiration, as well as to assure of the certain performance of it:

that this place shall no more be called Tophet: as it had been, from the beating of drums in it, that the cries and shrieks of infants burnt in the fire might not be heard by their parents:

nor the valley of the son of Hinnom; which was its name in the times of Joshua, and long before it was called Tophet; but now it should have neither names:

but the valley of slaughter; or, “of the slain”, as the Targum; from the multitude of those that should be killed here, at the siege and taking of Jerusalem; or that should be brought hither to be buried; (see ^{2491b}Jeremiah 19:11) and (see Gill on “^{2472b}Jeremiah 7:32”).

Ver. 7. *And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place*, etc.] The counsel which they took in this place and agreed to, in offering their sons and daughters to idols; and which they took with these idols and their priests, from whom they expected assistance and relief; and all their schemes and projects for their deliverance; these were all made to spear to be mere empty things, as empty as the earthen bottle he had in his hand, to which there is an allusion; there being an elegant pronomasia between the word ^{f401} here used and that:

and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies: such as sallied out from the city, or attempted to make their escape:

and by the hands of them that seek their lives; and so would not spare them, when they fell into them:

and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth: signifying that they should have no burial, but their slain bodies should lie upon the earth, and be fed upon by fowls and beasts.

Ver. 8. *And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing*, etc.] An hissing to its enemies; an hissing because desolate; when its walls should be broken down, its houses burnt with fire, and its inhabitants put to the sword, or carried captive:

everyone that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and hiss; surprised to see the desolations of it; that a city once so famous and flourishing should be reduced to such a miserable condition; and yet hiss by way of detestation and abhorrence of it, and for joy at its ruin:

because of all the plagues thereof: by which it was brought to desolation, as the sword, famine, burning, and captivity.

Ver. 9. *And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons, and the flesh of their daughters,* etc.] For want of food; the famine should be so great and pressing. Jeremiah, that foretells this, was a witness of it, and has left it on record, (²³⁴⁰Lamentations 4:10);

and they shall eat everyone the flesh of his friend. The Targum interprets it, the goods or substance of his neighbour; which is sometimes the sense of eating the flesh of another; but as it is to be taken in a literal sense, in the preceding clause, so in this: so it should be,

in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them; the siege of Jerusalem should be so close, that no provision could be got in to the relief of the inhabitants; which obliged them to take the shocking methods before mentioned. Jerom observes, that though this was fulfilled at the Babylonish captivity, yet more fully when Jerusalem was besieged by Vespasian and Titus, and in the times of Hadrian. Josephus^{f402} gives us a most shocking relation of a woman eating her own son.

Ver. 10. *Then shall thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee.*] The earthen bottle he was bid to get of the potter, (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 19:1); this he is ordered to break in pieces before the eyes of the ancients of and of the priests that went with him out Jerusalem to Tophet, as an emblem of the easy, sure, and utter destruction of Jerusalem; for nothing is more easily broken than an earthen vessel; and so easily was Jerusalem destroyed by the Chaldean army; nor can an earthen pot resist any force that is used against it; nor could the inhabitants of Jerusalem withstand the force of Nebuchadnezzar's army; and an earthen vessel once broken cannot be put together again; a new one must be made; which was the case both of the city and temple; and which, upon the return from the captivity, were not repaired, but rebuilt.

Ver. 11. *And shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord of hosts,* etc.] Of armies above and below; and so able to execute what he here threatens:

even so will I break this people and this city: the people, the inhabitants of this city, and that itself, by the sword, famine, burning, and captivity:

as [one] breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again; or "healed"^{f403}; a potter's vessel, upon the wheel, such an one as the prophet had seen, and to which the Jews are compared, (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 18:3,4); being marred, may be restored and put into another form and shape; but one that

is dried and hardened, when broke, can never be put together again; so a vessel, of gold, silver, and brass, when broke, may be made whole again; but an earthen vessel never can; a fit emblem therefore this to represent utter and irrecoverable ruin; (see ^{<23014>}Isaiah 30:14). Jerom here again observes, that this is clearly spoken, not of the Babylonish, but of the Roman captivity; after the former the city was rebuilt, and the people returned to Judea, and restored to former plenty; but since the latter, under Vespasian, Titus, and Hadrian, the ruins of Jerusalem remain, and will till the conversion of the Jews:

and they shall bury [them] in Tophet, till [there be] no place to bury: where there should be such great numbers slain; or whither such multitudes of the slain should be brought out of the city to be buried there, that at length there would not be room enough to receive the dead into it; or, as the Syriac version renders it, “and in Tophet they shall bury, for want of a place to bury” in; in such a filthy, abominable, and accursed place shall their carcasses lie, where they were guilty of idolatry, and sacrificed their innocent babes, there being no other place to inter them in: an emblem this of their souls suffering in hell the vengeance of eternal fire.

Ver. 12. *Thus will I do unto this place, saith the Lord, and to the inhabitants thereof,* etc.] To the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants, as was done to the earthen bottle, and as before threatened:

and [even], or also,

make this city as Tophet; as full of slaughtered men and women as that had been of the blood of innocent children; and as filthy, abominable, and execrable a place as that; and to lose its name, as that is foretold it should, (^{<24006>}Jeremiah 19:6); and as Jerusalem did, after the desolation of it by Hadrian, as Jerom observes; for what was built upon the spot afterwards was by the emperor called Aelia, after his own name.

Ver. 13. *And the houses of Jerusalem,* etc.] Where the common people dwelt:

and the houses of the kings of Judah; the palaces of the king, princes, and nobles of Judah, one as well as another:

shall be defiled os Tophet; as that was defiled with the bodies and bones of the slain, and with the faith of the city brought unto it; so the houses of great and small, high and low, should be defiled with the carcasses of the

slain that should lie unburied there; their houses should be their graves, and they buried in the ruins of them: or, “the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, which are defiled”^{f404}, with the idolatries after mentioned, shall be as Tophet, places of slaughter:

because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burnt incense to all the host of heaven; the roofs of houses with the Jews were built flat; and, as they sometimes used them for prayer to the God of heaven, as Peter did, (~~400~~Acts 10:9); idolaters used them to burn incense on to the sun, moon, and stars; to which they were nearer, and of which they could have a clearer view upon the house tops, and therefore chose them for this purpose; and so common was this sort of idolatry, that it was practised upon most, if not all, the houses in Jerusalem; (see ~~300B~~Zephaniah 1:5);

and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods; besides the God of Israel; to Baal, and other Heathen deities.

Ver. 14. *Then came Jeremiah from Tophet*, etc.] When he had broke his earthen bottle, and delivered his prophecy before the elders of the people and priests: or, “from that Tophet”^{f405},

whither the Lord had sent him to prophesy; and whither he went and prophesied, according to his command; but now returned from thence, it being no doubt signified to him, in some manner or other, that it was the will of God he should;

and he stood in the court of the Lord’s house, and said to all the people; this was the court of the temple, called the outward court, or the court of the Israelites, where all the people met; for into other courts they might not enter; here the prophet placed himself, on purpose to deliver his prophecy to all the people; even the same as he had delivered at Tophet to the ancients of the people and the priests; but lest they should not faithfully represent it to the people, and that they might not be without it, he delivers it openly and publicly to them all, in the following words; which both declare their punishment, and the cause of it.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] (See Gill on ~~200B~~Jeremiah 19:3”);

behold, I will bring upon this city, and upon all her towns: the city of Jerusalem, and all the cities and towns near it, even all the cities and towns in Judea; of which Jerusalem was the metropolis, and therefore called hers:

all the evil that I have pronounced against it; or decreed against it, as the Targum; all that he had purposed, and all that he had threatened, or spoke of by the Prophet Jeremiah, or any other of his prophets; for whatever he has said he will do, and whatsoever he has solved upon, and declared he will do, he assuredly brings to pass:

because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words; they turned their backs upon him, pulled away the shoulder, stopped their ears that they might not hear what was said by the prophets from the Lord; they neither inclined their ears to hearken to, nor bowed their necks to receive the yoke of his precepts; but, on the contrary, were, as was their general character, a stiffnecked people, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, obstinate and disobedient; and this was the cause of their ruin, by which it appeared to be just and righteous.

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 20

This chapter gives an account of the usage that Jeremiah met with from many for his prophecies, and the effect it had upon him. He was smitten and put in the stocks by Pashur the priest, who released him the next day, (^{<2001>}Jeremiah 20:1-3); upon which he prophesies again of the delivery of the city of Jerusalem, with all its riches, and of the whole land, to the Chaldeans; and particularly that Pashur should be a terror to himself and all his friends; and that both he and they should be carried captive into Babylon, and die, and be buried there, (^{<2001>}Jeremiah 20:4-6); and then he complains of his being mocked at by the people for the word of the Lord; which he therefore determined to make no more mention of, but was obliged to it; and of the defamations of him, and snares that were laid for him, (^{<2001>}Jeremiah 20:7-10); under which he is supported with the consideration of the Lord's being with him, and that his enemies should not prevail, but be confounded; and appeals to him, and calls for vengeance from him on them; and, in the view of deliverance, not only praises the Lord himself, but calls upon others to join with him in it, (^{<2001>}Jeremiah 20:11-13); and yet, after all, the chapter is concluded with his cursing the day of his birth, and the man that brought his father the news of it, (^{<2001>}Jeremiah 20:14-18).

Ver. 1. *Now Pashur the son of Immer the priest*, etc.] Not the immediate son of Immer, but one that descended from him after many generations; for Immer was a priest in David's time, to whom the sixteenth course of the priests fell by lot, (^{<1344>}1 Chronicles 24:14);

who [was] also chief governor in the house of the Lord; the temple; not the high priest, since he was of the course of Immer; perhaps he was the head of the course to which he belonged, the chief of the priests of that course. The Targum calls him the "sagan" of the priests. There was such an officer, who was called the "sagan" or deputy to the high priest, who upon certain occasions acted for him; and some think that this man was in the same office; though others take him to be the same with the captain of the temple, (^{<4001>}Acts 4:1). Who

heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things; some that heard him in the court of the temple prophesying of the evil that should come upon the city, and places adjacent to it, went and told the chief governor of it. Though the words may be rendered, “now Pashur heard^{f406} ----Jeremiah prophesying these things”; he heard him himself; either he was one of the ancients of the priests that went with him to Tophet, and heard him there; or, however, when he came from thence, and stood and prophesied in the court of the temple, he heard him.

Ver. 2. *Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet*, etc.] Either with his fist, or with a rod, while he was prophesying, to stop his mouth, and hinder him from going on, and to show his resentment, and influence, the people not to believe him; or he ordered him to be smitten and scourged by some inferior officer. This was very ill treatment of a prophet, a prophet of the Lord, and one that was a priest too, of the same order with himself;

and put him in the stocks; or ordered him to be put there; but whether it was such an engine or instrument as we call “stocks”, in which the feet of prisoners are put, is not certain. Kimchi’s father says, it was an instrument made of two pieces of wood, in which the necks of prisoners were put; and some say it had besides two holes for the two hands to be put in; and so the same with our “pillory”. The Septuagint render it “a cataract”, a ditch or dungeon. Jarchi interprets it a prison; and so our translators render the word in (^{247B}Jeremiah 29:26); however, it was a place of confinement, if not of torture and pain;

that [were] in the high gate of Benjamin; here were these stocks, pillory, or prison; which was either a gate of the city of Jerusalem, so called, because it looked towards and led out to the tribe of Benjamin, (^{247B}Jeremiah 37:13 38:7); or a gate of the temple, which stood on that side of it that belonged to the tribe of Benjamin; both the city and temple being partly in the tribe of Judah, and partly in the tribe of Benjamin; and it seems by this that there was an upper and lower gate of this name; and the following clause seems to incline to this sense:

which [was] by the house of the Lord; or, “in the house of the Lord”^{f407}; the temple.

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass on the morrow*, etc.] After the prophet was put into the stocks; so that he was there all night:

that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks; either to bring him before the priests, or the sanhedrim, to be examined; or in order to dismiss him, being either admonished by his friends, or convicted in his own conscience that he had done a wrong thing;

then said Jeremiah unto him; when he had brought him out, not being at all intimidated by him, and having a word from the Lord for him:

the Lord hath not called thy name Pashur; which, according to Jerom, signifies “blackness of mouth”; and, according to others, “diffusing paleness”; one that terrified others, and made their faces look pale; but now it should be otherwise, and he himself should be filled with terror, and have paleness of thee: but, according to a late etymologist, it signifies one abounding or “increased in liberty”⁴⁰⁸, who in a little time would become a captive; for it is not suggested hereby that he should no more be called by this name, but that he should be in a condition which would not answer to it, but to another, as follows:

but Magormissabib; or, “fear round about”; signifying that terrors should be all around him, and he in the utmost fright and consternation. The Septuagint version renders it “one removing”; changing from place to place; that is, going into captivity; a stranger and wanderer, as the Syriac version. The Targum is,

“but there shall be gathered together against thee those that kill with the sword round about;”

meaning the Chaldeans, which would make him a “Magormissabib”.

Ver. 4. *For thus saith the Lord, behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends*, etc.] This is an interpretation of the name given, “Magormissabib”: and shows that it was not a mere name he had, but that he should be in fact what that signifies; his conscience should be filled with terror at the judgments of God coming upon him for his sins; and which could not be concealed in his own breast from others, but he should be seized with such tremblings and shakings, and be such a spectacle of horror, that his own familiar friends, instead of delighting in his company, would shun it, and run away from him: unless this terror is to be understood of the Chaldean army, which should not only terrify him, but his friends, in whom he placed his confidence; these would be thrown into such a consternation, as not to be able to help him or themselves; to which the following words agree:

and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold [it]; which would be an aggravation of the calamity, that not only he should be deprived of their assistance, but that they should fall into and by the hands of the Babylonians, and in his sight also:

and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon; the whole land, and the inhabitants of it:

and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword; being in his hands, he shall do as he pleases with them, either carry them captive, or slay them; and some he will dispose of one way, and some another.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, I will deliver all the strength of this city*, etc.] The fortifications of it; its towers, as the Syriac version; the riches of it, as the Targum; all its magazines and stores, in which its strength lay:

and all the labours thereof; all the fruit of their labours; all their wealth and riches got by labour; all their goods in trade; all their manufactures and merchandise:

and all the precious things thereof; all their plate and jewels, the rich furniture of their houses, and whatsoever was laid up in their treasures as rare and valuable:

and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies; which they in successive reigns had been laying up in store for years together; (see ²³⁰⁶Isaiah 39:6);

which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon; make a prey of them, seize them as their property, and carry them away with them.

Ver. 6. *And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house, shall go into captivity*, etc.] Particularly he and his family should not escape; whoever did:

and thou shalt come to Babylon; being brought there, though sore against his will:

and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there; even in a defiled land, as all other countries were reckoned by the Jews; and to be buried in such a land, Kimchi observes, was a curse; and so it is here threatened as such:

thou, and all thy friends; that is, such as should escape the sword, (^{200b}Jeremiah 20:4);

to whom thou hast prophesied lies; this shows the cause of; all this threatened destruction to him and his friends; not only because he had so ill used Jeremiah, a true prophet of the Lord; but because he was a false prophet, and his friends had hearkened to his lies, and disbelieved those prophecies that came from the Lord himself.

Ver. 7. *O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived*, etc.] What follows from hence to the end of the chapter is thought to have been said by the prophet, when in the stocks, or in prison, and shows mixture of grace and corruption in him; a struggle between flesh and spirit, and the force of a temptation under which he laboured, arising from difficulties and discouragements in his work; and he not only complains to God, but of him; that he had deceived him, when he first called him to be a prophet, by telling him that he should be set over nations and kingdoms, to pull them down, (²⁰¹⁰Jeremiah 1:10); which he understood of foreign nations, but now found his own people were meant, so Jerom; or in not immediately executing the threatenings he sent him with; as was the case of Jonah; or by giving him reason to expect honour and ease, whereas he met with nothing but disrespect and trouble; and that he should have divine protection and success against his opposers, (²⁰¹⁸Jeremiah 1:18,19); whereas he was now delivered into their hands, and used in the most reproachful manner; but be it so, this was all a mistake of the prophet, and no deception of God. Calvin takes it to be ironically spoken, expressing the sense of his enemies, who charging him with a deception, tacitly charged God with being the author of it. Others, to soften the expression, render the words, “if thou hast deceived me, I am deceived”; or, “thou hast deceived me if I am deceived”^{f409}. But it seems best of all to translate them, as they will hear it, “O Lord, thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded”^{f410}; so the word is used of God in (⁰⁰²⁷Genesis 9:27); “God shall enlarge” or “persuade Japheth”; see also (²⁰¹⁴Hosea 2:14), where it is rendered allure; and then the sense is, thou hast persuaded me to take upon me the prophetic office against my will, and against remonstrances made by me; and I was persuaded by thy words and promises, and by thy spirit and grace, to enter upon it; to which sense the following words incline:

thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed; so strong were the arguments, motives, and inducements the Lord made use of; so pressing his injunctions

and commands; so forcible the constraints of his spirit; that the prophet was obliged to yield unto them, and was made willing in the day of his power to comply, though first it was sore against his will; but he could not withstand the divine call, and therefore might have hoped, since it was so manifest that he was sent of God, and did not run of himself, that he should have met with a better reception, and more success; but so it was not:

I am in derision daily, everyone mocketh me; he was the laughing stock of everyone of the people of Israel, from the highest to the lowest; princes, priests, and people, all derided him and his prophecies, and that continually, every day, and all the day long, and especially when he was in the stocks; though it was not only his person they mocked, but the word of the Lord by him, as appears from (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 20:8).

Ver. 8. *For since I spake, I cried out*, etc.] Or, “when I speak, I cry”^{f411}; whensoever I speak in the name of the Lord, and deliver message from him to the people, I lift up my voice and cry aloud, that all may hear and understand; and as showing zeal, fervour, and diligence: or, “I cry” with grief and trouble at the usage I meet with, and the contempt that is cast upon the word; or because of what I am obliged to declare to them, as follows. The Targum takes in both sense, of the word thus,

“for at the time that I prophesy, I lift up my voice, weeping, and crying.”

I cried violence and spoil: or, “proclaimed” it^{f412}, for a different word is here used; that is, he publicly declared the rapine and oppression they were guilty of, inveighed against it, and reprov'd them for it; and foretold the violence of the enemy, and the spoil that he should make of them, when he should come upon them, even the king of Babylon; as well as cried out and complained of the injurious treatment he himself met with from them;

because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily; which is a reason either why he cried with grief and sorrow; or why he cried violence and spoil, ruin and destruction: or, “though the word of the Lord was”^{f413}, &c; yet he went on publishing and proclaiming it: or, “surely the word of the Lord was made a reproach”^{f414}, &c; either because of the matter of it, it not being believed, or the manner in which it was delivered; or because it was not immediately fulfilled.

Ver. 9. *Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name*, etc.] Not that he publicly said this before his enemies, or

privately to his friends, but he said it in his heart; he thought, nay, resolved, within himself, to prophesy no more; since no credit was given to him, but contempt cast on him; he was disgraced, and God was dishonoured, and no good done; wherefore he concluded it was better to be silent, and not mention the name of God, and say nothing of any message he had from him, since it was to no purpose. A temptation that oftentimes besets a minister of the word, because of the ill usage he meets with, the ill success of his ministry; and is but a temptation, as such see it to be sooner or later, as Jeremiah did;

but [his word] was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones; which wanted vent, and must have it, and which only could be quenched by being divulged; and which, until it was done, he was in the utmost pain, as if he had been all on fire; his conscience accused him; his heart smote and condemned him; a woe was to him; (see ~~406~~ 1 Corinthians 9:16); or “there was in mine heart as a burning fire”^{f415}, etc. a principle of love to God, and to the souls of men; a zeal for his glory, and the good of his countrymen; which made him uneasy, and constrained him to break his former resolution: for the phrase, “his word”, is not in the original text; though it is in like manner supplied by the Targum,

“and his words became in mine heart as fire burning and overflowing my bones;”

and so Kimchi,

“and the word of the Lord was in my heart as fire burning;”

and also Jarchi; the prophecy was as fire, to which it is compared, (~~229~~ Jeremiah 23:29);

and I was weary with forbearing; to speak; weary to hold it in:

and I could not [stay]; or I could not hold it in any longer; I was obliged to speak in the name of the Lord again, and deliver whatever message he was pleased to send me

Ver. 10. *For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side,* etc.] It was brought to the prophet’s ears by some of his friends, how he was defamed by many, and these great and mighty ones, as the word also signifies; how his character was aspersed; his good name taken away; and false and scandalous reports were raised of him from all quarters; which filled him

with fear all around, so that he might quickly expect fresh trouble from one side or another; (see ^{<8813>}Psalm 31:13); and this was a reason of his entering into the above resolution to leave off prophesying: though some understand it as an additional reason to the former for going on with it; being not only inwardly pressed to it in spirit, but outwardly provoked by the usage of his enemies. Some retain the words “Magormissabib”, untranslated, and render the whole thus, “for I heard the defaming of many magormissabibs”; of many such as Pashur, so called, (^{<2418>}Jeremiah 20:3); but neither the accents nor the syntax will admit of it; since there is an accent on many, which makes a stop, and “magormissabib” is in the singular number: rather it may be rendered, “I have heard the defaming of many; [even of] magormissabib”, that is, of Pashur and his associates;

report, [say they], and we will report it; these are the words of the defamers, whether Pashur and his accomplices, or the great ones, the princes and nobles, the priests and false prophets, that more especially bore a grudge to Jeremiah; addressing themselves to the common people, and such who were most acquainted with the prophet, and his manner of life; saying, tell us what you can of him, right or wrong, true or false, that may be any ways improved against him, and we shall tell it to the king, or to the sanhedrim, the court of judicature, and get him punished for it; or we shall take care to have it spread about city and country, and so blast his character and credit with the people, that none will after regard his prophecies;

all my familiars watched for my halting; or, “every man of my peace”^{f416}; who pretended to be at peace, and to be friendly with him, and wished well unto him, spoke fair to his face, as if they were cordial friends, and fond of the most intimate acquaintance with him; perhaps the men of Anathoth, the birth place of Jeremiah, are here meant; whom the priests at Jerusalem, or others, had engaged on their side, narrowly to observe what was said and done by him, of which any handle could be made against him to the government; and accordingly they did; they watched his words, and observed his actions, if they could catch at anything that was imprudently or inadvertently said or done, or what could be misconstrued to his disadvantage;

[saying], peradventure he will be enticed; to say or do something that may be laid hold on, and be produced against him, to the ruin of him; he not being on his guard, and knowing of no design against him:

and we shall prevail against him; gain our point, get him accused, condemned, and punished:

and we shall take our revenge on him; for inveighing so severely against their sins, which they could not bear; and for threatening them with punishments that should be inflicted on them, which they liked not to hear.

Ver. 11. *But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one*, etc.] The Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord is for my help.”

“Mighty” to support, uphold, defend, and deliver him; and “terrible” to his enemies. The prophet looks back to the promise the Lord had made him, of his gracious and powerful presence, (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 1:18,19); which he now takes comfort from; and it would have been well if he had kept this always in view, and had continued in the same actings of faith and temper of mind: but this lasted not long, as some following verses show;

therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and shall not prevail; though they should very hotly and furiously pursue him, yet they should stumble and fall by the way, and not be able to overtake him, and execute their designs upon him; the Lord, who was with him, and on his side, would throw some things in their way, at which they should stumble, and which should hinder them from proceeding;

they shall be greatly ashamed, for they shall not prosper; when they see their schemes are disappointed, and they do not succeed, they shall be filled with shame and confusion: or, “because they do not deal prudently”,^{f417}, as the word is rendered, (²⁵¹³Isaiah 52:13); they do not act a wise, but a foolish part, and therefore shame will be the consequence of it;

[their] everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten; neither by themselves nor others; the memory of it will always continue, to their everlasting grief and reproach. A very learned man connects these words with the former, thus, “they shall be greatly ashamed, for they shall not prosper, with an everlasting shame never to be forgotten”,^{f418}, very rightly; so another learned interpreter^{f419}.

Ver. 12. *But, O Lord, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart*, etc.] That tries the cause of the righteous, and vindicates them, rights their wrongs, and does them justice; being the omniscient God, the

seer and searcher of the hearts and reins; who knows the uprightness of their hearts, as well as their ways, and the sincerity of their affections: or that tries the faith and patience of the righteous, their constancy and integrity; and upon trial finds that their affections are real, and their souls sincere;

let me see thy vengeance on them; his enemies and persecutors; he does not seek vengeance himself, but desires it of the Lord; he does not ask to see his vengeance, but the Lord's vengeance on them, what he thought was just and proper to inflict on them; he knew that vengeance belonged to the Lord, and therefore left it with him, and prayed for it from him. The Targum is,

“let me see the vengeance of thy judgments on them;”

for unto thee have I opened my cause; or “revealed”, or “made it manifest”^{f420}; this he did in prayer, at this time, when he laid before the Lord his whole case, and appealed and applied to him for justice, who judgeth righteous persons, and judgeth righteously.

Ver. 13. *Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord*, etc.] The prophet, from prayer, proceeds to praise; and from expressions of faith and confidence in the Lord, having committed his cause to him, being assured of success, rises up to a holy triumph and joy; and calls upon his soul, and upon others, to join with him in praising, and singing praises to the Lord: this is said, as Kimchi observes, with respect to the saints in Jerusalem; for there were some good people doubtless there at this time, a remnant according to the election of grace; who had a regard for the prophet, and wished well to him, and were ready to join with him in acts of devotion, prayer, or praise;

for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil doers; or, “the life of the poor”; meaning himself, a poor destitute person, few or none to stand by him but the Lord, who had delivered him out of the hand of Pashur and his accomplices; and out of the hand of those that watched for his halting; and out of the hands of all his persecutors: or this may respect not past deliverances, but what was to come; which the prophet had such a believing view of, that he calls upon himself and others to praise God for beforehand.

Ver. 14. *Cursed [be] the day wherein I was born*, etc.] If this was said immediately upon the foregoing, it was a most strange and sudden change of frame indeed that the prophet came into, from praising God, to cursing

the day of his birth; wherefore some have thought it was delivered at another time, when in great anguish of spirit; very likely when so ill used by Pashur, as before related; but here repeated, to show in what distress he had been, and what reason there was for praise and thanksgiving; for the words may be connected with the preceding, thus, “for he hath delivered from the hand of evil doers the soul of the poor, who said”^{f421}, in the time of his distress, “cursed be the day”, &c; but, whenever it was spoke, it showed the impatience of the prophet, the weakness of his faith, and the greatness of his folly, to curse a day, and his birth day too, as Job did, when under affliction, (~~1800~~ Job 3:1-16);

let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed; to myself or others; let it be reckoned among the unhappy and unfortunate days; let it not be blessed with the light of the sun, or with the light of joy and prosperity; (see ~~1804~~ Job 3:4,7); let it not be said on this occasion, as commonly is, we wish you joy on your birth day, and may you see many happy days of this kind. Abendana observes, that some of their Rabbins say, that Jeremiah cursed the day of his birth, because it was the ninth of Ab, the day on which the temple was burnt.

Ver. 15. *Cursed [be] the man who brought tidings to my father*, etc.] The word signifies commonly good tidings, as the news of a child born, and especially a man child, is to its parent. The Septuagint use the same word the angel did, when he brought the tidings of the birth of Christ, (~~1810~~ Luke 2:10,11). This was still more foolish and sinful, to curse the man that carried the tidings of his birth to his father; who did a right thing, and what was acceptable, and perhaps might be a good man. Kimchi observes, that there are some that say, it was known to Jeremiah that this man was Pashur, the son of Immer, and therefore he cursed him; but this is without any foundation;

saying, a man child is born unto thee, making him very glad; as the birth of a man child usually makes glad its parent, whether father or mother; (see ~~1812~~ John 16:21).

Ver. 16. *And let that man be as the cities which the Lord overthrew*, etc.] In his fury, as the Targum and Septuagint add. Meaning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, who were utterly destroyed, and were never recovered:

and repented not; whose sentence God never repented of, nor revoked: this was very severe and uncharitable, to wish for so sore a destruction upon an innocent person;

and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide; as soon as he is up in the morning, the first thing that salutes his ears, let it be the noise of an enemy invading the city he dwells in; and by noon let him hear the shouting of him, having broke in, and gotten the victory, seizing the plunder.

Ver. 17. *Because he slew me not from the womb*, etc.] As soon as he came out of it; that is, as soon as he was born; either because God slew him not so soon, as Kimchi; or the angel of death, as Jarchi: or rather the man that carried the tidings of his birth to his father, who is all along spoken of in the two former verses; he curses him for not doing that, which, had he done, would have been exceeding criminal in him indeed; for not committing murder, even for not murdering an innocent babe;

or that my mother might have been my grave; he wishes he had died in her womb, and had never been brought forth; and so that had been his grave, where he should have been at ease and safety:

and her womb [to be] always great [with me]; or, “her womb an everlasting conception”^{f422}; his wish was, that she had been always conceiving, or ever big with child of him, but never bring forth; which was a more cruel and unnatural wish than the former concerning the man, the carrier of the tidings of his birth; since this was wishing a perpetual, painful, and intolerable evil to his own mother.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow*, etc.] “Labour” in performing his work and office as a prophet; and “sorrow” in suffering reproach, contempt, and persecution for it; which to avoid, he wishes he had never been born: a sign of a very fretful and impatient spirit, and of a carnal frame. Jarchi thinks this refers to the destruction of the temple;

that my days should be consumed with shame? through the bad usage of him, the reproach that was cast upon him, and the contempt he was had in for prophesying in the name of the Lord. All this shows that there is sin in the best of men, and what they are when left to themselves; how weak, foolish, and sinful they appear. And Jeremiah recording these his sins and

failings, is an argument of the uprightness and sincerity of the man, and of the truth of Scripture.

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 21

This chapter contains Jeremiah's answer to King Zedekiah's message to him; in which he assures him of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and gives advice both to the people and the king. The names of the persons sent to him are mentioned, (^{21:1}Jeremiah 21:1); and the errand they were sent upon, to desire the prophet to pray to the Lord, that the king of Babylon might be obliged to depart from Jerusalem, (^{21:2}Jeremiah 21:2); the answer from the Lord by him is, that their opposition to the king of Babylon should be fruitless; that he should be so far from quitting the siege, that he should enter the city, (^{21:3,4}Jeremiah 21:3,4); yea, that the Lord himself would fight against them, and destroy men and beast with the pestilence; and that such who escaped the sword, famine, and pestilence, should fall into the hands of the king of Babylon, (^{21:5-7}Jeremiah 21:5-7); and then some advice is given to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to go out and give up themselves to the Chaldeans; which was the best way to save their lives, since the city would certainly fall into their hands, and be burnt by them, (^{21:8-10}Jeremiah 21:8-10); and as for the royal family, they are advised to do justice and deliver the oppressed; the not doing of which, it is suggested, was the cause of their ruin, (^{21:11,12}Jeremiah 21:11,12); and the chapter is closed with a denunciation of destruction upon the city, notwithstanding the vain trust and confidence of the inhabitants of it, (^{21:13,14}Jeremiah 21:13,14).

Ver. 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord*, etc.] This prophecy stands out of its proper place, being made in the times of Zedekiah, and when Jerusalem was besieged by the king of Babylon; whereas, after this, there are prophecies which were delivered in the times of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah, who both reigned before Zedekiah; (see ^{22:11,18,24 25:1}Jeremiah 22:11,18,24 25:1), etc.

when King Zedekiah sent unto him Pashur the son of Melchiah; this was another Pashur from him that is spoken of in the preceding chapter, and is called "Magormissabib"; he was the son of Immer; this of Melchiah; he was of the sixteenth course of the priesthood; this of the "fifth":

and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest; who was of the “twenty fourth” course; (see ^{<1310>}1 Chronicles 24:9,14,18); in (^{<2624>}Jeremiah 52:24), he is called the “second priest”; he was “sagan”, or deputy to the high priest: they were both priests; wherefore the Syriac version renders it in the plural number, “priests”. It may be observed, that the foregoing chapter is concluded with the prophet’s cursing the day of his birth; and the last clause of it expresses the “shame” he imagined his days would be consumed in; and the next account we have is of an honour done him by the king, in sending two priests to him, with a message from him; whereby he tacitly owned him to be a true prophet of the Lord; as indeed he must now be convinced by facts that he was. Princes and people, who slight the ministers of God in time of prosperity, send to them, and are desirous of their assistance in times of distress:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Inquire, I pray thee, of the Lord for us*, etc.] Or, “seek the Lord now for us”^{f423}; seek the Lord by prayer and supplication for me and my people, for this city and the inhabitants of it; entreat him that he would appear for us, and deliver us out of the hands of the enemy; for this they said in the name of the king that sent them, who knew that the prophet had an interest at the throne of grace, and was a favourite of heaven; and therefore desired him to be an intercessor for them:

for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; the same that is elsewhere called Nebuchadnezzar, commonly called by the Greeks Nebuchodonosor; he was now come up to Jerusalem, and was besieging it, as had been predicted:

if so be the Lord will deal with us according to all his wondrous works; which he had done in times past for that nation; as by bringing them out of Egypt; driving out the Canaanites before them; delivering them out of the hands of their neighbours, time after time, when oppressed by them; and particularly by destroying the Assyrian army in Hezekiah’s time, which was besieging the city of Jerusalem, and causing their king to depart and flee in haste; and their present case being similar to that, it is very likely that that was more especially in view:

that he may go up from us; namely, the king of Babylon; that he may rise up, and raise the siege, and depart into his own country, as Sennacherib did.

Ver. 3. *Then said Jeremiah unto them*, etc.] The two priests, Pashur and Zephaniah, after he had sought the Lord, and knew his mind and will:

thus shall ye say to Zedekiah; by whom they were sent.

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel*, etc.] Who had been, still was, and would be, Israel's God, even the God of such who are Israelites indeed; though he should, as he would, give up the present generation to ruin and destruction; they having by their sins forfeited his care and protection of them; and therefore it was in vain to hope for it from this character which they bore:

behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that [are] in your hands; so that they should do no hurt to the enemy, but recoil upon themselves. The meaning is, that they should be useless and unserviceable; that they should neither be defensive to them, nor offensive to their enemies; but rather hurtful to themselves. It seems to suggest, as if they should fall out with one another; and, like the Midianites, turn their swords upon one another, and destroy each other:

wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and [against] the Chaldeans which besiege you without the walls; by shooting arrows at them from within the city; or by sallying out unto them with sword in hand: this, shows that the Chaldean army, under the command of the king of Babylon, was now without the walls of Jerusalem besieging it:

and I will assemble them into the midst of this city; either the weapons of war, as Jarchi and others; which the Chaldeans, breaking into the city, should cause to be brought in to them in the middle of the city, and there slay them with them: or rather the Chaldeans, as Kimchi; who, though now without the walls, and which the Jews thought a sufficient security for them; yet should not be long there, but the walls would be broken down, and they should enter the city, and rendezvous their whole army in the midst of it.

Ver. 5. *And myself will fight against you*, etc.] So far from being entreated to do for them according to his wondrous works in times past, as their friend; that he will set himself against them as their enemy; and sad it is to have God for an enemy: if God be for a people, none can be against them to do them any hurt; but if he is against them, it signifies nothing who is for them: this must be much more terrible to them than the whole Chaldean army, and the king of Babylon at the head of them:

with an outstretched hand, and with a strong arm; such as he had used formerly in delivering Israel out of Egypt, but now in delivering them into the hands of their enemies; and out of the reach of such a hand there is no getting; and under the weight of such an arm there is no supporting; (see ^{<B86>}Exodus 6:6 13:9);

even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath; because of their sins and iniquities. This heap of words is used to show the greatness of his indignation: this was not the chastisement of a father, but the rebuke of an enemy; not a correction in love, but in hot displeasure; a punishment inflicted in vindictive wrath by a righteous Judge, appearing in a warlike manner.

Ver. 6. *And I will smite the inhabitants of this city*, etc.] With one or other of his arrows after mentioned: or, “them that abide in this city”^{f424}; that do not go out of it, and surrender themselves to the king of Babylon; (see ^{<209>}Jeremiah 21:9);

both man and beast; the latter for the sin of the former; particularly such beasts as were fit for food are meant, whereby the famine would be increased, and so the greater destruction of men:

they shall die of a great pestilence; both man and beast; a disease which comes immediately from the hand of God; hence Hippocrates used to call it **το ψειλον**, “the divine disease”: here it denotes a very uncommon one, which should sweep away large numbers; called great, both for quality, or the nature of it, and for the quantity of persons that died of it.

Ver. 7. *And afterwards, saith the Lord God*, etc.] After there should be so great a mortality among men and beasts:

I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants; the king himself shall not escape; though he shall not die by the pestilence, or famine, or sword, yet he shall fall into the hands of the Chaldeans, and also “his servants”, his courtiers, and counsellors:

and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine; such of the inhabitants of the city, as well as those at court, that died not by the sword, famine, and pestilence: these should be delivered

into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; who was now with his army without the walls of the city besieging it:

and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life; the Chaldeans, who were their implacable enemies, and cruel, and whom nothing would satisfy but their lives:

he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; that is, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, or, however, the army under his command; for what was done by the one is ascribed to the other: this is to be understood of such that fell into their hands upon taking the city, and who endeavoured to make their escape; (see ^{<3904>}Jeremiah 39:4-6);

he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy; they had no regard to rank or figure, to age or sex; the sons of the king were slain before his eyes, and then his eyes were put out; princes were hanged up by the hand; and no compassion shown to old or young, man or maiden; (see ^{<3510>}Jeremiah 52:10,11 ^{<2512>}Lamentations 5:12,13 ^{<4817>}2 Chronicles 36:17).

This verse is remarkably long.

Ver. 8. *And unto the people thou shalt say, thus saith the Lord*, etc.]

These are the words, not of the prophet to the messengers of the king, ordering or advising them what they each of them should say to the people; for the message by them is finished; but they are the words of the Lord to the prophet, directing him what he should say to the people at this critical juncture:

behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death; the way how to preserve their lives; and which, if they did not choose to take, would be inevitable death. The allusion seems to be to a phrase used by Moses, when he gave the law; obedience to which would issue in life, and disobedience in death, (^{<1515>}Deuteronomy 30:15,19).

Ver. 9. *He that abideth in this city*, etc.] Imagining himself safe there; not fearing its being taken by the king of Babylon; though it was so often foretold by the prophet of the Lord that it should:

shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: by the first of these, in sallying out against the enemy; and by the other two, which raged within the city:

but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live; not fall upon them, as the words may be literally rendered; so it would describe such that went out of the city and sallied upon them; whereas it designs such who should go out of the city, and surrender themselves unto the Chaldeans; submit to them, so as to obey them, as the Targum adds; such shall have their lives spared:

and his life shall be unto him for a prey; it shall be like a spoil or booty taken out of an enemy's hands; it shall be with difficulty obtained, and with joy possessed, as a prey or spoil is.

Ver. 10. *For I have set my face against this city*, etc.] Or “my fury”, as the Targum; their sins had provoked the eyes of his glory; he was wroth with them, and determined to cut them off; his mind was set against them, and upon their ruin; and there was no turning him from it:

for evil, and not for good, saith the Lord; to bring the evil of punishment upon them for the evil of their sins, and not do any good unto them, they were so ill deserving of:

it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon; come under his power and dominion, by the will of the Lord; for it was he that gave it into his hands, because of the sins of the inhabitants of it:

and he shall burn it with fire; as he did, both the house of the Lord in it, the temple, the king's house or palace, the stately houses of the princes and nobles, and even the houses of all the people; (see ²⁵¹³Jeremiah 52:13).

Ver. 11. *And touching the house of the king of Judah, [say]*, etc.] Or “to the house of the king of Judah”⁴²⁵; that is, his palace, as Calvin understands it; go to it, and there say as follows, as in (²²¹¹Jeremiah 22:1); and some think that this part of the chapter belongs to that, and was not delivered at the time the former part of it was; but before the peremptory decree was gone forth, to deliver the city into the hand of the king of Babylon to be burned with fire; since, upon a reformation, some hope of pardon and salvation is yet given. The Syriac version joins this clause to (²²¹⁰Jeremiah 21:10); “and he shall burn it with fire, and the house of the king of Judah”; burn the city of Jerusalem, and particularly the king's palace; but by “the house of the king” is not meant his dwelling house, but his family, himself, his sons, his servants, his courtiers and nobles, to whom the following speech is directed:

hear ye the word of the Lord; and obey it; for not bare hearing is meant, but a reverent attention to, and a cheerful and ready performance of, what is heard.

Ver. 12. *O house of David, thus saith the Lord*, etc.] This appellation is made use of to put them in mind of their descent, and to observe to them how much it became them to follow the example of so illustrious an ancestor, from whom they had the honour to descend; by doing judgment and justice as he did, (^{f4085}2 Samuel 8:15); or, otherwise, their being his seed would not secure them from ruin and destruction:

execute judgment in the morning; be at it early, and dispatch it speedily; show a hearty regard for it; prefer it to eating and drinking; and do not delay it to the prejudice of persons concerned. The power of judgment with the Jews belonged to the king; he was supreme judge in their courts; they judged, and were judged, the Jews say ^{f426}; by whom judgment was executed in a morning, and not in any other part of the day; and the case judged ought, as they say, to be as clear as the morning ^{f427}:

and deliver [him that is] spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; that had anything taken from him by force or fraud; that was either robbed or cheated of his substance; or was refused what he had lent to or entrusted another with; or was by any ways and means wronged and injured by another in his person or property. This suggests that things of this kind were not done, and were the reason why the Lord would deliver them up into the hands of their enemies, or cause his judgments to fall upon them:

lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench [it]; or put a stop to it, by all their prayers and entreaties, or by all that they can say or do:

because of the evil of your doings; it is a sad thing when princes set bad examples; it is highly provoking to God, whose deputies they are; and it becomes them to begin a reformation, and lead it on, or they cannot expect safety for themselves and their people.

Ver. 13. *Behold, I [am] against thee*, etc.] Or, “behold, I unto thee”^{f428}; to be supplied either thus, “behold, I say unto thee”^{f429}; what follows; and therefore take notice of it, attend unto it: or, “behold, I come unto thee”^{f430}; who bid defiance to all their enemies to come near them, as in the latter part of the verse. The Targum is,

“lo, I send my fury against thee;”

and the phrase denotes the Lord’s opposition to them; his setting himself against them, and coming out unto them in his great wrath:

O inhabitant of the valley, [and] rock of the plain, saith the Lord; a description of Jerusalem; between the lower and higher part of which lay a valley, called Tyropaeon, which divided the two hills, on which the city was built^{f431}; yea, the whole city was on high, on a rock, and around it a valley or plain; and because it was built upon a rock, and fortified with hills and mountains, the inhabitants of it thought themselves safe and secure, and even impregnable; hence it follows:

which say, who shall come down against us? who shall enter into our habitations? who of our neighbours dare to make a descent upon us? or are so weak and foolish as to attempt to break through our fortifications, natural and artificial, and enter into our houses, and take away our persons, and spoil us of our goods? we defy them.

Ver. 14. *But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the Lord,* etc.] The situation of their city, and the strength of its fortifications, however sufficient they might be thought to keep out an enemy from annoying them; yet it was impossible to hinder the Lord’s coming among them, as he here threatens to do; and “visit” them, as the word signifies, in a way of wrath and justice, according to the demerit of their sins, expressed by “the fruit of their doings”; their punishment was the reward of their unrighteousness, the effect of their sinful practices; and, though this was dreadful and terrible, they could not but own it was just and equitable:

and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof; not in the forest of Lebanon, but in the city of Jerusalem; whose houses stood as thick as trees in a forest, and which many of them, at least the most stately, might be built or ceiled with cedars from Mount Lebanon and its forest; though some understand this of the cities and towns about Jerusalem; and so the Targum renders it, “in its cities”; and the Syriac version, “its towns”; but these seem rather meant in the following clause:

and it shall devour all things round about it; the mountains and trees upon them, the cities and towns adjacent.

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 22

This chapter is a prophecy of what should befall the sons of Josiah, Jehoahaz or Shallum; Jehoiakim and Jeconiah. It begins with an exhortation to the then reigning prince, Jehoiakim, his family and court, to do justice, relieve the oppressed, and refrain from doing injury to any; with a promise of prosperity upon so doing, (²⁴²¹Jeremiah 22:1-4); but, on the contrary behaviour, the king's family, however precious they had been in the sight of the Lord, should be destroyed, by persons described as fit for such work, which would occasion others to inquire the cause of such destruction; when it would be told them, it was for their apostasy from the Lord, their breaking covenant with him, and their idolatry, (^{2421b}Jeremiah 22:5-9); then of Shallum, who was then carried captive, it is predicted that he should never return more, which was matter of greater lamentation than the death of his father Josiah, (^{2421c}Jeremiah 22:10-12); next Jehoiakim, the present king on the throne, is reproved, and a woe denounced upon him for his injustice, luxury, covetousness, rapine, and murders, (^{2421d}Jeremiah 22:13-17); and it is particularly threatened that he should die unlamented, and have no burial, (^{2421e}Jeremiah 22:18,19); and then the people of the land are called upon to mourning and lamentation, their kings one after another being carried captive, (^{2421f}Jeremiah 22:20-23); also Jeconiah the king's son, and who succeeded him, is threatened with rejection from the Lord, and a delivery of him up into the hand of the king of Babylon, with exile in a strange country, and death there, and that without children; so that Solomon's line should cease in him, (^{2421g}Jeremiah 22:24-30).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, go down to the house of the king of Judah,* etc.] To the palace of Jehoiakim, who was now the reigning king; the prophet is bid to go down to it, because, as Kimchi thinks, he was now upon the mountain of the house, or in the temple, from whence to the king's house there was a descent:

and speak there this word; of prophecy, relating to the several kings hereafter mentioned. This prophecy was delivered some years before that in the preceding chapter, though it stands here. It is indeed by some

thought to be repeated here on occasion of what is before said, and for the confirmation of it, putting in mind of what he had prophesied in former times: and they render the words, with which it begins, “thus hath the Lord said”^{f432}; so he said to me years ago; which agrees with what is now delivered.

Ver. 2. *And say, hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah,* etc.] O Jehoiakim king of Judah, hear the word of the King of kings; listen to it, and obey it, as kings ought to do; and it is for their good, as well as it is their duty, so to do:

that sittest upon the throne of David; whom he mentions, to put him in mind of his illustrious ancestor, whose successor he was, that he might be prompted to follow his example:

thou, and thy servants, and that people that enter in by these gates; the king and his courtiers, his nobles and privy counsellors, that were continually waiting upon him, and were frequently passing and repassing the gates of the palace; for not the gates of the court in the temple are meant, as Kimchi suggests; and all other people, that either waited on or came to the king, upon business, with their suits, and to have their causes heard and tried.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord, execute ye judgment and righteousness,* etc.] Judge righteous Judgment; give the cause to whom it belongs, without respect of persons, and without a bribe or corruption; do no unrighteousness to any, by withholding from them what is due unto them, which was what this prince was chargeable with, (²²¹³Jeremiah 22:13);

and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; that was robbed or wronged of his property by one superior to him in power or cunning; (see Gill on “²¹¹²Jeremiah 21:12”);

and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow: who are not in a situation, and in such a condition and circumstances, as to defend themselves; and whom God has a peculiar regard unto; and therefore they who are his deputies and vicegerents, as kings and civil magistrates are, ought to protect such persons, and neither grieve and injure them themselves, nor suffer others to do it:

neither shed innocent blood in this place; to grieve and wrong the above persons is a very great evil, but to shed the blood of innocent persons is a

greater still; and this is aggravated by being committed by such who are set over men to secure and preserve their properties and their lives; and such heinous sins as these the present reigning king of Judah was guilty of; which is the reason of their being mentioned; (see ^{<227>}Jeremiah 22:17).

Ver. 4. *For if ye do this thing indeed*, etc.] Or, “in doing do this word”^{f433}; diligently and carefully attend to this word of exhortation, and constantly perform the duties required:

then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David; or, upon the throne for David: in his room and stead, as successors of his; or of his lineage and descent, as the Vulgate Latin version. The meaning is, that should the kings of Judah do the duty of their office, before pointed at, there should never be any want of successors of the seed of David; but there should be a race of kings descending from him, and sitting on his throne in all after ages, who should dwell in the royal palace, and go in and out at the gates of it; and they should also live in great pomp and splendour, in royal dignity, answerable to their characters:

riding in chariots, and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people; the king, his nobles, and other his attendants; some on one, and some on another, when they went out or came in; (see ^{<475>}Jeremiah 17:25).

Ver. 5. *But if ye will not hear these words*, etc.] Will give no attention, and yield no obedience to them:

I swear by myself, saith the Lord; and by a greater he cannot swear; and that is the reason why he swears by himself, (^{<863>}Hebrews 6:13); and as, when he swears to a promise, it shows the immutability of it, the certainty of its performance, and that it is irreversible, and never repented of, nor revoked; so it is when he swears to a threatening. The Targum is,

“by my word I swear:”

that this house shall become a desolation; meaning not the temple, nor the city, but the king’s palace.

Ver. 6. *For thus saith the Lord unto the king’s house of Judah*, etc.] That is, to the family of the king of Judah; though it may be rendered, “concerning the house of the king of Judah”^{f434}; and so refer to his palace as before:

thou [art] Gilead unto me, [and] the head of Lebanon; or, though like to Gilead (which was a very fruitful country) for wealth, riches, and all kind of valuable things; and like to the top of Mount Lebanon^{f435}, being set with tall cedars, for stateliness. So the Targum is,

“although thou art beloved before me more than the sanctuary, which is high upon the top of the mountains:”

or thou shall be as Gilead, and Mount Lebanon, which belonged to the ten tribes of Israel, and are put for the whole kingdom of Israel, which was wasted by the king of Assyria; and in like condition should the royal palace at Jerusalem be, notwithstanding all its riches and grandeur, and so the city and temple likewise; as follows:

[yet] surely I will make thee a wilderness, [and] cities [which] are not inhabited; though as fruitful as Gilead, yet shall become like a barren desert; and though full of children, courtiers, princes, and nobles, yet shall be like cities quite depopulated: or, “if I do not make thee”^{f436}, etc. it is in the form of an oath, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; and to be supplied thus, if I do not do as I have said, let me never be believed; let me be reckoned a liar, or not thought to be God, and the like. It shows the certain accomplishment of these things.

Ver. 7. *And I will prepare destroyers against thee*, etc.] The Chaldeans, men of savage dispositions, bent upon the destruction of their neighbours; and who had already destroyed many nations, and so fit instruments for such service, as after mentioned; and who yet did not come merely of themselves, but were moved and directed to it by the powerful and all wise providence of God, in consequence of a previous preparation and appointment of them by the Lord in his counsels and purposes. It is, in the original text, “I will sanctify destroyers”^{f437}; and not only intends a purpose and design; but suggests, that what they should do by his will and order would be consistent with his holiness and justice; and also that being prepared and ready, they might quickly expect a visit from them:

everyone with his weapons; of war, or slaughter weapons, as in (^{310D}Ezekiel 9:2); or, “a man and his weapons”^{f438}; not a single man only, as Nebuchadnezzar, but him and his army; everyone of the destroyers prepared with proper instruments to do execution: and

they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast [them] into the fire; the sons of the king, the princes of the blood, the nobles of the land, and other

persons of rank and distinction, comparable to the tall cedars of Lebanon; so the Targum,

“and they shall slay the beauty of thy mighty ones, as the trees of a forest are cut down, and cast into the fire;”

or else the stately palaces of the king and his nobles, and other beautiful buildings, which were lined and ceiled with cedar, are here meant; and which the Chaldeans burnt with fire, (²⁶²³Jeremiah 52:13).

Ver. 8. *And many nations shall pass by this city*, etc.] After it is burned down and destroyed; that is, people out of many nations travelling that way:

and they shall say every man to his neighbour; as in company together, passing along the ruined walls of the city:

wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city? so fortified and so full of people; the metropolis of the whole nation; the greatest city in the east; yea, the joy of the whole earth; a city peculiarly dear to the Lord; greatly honoured by him with his presence, worship, and ordinances, and yet now in ruins; how comes this to pass? they see and acknowledge the hand of the Lord in it, having a better notion of things than the Jews themselves had.

Ver. 9. *Then they shall answer*, etc.] Or, “it shall be answered”^{f439}; by some in company, acquainted with the history of this people:

because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God; the Lord was the God of these people; he chose them for his peculiar people, and distinguished them by his favours from others; a covenant was made with them, in which many good things were promised them upon their obedience; this was kept by him, but forsaken and broken by them; they forsook their covenant God, his law and his worship; and that was the cause of their ruin:

and worshipped other gods, and served them; the idols of the people, as the Targum; they left the true God, who had done great and good things for them, and worshipped those who were only gods by name, and not by nature; and served stocks and stones, the vanities of the Gentiles, who could not bestow one good thing on them; such were their stupidity and ingratitude, and therefore very justly given up to destruction. This seems to

refer, as Cocceius thinks, not to the first destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, when it had not so clear and full an accomplishment; but to the second destruction of it by the Romans, and the times following that; when the Gospel being preached among the Gentiles, they had a better understanding of the true God, and of his covenant, and of the vanity of idolatry, and of the state of the Jewish nation, and the religion of it, and of the true causes of their ruin.

Ver. 10. *Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him*, etc.] Not Jehoiakim, as Jarchi and Kimchi; but King Josiah, slain by Pharaohnecho; who, being a pious prince, a good king, and very useful, and much beloved by his people, great lamentation was made for him by them, and by the prophet also; but now he exhorts them to cease weeping, or at least not to weep so much for him, it being well with him, and he taken away from evil to come; and especially since they had other and worse things to lament; (see ^{<1485t>}2 Chronicles 35:24,25);

[but] weep sore for him that goeth away: or, “in weeping weep”^{f440}: weep bitterly, and in good earnest; there is reason for it; for him that was about to go, or was gone out of his own land, even Jehoahaz or Shallum, after mentioned, who reigned but three months, and was put into bonds by Pharaohnecho king of Egypt, and carried by him thither, (^{<1480t>}2 Chronicles 36:4);

for he shall return no more, nor see his native country; for he died in Egypt, (^{<1233t>}2 Kings 23:34); Jarchi interprets the dead, in the first clause, of Jehoiakim, who died before the gate, when they had bound him to carry him captive, (^{<1486t>}2 Chronicles 36:6); “and him that goeth away”, of Jeconiah and Zedekiah, who were both carried captive; and so Kimchi; but the former interpretation is best. Some understand this not of particular persons, but of the people in general; signifying that they were more happy that were dead, and less to be lamented, than those that were alive, and would be carried captive, and never see their own country any more; (see ^{<200t>}Ecclesiastes 4:2); but particular persons seem manifestly designed.

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord touching Shallum*, etc.] Not Shallum the fourth son of Josiah, (^{<1185t>}1 Chronicles 3:15); for it is not likely that he should immediately succeed his father; nor Zedekiah, as Jarchi; nor Jeconiah, as Kimchi; but Jehoahaz, as Aben Ezra; who seems to have had several names, as Johanan, (^{<1185t>}1 Chronicles 3:15); and Shallum here:

the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father; the same is said of Jehoahaz, (^{<48B>}2 Chronicles 36:1);

which went forth out of this place; out of Jerusalem, being put down there from his throne by Pharaohnecho, and carried by him into Egypt, (^{<48B>}2 Chronicles 36:3,4);

he shall not return thither any more; he died in Egypt, or however out of his own land; but was alive when this prophecy was delivered out, which was in the reign of his brother Jehoiakim, as some following verses show.

Ver. 12. *But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive*, etc.] Even in Egypt, where Pharaohnecho and his army carried him captive, as before observed:

and he shall see his land no more; the land of Judah, where he was born, and over which he had been king: this is repeated to show the certainty of it, and what reason there was for the above lamentation; since the people might have been in hopes of the return of him, but now they are assured they had no ground for it; who, though he was not a good prince, yet perhaps not so bad as his brother Jehoiakim, who succeeded him; who appears, by what follows, to have been a very unjust, tyrannical, and oppressive prince; and therefore there was great occasion for mourning on the account of Shallum, who very likely was more promising.

Ver. 13. *Woe unto him that buildeth his house by righteousness, and his chambers by wrong*, etc.] This respects Jehoiakim, the then reigning king; who, not content with the palace the kings of Judah before him had lived in, built another; or however enlarged that, and made great alterations in it; but this he did either with money ill gotten, or perverted to a wrong use, which ought to have been otherwise laid out; or by not paying for the materials of whom they were bought, or the workmen for their workmanship; and perhaps this may be the reason why so much notice is taken of the king's house or palace in the former part of the chapter, and why it is threatened with desolation, (^{<22B>}Jeremiah 22:1,4-6);

[that] useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; or, "that serveth [himself] of his neighbour freely"; or, "makes him serve freely"^{f441}; "and giveth him not his work"^{f442}; makes him, work for nothing; gives him no wages for it, but keeps back the hire of the labourers; which is a crying sin in any person, and much more in a king; (see ^{<58B>}James 5:4).

Ver. 14. *That saith, I will build me a wide house*, etc.] Or, “a house of measures”, or, “dimensions”^{f443}; a very large house, whose length and breadth measure much consisting of many spacious rooms, upper as well as lower; as follows:

and large chambers; or, “widened ones”; very spacious and roomy; or “aired”, or “airy”^{f444} ones”; through which the wind blows, or into which much air comes; so that they were good summer chambers, for which they might be built:

and cutteth him out windows; to let in light and air, as well as for ornament. Some render it, “and teareth my windows”^{f445}; as if he had taken some of the windows of the temple, and placed them in his palace, and so was guilty of sacrilege; but this is not very likely:

and [it is] ceiled with cedar; wainscotted with it; or the roof of it was covered with cedar, as Jarchi; or its beams and rafters were made of cedar, as Kimchi; it might be lined throughout with cedar:

and painted with vermilion. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “sinopis”; so called from Sinope, a city in Pontus, where it is found; of which Pliny says^{f446} there are three sorts, one red, another reddish, and a third between them both: this is the same with “minium” or vermilion. Strabo^{f447} says, in Cappadocia the best Sinopic minium or vermilion is produced, and which vies with that of Spain; and he says it is called sinopic, because the merchants used to bring it to that place (Sinope) before the commerce of the Ephesians reached the men of this country, Cappadocia; other versions^{f448}, besides the Vulgate Latin, so render it here. Schindler^{f449} renders the Hebrew word by this; and also by “cinnabar”, which is a red mineral stone, and chiefly found in quicksilver mines; and may be thought to be quicksilver petrified, and fixed by means of sulphur, and a subterraneous heat; for artificial cinnabar is made of a mixture of mercury and sulphur sublimed, and reduced into a kind of fine red glebe; and this is called by the painters vermilion; and is made more beautiful by grinding it with gum water, and a little saffron; which two drugs prevent its growing black: and there are two kinds of vermilion; the one natural, which is found in some silver mines, in form of a ruddy sand, of a bright beautiful red colour; the other is made of artificial cinnabar, ground up with white wine, and afterwards with the whites of eggs. There are two sorts of it that we have; the one of a deep red; the other pale; but are the same; the difference of colour only proceeding from the cinnabar’s being more or less

ground; when fine ground, the vermilion is pale, and is preferred to the coarser and redder. It is of considerable use among painters in oil and miniature^{f450}; and here it may be rendered, “anoointed with minium” or “vermilion”^{f451}; but it is questionable whether this vermilion was known so early. Kimchi here says, it is the same which the Arabians call “zingapher”, or cinnabar. The Hebrew word is “shashar”, which Junius and Tremellius translate “indico”^{f452}; and observe from Pliny^{f453}, that there is a people in India called Sasuri, from whence it is brought; but this is of a different colour from minium or vermilion; the one is blue, the other red; but, be it which it will, the painting was for ornament; and either colours look beautiful.

Ver. 15. *Shalt thou reign because thou closest [thyself] in cedar?* etc.] Dost thou think that thou shalt reign long, and thy throne be established firm and secure, because of thy cedar wainscot? as if that was a protection to thee, and were like the fortifications of a city or tower; when it may easily be broke to pieces, or burnt with fire; and must be a poor defence against a powerful enemy. The Targum is,

“dost thou think to be as the first king?”

as David; to be as great a prince, to keep as grand a court, and live in as splendid a manner, as he? The Septuagint version, instead of “ares”, a cedar, reads “Ahaz”, and takes it for the proper name of a king of Judah; and the Arabic version reads “Ahab”; and so the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint; and both confound it with the next clause; the former rendering the words thus, “shalt thou reign, that thou provokest in”, or “after the manner of Ahaz thy father?” and the latter thus,

“thou shalt not reign, because thou imitatest the original of Ahab thy father;”

but both wrong; though Grotius seems to approve of this reading:

did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? that is, Josiah his father, who ate and drank in moderation, and lived cheerfully and comfortably; and kept a good table like a prince, without such a magnificent palace as he, his son, had built; and without oppressing his subjects, and detaining the hire of the labourer: living in a grand manner, becoming a king, may be done consistent with doing justice and judgment; let but that be done, and a prince will not be blamed for living like himself, and for supporting the dignity of his character and office, as Josiah did:

[and] then [it was] well with him; or, “therefore [it was] well with him”^{f454} he was blessed of God, and was prosperous and successful; he was happy himself as a prince, and his people under him, both enjoying peace and prosperity; there are never better times than when justice is done; by it the throne is established.

Ver. 16. *He judged the cause of the poor and needy*, etc.] Who could not defend themselves against the rich and the mighty; he took their cause in hand, and, having heard it, determined it in their favour, and did them justice, as princes and civil magistrates ought to do:

then [it was] well [with him]; this is repeated, not only to show the certainty of it, but that it might be observed, and his example followed:

[was] not this to know me? saith the Lord; it is not by words only, but by deeds, that men show that they know the Lord; for some in words profess to know him, who in works deny him; when princes do the duty of their office, they thereby declare that they know and own the Lord, by, and under whom, they reign; that they have the fear of him before their eyes; this is a practical knowledge of him, and is well pleasing to him. The Targum is,

“is not this the knowledge with which I am well pleased? saith the Lord.”

Ver. 17. *But thine eyes and thine heart [are] not but for thy covetousness*, etc.] He was wholly intent upon gratifying that lust; his heart was meditating, contriving, and forming schemes for that purpose; and his eyes were looking out here and there for proper objects and opportunities to exercise it:

and for to shed innocent blood; in order to get their money, goods, and possessions into his hands; avarice often leads to murder:

and for oppression, and for violence, to do [it]; by making incursions, and seizing upon the properties of men, and converting them to his own use; so true it is, that covetousness, or the love of money, is the root of all evil, (⁵¹⁶⁰1 Timothy 6:10).

Ver. 18. *Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim*, etc.] This shows who is before spoken of and described; Jehoiakim, the then reigning king in Judah, whose name was Eliakim, but was changed by Pharaoh king

of Egypt, when he deposed his brother Jehoahaz or Shallum, and set him on the throne, (~~1234~~2 Kings 23:34);

the son of Josiah king of Judah; and who seems to have been his eldest son, though his brother Jehoahaz reigned before him; for he was but twenty three years of age when he began his reign, and he reigned but three months; and Jehoiakim was twenty five years old when he succeeded him, (~~1234~~2 Kings 23:31,36); his relation to Josiah is mentioned, not so much for his honour, but rather to his disgrace, and as an aggravation of his wickedness, that having so religious a parent, and such a religious education, and the advantage of such an example, and yet did so sadly degenerate: and it also suggests that this would be no security to him from the divine vengeance; but rather provoke it, to deal more severely with him;

they shall not lament for him; that is, his people, his subjects, shall not lament for him when dead, as they did for his father Josiah; so far from having any real grief or inward sorrow on account of his death, that they should not so much as outwardly express any, or use the common form at meeting together:

[saying], ah my brother! or, ah sister! a woman meeting her brother would not say to him, O my brother, what bad news is this! we have lost our king! nor he reply to her, O sister, it is so, the loss is great indeed! for this is not to be understood of the funeral “lessus” at the interment of a king or queen; lamenting them under these appellations of brother or sister, which is denied of this prince. Kimchi thinks it has reference to his relations, as that they should not mourn for him, and say, “ah my brother!” nor for his wife, who died at the same time, though not mentioned, ah sister! both should die unlamented, as by their subjects, so by their nearest friends and relations;

they shall not lament for him, [saying], ah lord! or, ah his glory! O our liege lord and sovereign, he is gone! where are his glory and majesty now? where are his crown, his sceptre, his robes, and other ensigns of royalty? So the Targum,

“woe, or alas, for the king; alas, for his kingdom;”

a heavy stroke, a sorrowful melancholy providence this! but nothing of this kind should be said; as he lived not beloved, because of his oppression and violence, so he died without any lamentation for him.

Ver. 19. *He shall be buried with the burial of an ass*, etc.] Have no burial at all, or no other than what any brute creature has; which, when it dies, is cast into a ditch, and becomes the food of dogs, and the fowls of the air. The “ass” is mentioned, as being a sordid stupid creature; and such an one was this king;

drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem; as the carcass of a beast is dragged about by dogs; or as a malefactor, when executed, is dragged and cast into a ditch: this perhaps was done by the Chaldeans, who, when he was slain, dragged him along, and cast him beyond the gates of Jerusalem. So Josephus^{f455} says, that when Nebuchadnezzar entered Jerusalem, he slew the most robust and beautiful with Jehoiakim their king, and ordered him to be cast without the walls unburied; and so, though he is said to “sleep with his fathers”, yet not to be buried with them, (^{<1216>}2 Kings 24:6). Kimchi says that he died without Jerusalem, as they were carrying him into captivity a second time; and the Chaldeans would not suffer him to be buried. Jerom reports, from the Hebrew history, that he was killed by the robbers and thieves of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Ammonites, and Moabites. Some think, that as he was bound in chains, in order to be carried to Babylon, that he was had there, and there died, and after his death used in this ignominious manner: and the words will bear to be rendered, “cast forth far beyond the gates of Jerusalem”^{f456}; even as far as Babylon; (see ^{<4416>}2 Chronicles 36:6).

Ver. 20. *Go up to Lebanon, and cry*, etc.] These words are directed to Jerusalem and its inhabitants, and to the people of the Jews; not to go up to the temple, as the Targum interprets it, so called, because made of the wood of Lebanon, as in (^{<3810>}Zechariah 11:1); or, as the Rabbins say, because it made white the sins of Israel; but the mountain of Lebanon, and from thence call to their neighbours for help in their present distress, as the Assyrians and Egyptians;

and lift up thy voice in Bashan; another high hill in the land of Israel. The Targum interprets this also of the gates of the mountain of the house; so called, as Jarchi thinks, because made of the oaks of Bashan; or, as Kimchi, because there were beasts continually there for sacrifice, as in Bashan, a pasture for cattle; but the mountain itself is intended;

and cry from the passages; or “from Abarim”; a mountain of this name on the borders of Moab, (^{<0272>}Numbers 27:12). Now these several high mountains are named, because from hence they might look around them,

and call to their neighbours, if any of them could help them: it is ironically spoken, for it is suggested that none of them could:

for all thy lovers are destroyed; their friends and allies, with whom they had not only entered into leagues, but had committed spiritual fornication with them; that is, idolatry, as the Egyptians and Assyrians; but these were now subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, and were at least so weakened and destroyed by him, that they could give no assistance to the Jews; (see ^{<1234>}2 Kings 24:7).

Ver. 21. *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity*, etc.] Or “prosperities”, or “tranquillities”^{<1457>}; when in their greatest affluence, in the height of it; this he did, when he sent to them his servants the prophets, as the Targum, and by them exhorted, reproved, and advised them:

[but] thou saidst, I will not hear; this was the language of their hearts and actions, though not of their mouths:

this [hath been] thy manner from thy youth; from the time they came out of Egypt, and first became a church and body politic; while they were in the wilderness; or when first settled in the land of Canaan: this was the infancy of their state; and from that time it was their manner and custom to reject the word of the Lord, and turn a deaf ear to it:

that thou obeyest not my voice; in his law, and by his prophets.

Ver. 22. *The wind shall eat up all thy pastors*, etc.] King, nobles, counsellors, priests, prophets, and elders of the people; they shall be carried away as chaff before the wind, or perish as trees and fruits are blasted with an east wind; to which Nebuchadnezzar and his army are sometimes compared; (see ^{<2487>}Jeremiah 18:17). The Targum is,

“all thy governors shall be scattered to every wind;”

and thy lovers shall go into captivity: the Assyrians and Egyptians, as before; (see ^{<2523>}Jeremiah 52:31,32);

surely then thou shalt be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness; being disappointed of all protection from their governors at home, and of all help from their allies abroad; and will then, when too late, be convinced of all their wickedness, and ashamed of it.

Ver. 23. *O inhabitant of Lebanon*, etc.] Jerusalem is meant, and the inhabitants of it, so called, because they lived near Lebanon, or in that land in which Lebanon was; or rather because they dwelt in houses made of the wood of Lebanon; and which stood as thick as the trees in the forest of Lebanon; and where they thought themselves safe and secure, according to the next clause; not but that there were inhabitants of the mountain of Lebanon, called Druses; and there were towns and villages on it, inhabited by people, as there are to this day. After four hours and a half travelling up the ascent, from the foot of the mountain, there is, as travellers^{f458} inform us, a small pretty village, called Eden; and besides that, at some distance from it, another called Canobine, where there is a convent of the Maronites, and is the seat of their patriarch; and near it a valley of that name, full of hermitages, cells and monasteries; but the former are here meant;

that makest thy nests in the cedars; in towns, palaces, and houses, covered, ceiled, rafted, and wainscotted with cedars; here they lived at ease and security, as birds in a nest. The Targum is,

“who dwellest in the house of the sanctuary, and among kings?
nourishing thy children;”

how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail? that is, either thou wilt seek grace and favour at the hand of God, and make supplication to him; thou wilt then be an humble supplicant, when in distress, though now proud and haughty^{f459}: or what favour wilt thou then find among those that come to waste and destroy thee? This refers to the calamity coming upon them by the Chaldeans, as the following words show:

Ver. 24. [*As*] *I live, saith the Lord*, etc.] The form of an oath, used to express the greater certainty of what is after delivered: swearing by his life is swearing by himself; (see ^{<3863>}Hebrews 6:13);

though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah; the same with Jeconiah, so nicknamed by way of contempt; and it may be to denote the diminution of his glory and kingdom, and the shortness of his reign:

were the signet upon my right hand; ever so near to him, or ever so much valued by him, as he had been before, and so constantly cared for and regarded by him; as a ring, with anything respectable engraved on it, is constantly wore by persons, and greatly valued; especially such as had on

them the image or picture of a person loved, as was usual in some countries, to which the allusion is by some thought to be: so the friends of Epicurus used to have his image engraved upon their rings, which they wore on their fingers in respect to him, and as an omen of good to themselves^{f460}; (see ^{<2186>}Song of Solomon 8:6 ^{<2396>}Isaiah 49:16 ^{<3023>}Haggai 2:23);

yet would I pluck thee thence: with great displeasure and indignation: it designs being removed from his throne and kingdom, and out of his native land, and carried into a far country, as follows.

Ver. 25. *And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life*, etc.] Cruel and bloodthirsty enemies, whom nothing would satisfy but his life; such were the persons following:

and into the hand [of them] whose face thou fearest: being a terrible savage people, to be dreaded both for their number and their cruelty; a strange change this, to be removed out of the hand of God into the hand of such an enemy;

even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; (see Gill on ^{<2202>}Jeremiah 21:2”);

and into the hand of the Chaldeans: who were the merciless and formidable people before mentioned: and this was fulfilled within three months after Jeconiah or Jehoiachin began to reign, and when he was but eighteen years of age, (^{<1218>}2 Kings 24:8,10-12).

Ver. 26. *And I will cast thee out*, etc.] Out of his palace, out of the city of Jerusalem, and out of the land of Judea:

and thy mother that bare thee; who very probably was a bad woman, and had brought up her son in an evil way, and had led him on and encouraged him in it, by her own example, and had been a partner with him in his sins: her name was Nehushta, a daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem; and as it was here predicted of her, so it was accomplished, (^{<1218>}2 Kings 24:8,15); it is very likely Jeconiah had no children before the captivity, since no mention is made of them, only of his mother that was cast out with him:

into another country, where ye were not born; the land of Chaldea, which was not the native place neither of him nor his mother; being both, as it seems probable, born in Jerusalem, or however in Judea:

and there shall ye die; both he and his mother; and so the Arabic version expresses it, “and there shall ye both die”; as no doubt they did, though we have no particular account of their death; as for Jeconiah, he lived a long time in captivity; it was in the “thirty seventh” year of his captivity that Evilmerodach king of Babylon showed favour to him above all the captive kings that were with him, and continued it to his death; but how long after that was is not known; (see ^{<3531>}Jeremiah 52:31-34).

Ver. 27. *But to the land whereunto they desire to return*, etc.] Or, “lift up their soul to return”^{f461}: either by making supplication to God, for it, (^{<3271>}Psalms 25:1); or buoying up themselves with vain hopes, founded upon the declarations of the false prophets, that they should return; and to which no doubt they had a natural desire, and comforted themselves with the hopes of it; but all in vain:

thither shall they not return; for they were to die, as before predicted, in another country, as they did, and never saw their own any more.

Ver. 28. *[Is] this man Coniah a despised broken idol?* etc.] Or like an idol that is nothing in the world, and like a broken one, that, whatever worship before was paid to it, has now none at all, but is despised by its votaries? he is such an one; though he was idolized by his people when he first came to the throne; but now his power and government being broken, and he carried captive, was despised by all; as his being called Coniah, and “this man” or fellow, show; which are used of him in a way of reproach and contempt;

[is he] a vessel wherein [is] no pleasure? he is. He is like a vessel made for dishonour, or is used for the most contemptible service; or like one that is cracked, or broken, or defiled, that no use can be made of it, or any delight taken in it; it is not fit to set up, to be looked at, or to be made use of;

wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed; which were in his loins, and were begotten by him in captivity; (see ^{<3371>}1 Chronicles 3:17,18); and so said to be cast out with him, when he was cast out of the land of Judea; just as Levi paid tithes in Abraham before he was born, (^{<3109>}Hebrews 7:9,10);

and are cast into a land which they know not? where they had no friends and acquaintance; doubtless it was for his sins and transgressions, and those of his people.

Ver. 29. *O earth, earth, earth*, etc.] Not Coniah himself, an earthly man; but either the inhabitants of the whole earth, or of the land of Israel; or rather the earth, on which men dwell, is here called upon as a witness to what is after said; to rebuke the stupidity of the people, and to quicken their attention to somewhat very remarkable and worthy of notice, and therefore the word is repeated three times. Some think reference is had to the land from which, and that to which, the Jews removed, and the land of Israel, through which they passed. So the Targum,

“out of his own land they carried him captive into another land; O land of Israel, receive the words of the Lord.”

Jarchi mentions another reason of this threefold appellation, because the land of Israel was divided into three parts, Judea, beyond Jordan, and Galilee;

hear the word of the Lord; which follows.

Ver. 30. *Thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless*, etc.] That is, Coniah, or Jeconiah; who though he had children in the captivity, yet they died in it, or however never succeeded him in the throne. This, to show the certainty of the thing, the Lord would have written. The speech is directed, as some think, to the angels, or to the prophets; though the words may be rendered impersonally, “let this man be written childless”, it may be set down, and taken for a sure and certain thing, as though it was written with a pen of iron, that he shall be alone, and die without children, and have none to reign after him;

a man [that] shall not prosper in his days; he sat but three months and ten days upon the throne, and all the rest of his days he lived in captivity, (^{418D}2 Chronicles 36:9); so that he was a very unfortunate prince;

for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah; none of them were so prosperous and happy as to arrive to the royal dignity, or to sit on the throne of David, and be kings of Judah. Here ended the race of kings of the house of David, until the King Messiah came; for though there were of his line that were governors of Judah, as Zerubbabel, yet not kings. Moreover, Jeconiah was the last of the house of David in the line of Solomon. Salathiel, of whom was Zerubbabel governor of Judah, was the son of Neri, who descended from Nathan the son of David; (see ^{418E}Luke 3:29,31), compared with (⁴¹¹²Matthew 1:12);

CHAPTER 23

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 23

This chapter contains threatenings to the Jewish governors, and to their priests and prophets, on account of their manifold sins; intermixed with gracious promises to the Lord's people, and particularly with a famous promise of the Messiah. The pastors or governors of Israel are charged with scattering and driving away the Lord's flock, for which they are threatened, (²²⁷⁰Jeremiah 23:1,2); and a promise is made of the gathering of the remnant of them, and of setting up other shepherds over them, under whom they should increase, and be comfortable, (²²⁷⁵Jeremiah 23:3,4); particularly the Messiah is promised; as David's righteous Branch; as a prosperous and righteous King; as the author of righteousness to his people, under whom they should have salvation and safety, (²²⁷⁵Jeremiah 23:5,6); so that in comparison of this salvation, the deliverance out of Egypt should not be spoken of, (²²⁷⁵Jeremiah 23:7,8); and then follows a sad complaint of the priests and prophets; of their profaneness, their adultery, swearing, lying, hypocrisy, and deception of the people; for all which they are severely threatened, (²²⁷⁵Jeremiah 23:9-15); wherefore the people are exhorted not to hearken to them, promising them peace and safety; whereas, by attending to the word of God, it might easily be seen that a storm of wrath was gone forth, and was ready to break, and would fall upon the head of the wicked, to the executing of the thoughts and purposes of God's heart, (²²⁷⁶Jeremiah 23:16-20); and the Lord declares he had not sent these prophets, as might be known from their not turning the people from their evil ways, (²²⁷⁷Jeremiah 23:21,22); whose conduct and behaviour could not be hid from the sight of the Lord, nor their prophecies from his ears, which were no other than dreams, and the deceits of their own hearts; and there was as great a difference between them and the word of the Lord, as between chaff and wheat; seeing his word in his hand is of great virtue and efficacy, whereas there was none in theirs, (²²⁷⁸Jeremiah 23:23-29); wherefore the Lord declares himself to be against these prophets, for stealing his word from their neighbour; for making use of his name, when they were not sent by him; and for causing the people to err by their lies, (²²⁷⁹Jeremiah 23:30-32); and both people, priest, and prophet, are

severely threatened for jeering and scoffing at the word of the Lord, calling it the burden of the Lord; which phrase they are forbid to use in a sneering way; and should they persist in it, they are told that God would forsake and forget them, and cast them out, and everlastingly punish them, (^(2E23)Jeremiah 23:39,40).

Ver. 1. *Woe be unto the pastors*, etc.] Or, “O ye shepherds” or “governors”, as the Targum; the civil rulers and magistrates, kings and princes of the land of Israel; since ecclesiastical rulers, the priests and prophets, are mentioned as distinct from them in (^(2E23)Jeremiah 23:9); whose business it was to rule and guide, protect and defend, the people: but, instead of that, they were such

that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord God; set them bad examples, led them into idolatry and other sins, which were the cause of their ruin, and of their being carried captive, and scattered in other countries; and their sin was the more aggravated, inasmuch as these people were the Lord’s pasture sheep, whom he had an interest in, and a regard unto, and had committed them to the care and charge of these pastors or governors, to be particularly taken care of.

Ver. 2. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel*, etc.] The covenant God of that people, who are Called his sheep, and the sheep of his pasture; having made a covenant with their fathers, and provided a good pasture for them, the land of Israel, where they enjoyed all blessings, civil and religious, and appointed persons over them to feed them; but these did not do their duty, and therefore the Lord was against them, as follows:

against the pastors that feed my people; whose office it was to feed, rule, and defend them; and who pretended to do it, but did it not;

ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; they had been the means of their being driven out of their dwellings, and out of their own land, and of their being among the nations of the world, and took no care for the return of them, any more than they concerned themselves for their welfare when over them; or they suffered the enemy, like beasts of prey, to come in among them, which scattered them, and drove them from their pasture, as sheep are by bears, dogs, and wolves; and took no care to preserve them from them, or to gather them together again to their pasture. The people of the Jews, at the time when Christ came, hereafter prophesied of, were scattered as sheep without a

shepherd, and are called the lost sheep of the house of Israel, (~~4086~~ Matthew 9:36 10:6 15:24);

behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord; that is, punish them for their iniquities; since they visited not the flock in a way of mercy and kindness, as the duty of their office required, the Lord would visit them in a way of justice, and punish them according to their deserts.

Ver. 3. *And I will gather the remnant of my flock, out of all countries,* etc.] Such of them as did not perish by the sword, famine, and pestilence, or died not in captivity, and chose not to remain in the kingdom where they were; for all did not return upon the edict of Cyrus: though some think this is to be understood of the gathering of God's elect, the remnant according to the election of grace, the children of God that were scattered abroad, by the sufferings and death of Christ, the Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be, hereafter prophesied of:

whither I have driven them; this, which is before charged upon the pastors, is taken by the Lord to himself; because this was not only permitted by him, namely, the dispersion and captivity of the Jews, but was inflicted by him as a punishment upon them for their sins, and the sins of their governors; but yet such was the mercy and goodness of God, as to return a remnant of them:

and will bring them again to their folds; to the city of Jerusalem, and their dwelling houses there, and in other places; an emblem of the Lord's bringing his chosen remnant, whether Jews or Gentiles, into a good fold and good pastures, to a Gospel church state, and the ordinances of it, (~~4106~~ John 10:16);

and they shall be fruitful and increase; the remnant of the flock returned to their own land and dwellings, and there grow numerous, and increase in wealth and riches; as Christ's spiritual sheep, gathered into his fold, become fruitful in grace and good works, and increase with the increase of God.

Ver. 4. *And I will set shepherds over them, which shall feed them,* etc.] Good shepherds, rulers and governors, that shall rule them with wholesome laws, and protect and defend them; such as Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and others, after the captivity: or Christian kings and princes, when the Gospel came to be published and established in many kingdoms and provinces, and the sheep of Christ were gathered out of them. Jerom

interprets these shepherds of the apostles of Christ; and it may include other ministers of the Gospel, who feed Christ's sheep with knowledge and understanding; (see ^{<3485>}Jeremiah 3:15);

and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed; not the shepherds, as Jerom understands it, but the sheep. This looks as if this prophecy had respect to more future times than those immediately following the return from the Babylonish captivity; since the Jews were made to fear, and were dismayed by Sanballat and Tobiah, and, in later times, by the Greeks and Romans; even to the times of Christ, and the Gospel dispensation; in which the saints receive not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, of Christ, have much spiritual peace and boldness of faith, and fear no enemy;

neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord; not one of the sheep brought back, or of the remnant gathered, shall be missing or lost; this is exactly true of Christ's sheep, (^{<4108>}John 10:28).

Ver. 5. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”^{f462}; and will soon be here, a few days, months, and years more; so it was usual with the prophets to represent the coming of Christ as near at hand, to comfort the saints, and keep up their faith and expectation of him, and especially the latter prophets; (see ^{<5006>}Haggai 2:6,7 ^{<3000>}Zechariah 9:9) (^{<3000>}Malachi 3:1); as also to usher in their prophecies of this sort with a behold, as a note of admiration, attention, and asseveration; (see ^{<2074>}Isaiah 7:14 ^{<3008>}Zechariah 3:8 6:12);

that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch; the Messiah; so it is explained by the Targum, which calls him the Messiah of the righteous; and by Kimchi and Ben Melech; and by the ancient Jews^{f463} also; who is frequently by the prophets spoken of as a branch, (^{<2000>}Isaiah 4:2 11:1) (^{<3008>}Zechariah 3:8 6:12); which respects his incarnation, his springing up and appearance in the earth, and the meanness and weakness of it; and here, his descent from the family of David, when that was in a low and mean condition, to be his successor in his throne and kingdom, not in a temporal, but in a spiritual sense; and is a branch and plant not of man's raising, but of the Lord's, his human nature being formed without the help of man; and is that tabernacle which God pitched, and not man; and is therefore elsewhere called the Branch of the Lord, and said to be brought forth by him, (^{<2000>}Isaiah 4:2 ^{<3008>}Zechariah 3:8); the epithet of “righteous” is given him, because righteous in himself, and the author of righteousness to

others; a branch that brings forth and bears the fruits of righteousness, from whence all those that are ingrafted in him come to have righteousness;

and a King shall reign and prosper; the King Messiah, the same with David's righteous Branch, his son and offspring; who was appointed by God the Father "King" over Zion, the church, from all eternity; was always promised and spoken of as a King, and came as such, though his kingdom was not with observation, it being not of this world; and when he ascended to heaven, he was declared Lord and Christ; and now "reigns" on the same throne with his Father, and will till all enemies are put under his footstool: and as he prospered in his priestly office, by obtaining the redemption and salvation of his people, which is the "pleasure of the Lord" that was to "prosper in his hand", (^{<2530>}Isaiah 53:10); so likewise in his kingly and prophetic offices, by going forth in his Gospel conquering and to conquer; riding forth therein prosperously, and subduing his enemies, and causing his ministers to triumph in him: or, "shall deal prudently"^{f464}, as the word is rendered in (^{<2523>}Isaiah 52:13); (see Gill on "^{<2523>}Isaiah 52:13");

and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: in his church, and among his people, by governing them with righteous laws, and by protecting and defending them from their enemies; for "all judgment [is] committed to the Son"; who will judge one day the whole world in righteousness; (see ^{<4152>}John 5:22 ^{<4473>}Acts 17:31 ^{<2307>}Isaiah 9:7).

Ver. 6. *In his days Judah shall be saved*, etc.] In the days of the Messiah, the righteous Branch, and reigning prosperous King, not only the people of the Jews, God's elect among them, but all that truly embrace him, and confess him, as Judah's name signifies, shall be saved from all their sins; from the law, its curse and condemnation; and from wrath to come; and from all their spiritual enemies. In the latter part of his days all Israel shall be saved, (^{<5125>}Romans 11:26);

and Israel shall dwell safely; without any fear of enemies, being saved from them; being in that city, the church, which has salvation for walls and bulwarks; angels encamping about them; the Lord as a wall of fire around them; the Spirit lifting up a standard against their enemies, when they come in like a flood; and the Messiah their rock and refuge, and strong tower, their strength and righteousness; as follows: for all the salvation and safety of the Lord's people are owing to the righteousness of Christ; the effect of which is peace, quietness, and assurance for ever:

and this [is] his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS; because he is the author of righteousness to his people, and is only so; no creature could be the author of it; unrighteous man cannot be the author of righteousness; and the righteousness of an angel is of no advantage to man; and indeed neither of the other divine Persons is the Lord our righteousness; for though they are both Jehovah, the Father and the Spirit, yet not our righteousness: the Father appointed and sent Christ to work it out; he approved and accepted of it, when wrought out; and imputes it to his people; but is not the author of it: so the Spirit convinces of the need of it; reveals it, and brings it near; works faith to receive it; and applies it, and pronounces a person justified by it; but is not the author of it; that the Son of God only is; who is become so by his obedience to the law, and by bearing the penalty of it; and who, having been delivered for our offences, rose again for our justification: and this righteousness, which he has wrought out to the satisfaction of law and justice, becomes “ours”; it being signed for us, and wrought out for us, by a free gift of it is given to us; ours through the imputation of it to us by the Father, and in virtue of our union to Christ, and interest in him; and through the application of it to us by the Spirit of God; who puts it upon us, and clothes us with it, and enables us to lay hold upon it, and claim interest in it; and which may be meant by Christ being “called our righteousness”; for the meaning is, not that he should commonly go by this name; but only that he should be that unto us which it signifies; and that we should by faith, even every true Israelite, every believer, call him our righteousness; say that we have righteousness in him make mention of that continually, and express our desires to be found atone in it; for so the words may be rendered, “and this is the name whereby he shall call him^{f465}, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”; and a sweet name to a sensible sinner it is; to one that has felt the guilt of sin in his conscience; seen his need of a righteousness, and the worth of it. That the Messiah is here meant is acknowledged by the Jews, ancient and modern^{f466}.

Ver. 7. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”^{f467}; and will begin to take place in a little time, even upon the Jews’ return from Babylon; and reached to the times of Christ, to which they have a special regard; and include the whole Gospel dispensation, even the latter day glory, when the Jews shall return to, and dwell in, their own land; as (²²⁷⁸Jeremiah 23:8); shows:

that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth: the people of Israel in particular, or the Lord's people in general, shall no more swear by the living God, described as follows; or, as the Targum, declare no more the power of God, in the instance next mentioned, they had been used to do:

which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt: which, though a wonderful deliverance, and never to be forgotten; yet not to be named with the redemption and salvation wrought out by Christ the Lord our righteousness; that being a deliverance from far greater and more powerful enemies, and from the far greater bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; nor with the restoration of the Jews in the latter day, which will be a most wonderful and amazing event, (^{f4115}Romans 11:15,25,26).

Ver. 8. *But, the Lord liveth*, etc.] Or they shall swear by the living God; or declare the power of the Lord, as the Targum, in their redemption by the Messiah:

which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them: which respects not only the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon, which lay north of Judea; but the conversion of many of the ten tribes, through the preaching of the Gospel in the several countries where they were, to which the apostles of Christ were sent with it; and also the gathering of them together at the latter day, when they shall turn to the Lord, and return to their own land; as follows:

and they shall dwell in their own land: which has never been fulfilled as yet of the seed of the house of Israel, or of the ten tribes; but will be when all Israel shall be saved.^{f468} This passage is applied in the Talmud^{f469} to the days of the Messiah; (see Gill on "^{f4164}Jeremiah 16:14-15").

Ver. 9. *Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets*, etc.] The false prophets, as the Targum rightly interprets it. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "to the prophets"; and makes a stop there; which agrees with the original^{f470}; so that it may be considered as the title of what follows; it being directed to them by the prophet, to let them know his concern for them; to expose their sin, and reclaim them; who was so affected with their case, that his "heart" within him was "broken" with grief and sorrow, because of their false doctrines and wicked lives; and because of the mischief they did the people, and the ruin they brought upon them, and themselves also:

all my bones shake; with dread and horror at the iniquities committed and the judgments approaching. The word, as Jarchi says, signifies such a fluttering motion as is made by the wings of a bird hovering over its nest. The same word is used in (^{<1000>}Genesis 1:2); which Ben Melech refers to here. The prophet shuddered at their dreadful impiety, and at the thoughts of what was coming upon them on that account:

I am like a drunken man; that can neither speak nor stand; that knows not what to say, or which way to go; so confused and astonished was the prophet at what he saw was doing by them, and was likely to befall them:

and like a man whom wine hath overcome; or, “has passed over”^{f471}; like waves and billows, so that he is drowned in it, and mastered by it:

because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness: because of the dishonour done to his holy name, and holy truths; because of the profanation of both in the mouths of these false prophets; they pretending to come in the name of the Lord, and to speak his words; and because of the dreadful judgments which he, the prophet, was sent to denounce against them from the Lord.

Ver. 10. *For the land is full of adulterers*, etc.] Of such as were guilty of corporeal adultery, and of spiritual adultery, which is idolatry. Now, though in this, and in the following verses, the prophet describes the men of his generation, both ecclesiastics and laics; yet also so as to have regard to the Jews in the times of Christ, to which this prophecy has respect; between whom there was a great resemblance; adulteries were so frequent in Christ’s time, that the Jews left off the use of the bitter waters^{f472}; and our Lord sometimes calls the generation in which he lived an adulterous one, (^{<1029>}Matthew 12:39 16:4);

for because of swearing the land mourneth; because of false swearing and cursing; because of the oaths and imprecations of men; or because of the curse of God, for the sins of men, the land was desert or desolate, as the Targum; it became barren and unfruitful, the land of Judea; just as the earth was cursed for the sin of man originally; though it seems rather to signify perjury or false swearing, which, and adultery, were the reigning vices of the age; (see ^{<1033>}Matthew 5:33-37);

the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up; or the pastures of the wilderness, where cattle used to feed, were dried up for want of rain, and so were unfruitful, and produced no grass for the beasts of the field:

and yet their course is evil; the course of their ministry or prophesying was bad; and the course of their lives and conversations was one continued series of iniquity; the race they ran, both prophet and people, was a wicked one; they ran and made haste to commit sin; though a professing people, their conversation was according to “the course of this world”, (^{<4111>}Ephesians 2:2); and not according to the rule of God’s word:

and their force [is] not right; or, “is not so”^{f473}; as it ought to be, or employed in the manner it should: the power and authority of the prophets over the people was not used, as it might have been, for the preserving of the people from sin; nor their courage and valour shown for truth, as it ought to have been; and they used their power to hurt and oppress, and not to relieve and help: so the Pharisees in Christ’s time laid heavy burdens on others, but would not move them themselves; and, through a pretence of devotion, devoured widows’ houses, (^{<4120>}Matthew 23:4,14). So some render the words here, “and their violence is not right”^{f474}; their rapine and oppression were very unjust; so that, besides adultery and swearing, they are charged with violence in particular, and with a wicked course of life in general.

Ver. 11. *For both prophet and priest are profane*, etc.] Being guilty of the afore mentioned sins. The Targum is,

“the scribe and the priest;”

and such were the scribes and priests in the time of our Lord; they played “the hypocrite”^{f475}, as some render the word here; and are often charged with the sin of hypocrisy, and called hypocrites, (^{<4128>}Matthew 22:18 23:13-15,23,25,27,29);

yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord; where they officiated in holy things, or should have done so; where the one should have instructed the people, and the other offered sacrifices for them, according to the will of God; there they committed wickedness, which was an aggravation of their sin, as was the case of Eli’s sons, (^{<4122>}1 Samuel 2:22-24); perhaps the same sin was committed by these men; or idolatry may be meant; setting up images, and building altars for them in the house of God; (see ^{<4173>}Jeremiah 7:30); or carrying on traffic and merchandise, whereby the temple was made a house of merchandise, as it was in the times of Christ, (^{<4124>}John 2:14-16).

Ver. 12. *Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery [ways] in the darkness*, etc.] Their course of life may fitly be compared, and in the issue will prove to be like to a man's walking in a dark night without any lamp or lantern to light him, and in a slippery way, scarce able to stand upon his legs, and cannot see to pick his way, nor where to step next, which is very uncomfortable and dangerous; such are blind leaders of the blind, and both in danger of slipping and falling into a ditch, (^{<4154>}Matthew 15:14);

they shall be driven on, and fall therein; hurried on by Satan, and their own lusts, in their sinful ways to their ruin; or forced on into captivity and destruction; their enemies and the just judgments of God pursuing them, like a man pursued by others in a dark and slippery way; who cannot stand to feel his way, but is obliged to go on, though he can scarce keep upon his legs, and knows not where to set his foot next; (see ^{<4886>}Psalm 35:6);

for I will bring evil upon them: the evil of punishment, which is from the Lord; as sword, famine, pestilence, or captivity:

[even] the year of their visitation, saith the Lord: the precise and exact time appointed by the Lord to visit them in a way of judgment for their iniquities; which was a set time that would certainly come, and they could not escape; and which may not only respect the time of the Babylonish captivity, but the destruction of the Jews by the Romans, which was the time of their visitation, (^{<2194>}Luke 19:44).

Ver. 13. *And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria*, etc.] The ten tribes of Israel, among whom, in Ahab's time there were many false prophets, Baal's prophets, even four hundred and fifty; whose "folly" the Lord had formerly taken notice of; even their idolatry and impiety for giving into which the ten tribes had been carried captive years ago. The word ^{f476} here used signifies that which is "unsavoury": something very unsavoury in their doctrines, and in their lives; they were as salt which has lost its savour and is good for nothing; to which bad ministers are compared, (^{<4153>}Matthew 5:13). These words are to be read in connection with the following, and may be rendered, "indeed I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria"; of Israel in times past; "but I have seen in the prophets of Jerusalem"^{f477} that which is far worse; and therefore they must not expect to escape; or, as the Syriac version, "as I have seen in the prophets of Samaria--so have I seen in the prophets of Jerusalem", etc. so that here is a comparison run between them; and the latter are represented as worse than the former, though they were bad enough; as follows: for

they prophesied in Baal; in the name of Baal, whose prophets they were; so the Targum,

“they prophesied in the name of idols:”

or, “they prophesied by Baal”, as the Septuagint version^{f478}; they pretended to be inspired by him, and to receive their prophecies from him: or, “they prophesied concerning Baal”; what he would do for them, for those that worshipped him. The Arabic version is, “they prophesied in my name to Baal”; which seems to be foreign from the sense of the place:

and caused my people Israel to err; by following their directions and instructions, and worshipping Baal.

Ver. 14. *I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing*, etc.] Or “but”, or “so have I seen”, etc. as before observed; even in the prophets of Jerusalem, where the temple was, and where the pure worship of God was professed to be observed, and that now, at the present time; as he had formerly seen and observed what was foolish, ridiculous, and impious, in the prophets of the ten tribes, and had punished them for it; so now at this instant he sees that in the prophets of Judea which was enough to make a man’s hair stand an end, as the word^{f479} signifies; or, as it may be derived from another root, what was “filthy”,^{f480} and obscene; as follows:

they commit adultery; or, “in committing adultery”,^{f481}; with their neighbours’ wives; for this rather than idolatry or spiritual adultery seems to be meant:

and walk in lies; or, “walking in lies”,^{f482}; constantly speaking lies in their common talk and conversation; so that they were not to be believed in anything they said; which was monstrous; and delivering out false doctrines in the name of the Lord, pretending they received them from him; which was worse than prophesying in the name of Baal:

they strengthen also the hands of evil doers, that none doth return from his wickedness; they hardened them in sin; partly by their false doctrines, extenuating their sins, putting a false gloss upon them, and promising them peace, though they lived in sin; and partly by their own wicked examples; the people concluding that what the prophets did they might do also; so that they never thought of repentance for their sins, or amendment of their lives; but went on in sin without remorse or reformation; not thinking anything about it, and not seeing any need of it; (see ⁴¹³²Ezekiel 13:22);

they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah; the prophets were all of them in God's account as the men of Sodom; who were exceeding great sinners before the Lord, daring and impudent in sinning; and the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that were led by them into the same wicked sentiments and practices, were like unto Gomorrah; and as they were like to them in sinning, So they would be in punishment; or a like punishment would be inflicted upon the prophets and people of Jerusalem as were upon Sodom and Gomorrah; (see ²¹⁰⁹Isaiah 1:9,10).

Ver. 15. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets,* etc.] Concerning the false prophets, as the Targum; their sin is before declared, and now their punishment:

behold, I will feed them with wormwood; with some bitter affliction and calamity; so the Targum,

“behold, I will bring upon them distress bitter as wormwood;”

they that have been fed with dainties, and lived upon the fat of the land; their views in pleasing the people with their lies being to serve their own bellies; now they shall fare after another manner:

and make them drink the water of gall: or, “the juice of hemlock”, as some; or “poison”, as others; “the savour of death”, so Kimchi; as they poisoned the people with their false doctrines, they shall drink poison themselves; they shall not only have that which is bitter and unpleasant, but that which is noxious and hurtful; not only a bitter potion, but a destructive one. The Targum is,

“I will cause them to drink a cup of the curse, bad as the heads of serpents;”

as pernicious as poison; (see ²¹⁸⁴Jeremiah 8:14 9:15);

for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land; by their false doctrines, and bad examples, debauchery, irreligion, and wickedness of all kinds, were encouraged, and spread all over the land; Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation, being infected by them, the contagion spread from thence throughout the country. Evil teachers have a bad influence all around them; from whom, and from whence, true doctrine and real religion should have been propagated; from them, and thence, was

the source of all impiety and pollution. Some render it, “hypocrisy”^{f483}, or “flattery”; as if by means of the hypocrisy and flattery of these false prophets, all manner of sin was countenanced; and the like hypocritical spirit and behaviour everywhere prevailed.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you*, etc.] Do not hear them; stop your ears at what they say; give no credit to them. The Targum is,

“do not receive the words of the false prophets that prophesy unto you:”

they make you vain; they filled their heads with vain and empty things, and their hearts with vain hopes, which deceived them; so the Targum,

“they deceive you;”

they taught them vain things, and made them vain and sinful in their lives and conversations; and therefore were not to be hearkened to:

they speak a vision of their own heart, [and] not out of the mouth of the Lord; what they imagined they saw was a device of their own hearts, and what was agreeable to them, which must be bad enough; a produce of their own brains; an invention of their own; mere doctrines of men, and not such as come from the mouth of God, are his revealed will, and according to his word; and therefore not to be hearkened to; for nothing is to be heard and received, in matters of religion, but what is according to the revelation of God’s will in his word; (see ^{<218D>}Isaiah 8:20). The Targum is,

“they speak to you the wickedness of their hearts, and not by the word of the Lord.”

Ver. 17. *They say still unto them that despise me*, etc.] That despised the word, worship, and ordinances of the Lord; with such mockers and scoffers at religion, such abandoned creatures, they associated themselves; finding that their prophecies and doctrines met with approbation and success among them. The Septuagint version is, “they say to them that put away the word of the Lord”; reject it, and cast it behind their backs; (see ^{<4136>}Acts 13:46);

the Lord hath said, ye shall have peace; all manner of prosperity; that they should dwell in their own land, and not go into captivity, and enjoy the good things of it in peace and prosperity; this they pretended they had from

the Lord; which was an aggravation of their sins; not only to tell a lie, but to tell it in the name of the Lord, and in direct opposition to what the true prophets said from the mouth of the Lord, particularly Jeremiah:

and they say unto everyone that walketh after the imagination of his own heart; which is evil, and that continually, (^{<0005>}Genesis 6:5); whose course of life is after the lusts of his own wicked heart; and a worse guide than these a man cannot well have: and this is a true character and description of an unregenerate man, who walks after the flesh, and not after the Spirit; after his own carnal heart, and the dictates of it; and not according to the will and word of God: and yet to such, to whom the Lord says, “there is no peace”, the false prophets said,

no evil shall come upon you; no evil of punishment for the evil of sin, as the prophets of the Lord had threatened; such as the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity.

Ver. 18. *For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord*, etc.] These are either the words of the Prophet Jeremiah; signifying that none of the false prophets were of God’s privy council, or were acquainted with his secrets, that they could tell the people they should have peace, and no evil come upon them; this they said, not from divine revelation, but from the imagination of their own hearts; for though the Lord does nothing but he reveals it to his servants, the prophets; yet not to men of such bad principles and wicked lives as they were: or rather these are the words of the false prophets; either taking this to themselves, that they were of God’s privy council, and knew his secrets, and ask who were besides themselves; or else insulting the prophets of the Lord, as though they took too much upon them to threaten the people with captivity and destruction, as if they were in the secret of the most High, and his privy counsellors; but that they thought themselves in such a situation seems to be the sense, from (^{<2272>}Jeremiah 23:22);

and hath perceived and heard his word? or, “hath seen and heard his word?”^{f484} seen a vision from him, and “heard” the word from his mouth, declaring the above things? or “seen” what was in his heart, what he purposed and designed to do; and “heard” what he said he would do?

who hath marked his word, and heard [it]? listened and attended to it, and obeyed it? not the false prophets, but the true ones; as the Targum of the whole is,

“for they stood not (or rose not up) that the secret from before the Lord might be revealed to them; and they saw not, nor heard his words; nor did they hearken to his word, nor receive;”

or obey; understanding this of the false prophets.

Ver. 19. *Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury*, etc.] Or, “behold, a whirlwind of the Lord, of the fury is gone forth”^{f485}; which latter clause explains the former; and, hews, that by “the whirlwind of the Lord” is meant his “fury” or “wrath”; which, like a whirlwind, would come suddenly, and at an unawares, and be very boisterous and powerful, and carry all before it; and which was gone forth from the Lord in the decree and commission; and would quickly break out and appear in the Chaldean army that would invade Judea and besiege Jerusalem, compared to a full and fanning wind, and its chariots to a whirlwind, (^{<2011>}Jeremiah 4:11-13); from whence it would appear, that these men, the false prophets, were not in the counsel of God; had seen no vision from him, nor had marked his word: since they prophesied of peace and prosperity, when a blustering storm was coming:

even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked; or “rest”^{f486} thereon; even on the head of the wicked prophets, and all such wicked persons as give heed unto them; on them it would fall with its full weight, and give excessive pain, and there continue to their utter ruin. Kimchi says this refers to the days of the Messiah, when all the wicked shall be consumed. It may refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, at least include it; which was a grievous whirlwind indeed.

Ver. 20. *The anger of the Lord shall not return*, etc.] Having a commission from him, and being sent forth on an errand to do business for him, it shall not return to him, without having done it; as a servant sent by his master does not return till he has finished what he was sent about:

until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart; all his counsels, purposes, and designs, respecting those his anger kindled against, the false prophets and wicked Jews:

in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly; when too late to avert it by repentance and reformation when all this shall be fulfilled, and the seventy years captivity take place; or, “in the end of days”^{f487}; in the latter part off time, when the Jews shall be converted, and seek the Lord their God, (^{<2015>}Hosea 3:5); then “shall [they] understand it with an understanding”^{f488},

as it may be rendered; when they shall have the veil removed from them, and turn to the Lord; then they shall have a true and thorough understanding of these things; of the cause and reason of them; and of the mind of God in them, and the ends to be answered by them. Kimchi says this will be in the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 21. *I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran*, etc.] They might be sent of men, and be encouraged by them; but they were not sent of God: it is not only necessary that men employed in religious affairs should have an external call, in an orderly way, from the church of God; but also an internal call from the Lord himself; he qualifying them with gifts, putting his word into their mouths, and inclining their hearts to publish it; (see ^{<3874>}Hebrews 5:4,5); but these false prophets had no mission nor commission from the Lord, nor were they sent on any errand, or with any message from him; and

yet they ran; showed great diligence and zeal, and made haste to tell the people what the Lord had never said to them, but what were the warm imaginations of their own heads and hearts; they ran a race or course of ministry, but it was not good, as in (^{<2230>}Jeremiah 23:10). The Targum adds,

“to do evil:”

I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied; wherefore what they prophesied was not the word of the Lord, but what they themselves devised; and so was what was false, as the Targum adds: it is a sad character of men when they speak in public neither by the will of God, nor according to the word of God.

Ver. 22. *But if they had stood in my counsel*, etc.] As they boasted they did; or, as they reproached the true prophets, and charged them with vanity and arrogance, in talking as if they had; had this been truly their case, as it was that of the prophets of the Lord:

and had caused my people to hear my words; or, “then they would have caused my people to hear my words”; had it been so, they would have heard first the words of the Lord themselves in secret and privately, and then they would have caused the people to have heard them; they would not have gone to them with their own lies; they would not have dared to have done that; they would have delivered nothing but what they had heard from the Lord:

then they should, or, “and they would”,

have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings; and not have strengthened their hands, and hardened them in their wickedness, and so kept them from repentance and reformation, (⁽²²³⁴⁾Jeremiah 23:14). The Lord argues from the efficacy and success of the ministry of the word to the truth of it, and their miss:, on from him; for though a good ministry is not always successful, at least so successful as could be wished for, and as it might reasonably be expected it would; yet it is more or less so; and at least it has a tendency to bring men off from their evil practices; and it attempts to do it, though it may fail in the execution; whereas a wicked ministry, such as this of the false prophets, had no tendency hereunto; nor was it the design of it; nor did they attempt it; but, on the contrary, encouraged and hardened men in sin.

Ver. 23. [*Am*] *I a God at hand, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or “near”^{f489}; that is, in heaven; and only sees, and hears, and observes persons and things there, being near unto him:

and not a God afar off? that sees, and hears, and takes notice of persons and things at a distance, even on earth. The meaning is, that he certainly was; and that persons and things on earth were as much under his cognizance and notice, as persons and things in heaven; which was quite contrary to the notions of these atheistical prophets and people; who, like Heathens, thought that God did not concern himself about persons and things on earth. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, without the interrogative, “I am a God near, saith the Lord, and not afar off”. The meaning is, that God is alike near in one place as in another; which is a very great truth; and a very comfortable one it is to the people of God, to whom he is near in all places, and at all times; he is a present help in time of trouble; he is near them, to hear their cries, and grant their requests; he is near to give them assistance in a time of need, and to deliver them out of all their troubles; to afford them his gracious presence, and to indulge them with communion with himself; to communicate all good things to them; to speak comfortably to them; to take them by the hand, and lead them in the way everlasting: he is at their right hand to uphold them with his, and to strengthen them with strength in their souls; to advise and counsel, and direct them; to rebuke their enemies, and save them from them that condemn them; and indeed there are no people like them, who have God so nigh unto them, in all things they call upon him for, (⁽²⁰⁴⁷⁾Deuteronomy 4:7);

and though he may seem at times to be afar off, and stand at a distance from them; when he hides his face; withdraws his gracious influences; does not appear at once for their relief in distress; but suffers them to be afflicted in one way or another; yet in reality he is not; but is nigh unto them when they call upon him: and this truth is as uncomfortable and dreadful to wicked men, who cannot go from his spirit, or flee from his presence; which is everywhere, in heaven and hell, in the earth and seas, even in the uttermost parts of them; there his eye is upon them, and his right hand can reach them: he is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. The Targum is,

“I God have created the world from the beginning, saith the Lord; and I God will renew the world for the righteous;”

(see ^{<GRB>}2 Peter 3:13); and some interpret the words of time, as well as of place; as if the sense was this, am I a God of late date, as the gods of the Heathens are? no, I am not: am I not a God from eternity who was before the world was, and the Creator of it, which they are not? verily I am: but the former sense is best, and most agreeable with the context, and what follows.

Ver. 24. *Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord,* etc.] If a man should hide himself in the most secret and hidden places of the earth, and do his works in the most private manner, so that no human eye can see him, he cannot hide himself or his actions from the Lord, who can see from heaven to earth, and through the darkest and thickest clouds, and into the very bowels of the earth, and the most hidden and secret recesses and caverns of it. The darkness and the light are both alike to him; and also near and distant, open and secret places:

do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord; not only with inhabitants, and with other effects of his power and providence; but with his essence, which is everywhere, and is infinite and immense, and cannot be contained in either, or be limited and circumscribed by space and place; (see ^{<IKZ>}1 Kings 8:27). The Targum is,

“does not my glory fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord;”

both of them are full of his glory; and every person and thing in either must be seen and known by him; and so the false prophets and their lies; in order to convince of the truth of which, all this is said, as appears by the following words.

Ver. 25. *I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name*, etc.] Or, “I hear what the prophets say”^{f490}, etc. though they thought God was at a distance from them, in the highest heavens, and neither saw, nor heard, nor took any notice of what was done on earth, they were greatly mistaken; he heard and observed with indignation the false doctrines and lying prophecies which they delivered out in his name to the people, whether in public or in private; for he is the Lord God omniscient and omnipresent; and therefore, though they deceived the people, they could not deceive him; who knew all their schemes and all their designs, from what principles they acted, and with what views;

saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed; not a common dream, but a divine dream; this was one way in which the Lord formerly made known his mind and will to his servants, (⁴⁹²⁶Numbers 12:6); wherefore these false prophets, in imitation of the true ones, and in order to gain credit from the people, pretended they had a dream from the Lord, in which such and such things were revealed to them; and this is repeated by them for the greater certainty of it, and to raise the people’s attention as to something very uncommon and extraordinary. So the Targum,

“saying, a word of prophecy has been shown to me in a dream.”

Now, though the people could not contradict them, or know any otherwise than as they might observe that they agreed not with the word of God, or with his will, as made known by the true prophets of the Lord; for if a man says he has dreamed so and so, another cannot say he has not; because no man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him; yet God, that knows all things, knew that these were all lies and impostures, and that they had never had a dream from him, or any revelation of his will in that way.

Ver. 26. *How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies?* etc.] To invent such lies, and deceive the people, and turn them away from God; agreeably to the preceding and following verses: this shows that this was not through ignorance and inadvertence; it was a meditated and studied thing by them; they contrived it in their hearts, and they were resolute and bent upon it, and took much delight and pleasure in it; their hearts were in it, and it was in them to do as they did; and in this way they had been long, but should continue no longer. Or the words may be rendered, “how long?”^{f491} and a stop be put there, being a short abrupt expression, like that in (⁴⁹⁰³Psalm 6:3); and the sense be, how long shall

they go on thus, pretending to dreams, and visions, and revelations from the Lord, and so impose upon the people? shall they always go on after this manner? no, they shall not: and then the next words may be read, “is there any thing in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies?”^{f492} nothing that is good; truth is not there; nothing but lies and deceit; the word of God is not there, as it is with the true prophet of the Lord, “he that hath my word”, as in (^{2P38}Jeremiah 23:28); there is no fear of God, nor knowledge of him and his will, nor faith in him, nor love to him, or any regard to his honour and glory;

yea, [they are] prophets of the deceit of their own hearts; they prophesy nothing but what their own deceitful hearts suggest to them, whereby they are deceived themselves, and deceive others, (^{2T13}2 Timothy 3:13).

Ver. 27. *Which think to cause my people to forget my name*, etc.] The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “my law”. The word and worship of God; from which men are drawn off by false teachers, and are in a fair way to be brought to atheism, and to forget that there is a God; for when once men are turned from the word of God to believe lies, and from the pure worship of God to a false religion, there is no knowing where things will end; and, indeed, it was the design of these false prophets, a scheme and device of theirs, in which they hoped to succeed

by their dreams; which, says the Lord,

they tell every man to his neighbour; privately from house to house, as well as publicly, to take off the people from all thoughts of God and his worship:

as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal: or, by Baal^{f493}; by means of Baal’s prophets in Samaria before mentioned; who seduced Israel from the pure worship of God, and made them forget him; having the name of Baal more in their minds and mouths than the name of God. The Syriac version is, “as their fathers forgot my name, and worshipped Baal”; and so the Targum,

“as their fathers forsook the worship of my name, and swore by the name of idols.”

Ver. 28. *The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream*, etc.] These words are directed not to a true prophet of the Lord, that has a dream from him, or something communicated to him in a dream by the Lord, which he

is to deliver as such; but to a false prophet, that says he has dreamed; and if he has dreamed a dream, let him tell it as a “dream”^{f494}; so some supply it, as the fruit of his own roving fancy and imagination in sleep; and not call it a revelation from the Lord, and impose it upon the people as such. The Septuagint version is, “let him tell his dream”; let him tell it as his own, and not as a dream from the Lord;

and he that hath my word; the word of prophecy by revelation, and under the influence of the Spirit of God, as the true prophets: “my word”; not the word of men, or the word spoken by angels, or the Scriptures in general; but the word of the Gospel, the word of peace and reconciliation, of righteousness, life, and salvation; the evangelical part of the word, though not to the exclusion of all the rest, but this chiefly: “he that hath it”; or “with whom”, or “in whom it is”^{f495}; who has it not only in his hands to read, nor merely in his head, so as to have speculative notions of it; but has it in his heart, where it is come with power, and is become the ingrafted word; and who has a large share of spiritual and experimental knowledge of it, and an ability and capacity to express it to the edification of others;

let him speak my word faithfully; or “truly”^{f496}; as it is. Ministers of the word are stewards, and it is required of such that they be faithful, and a more honourable character they cannot well have; and then may the word of the Lord be said to be spoken faithfully, when nothing else is spoken but that; when there is no mixture of man’s with it; and when the whole of it is spoken, and nothing kept back or concealed; when a man’s views in it are sincere and upright, and he aims only at the glory of God; and the good of immortal souls; when it is spoken out, openly and boldly, not as pleasing men, but God, and as in his sight, to whom the account must be given: or, “let him speak my word, truth”^{f497}; which is truth; or, for it is truth, as Kimchi; so this is a reason why it should be spoken freely, fully, publicly, and boldly, because it is truth, and nothing but truth: or, “let him speak my word as truth”; or as it is^{f498}; it comes from the God of truth; if lies in the Scriptures of truth; the subject matter of it is truth, Christ, who is truth itself, and those doctrines, relative to his person, office, and grace, and salvation by him; and it is the Spirit of truth that directs into it, owns it, and makes it useful;

what [is] the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord; there is no comparison between the one and the other; the one is greatly preferable to the other; there is as much difference between the dreams and lies of the false

prophets and the word of God, as there is between chaff and wheat. False doctrine is as “chaff”, light; when put into the balance of the sanctuary it is found wanting; it is of no value; it is as wood, hay, and stubble, in comparison of gold, silver, and precious stones; it is not fit for food, and has no nourishment in it, but the contrary, and its end is to be burned. Some doctrine is as “wheat”, choice and excellent, pure, solid, substantial, and of a nourishing and strengthening nature. And what is the one to the other? or what have they to do with one another? they should not be mixed together, but separated. So the Syriac version, “why do ye mix the chaff with the wheat?” (see ^{<4127>}2 Corinthians 2:17). The Targum interprets this of persons, paraphrasing the words thus,

“behold, as one separates between the chaff and the wheat, so I separate between the righteous and the wicked, saith the Lord.”

Wicked men are as “chaff”; such were the false prophets, and all ungodly men, for their emptiness, lightness, unprofitableness, and for their being fit fuel for everlasting burnings; (see ^{<506>}Psalm 1:5 ^{<4182>}Matthew 3:12); and good men, and true prophets of the Lord, and all the righteous, are as “wheat” for choiceness and excellency, purity and solidity; and these are not to be mixed together, should not now, nor will they be hereafter, (^{<4182>}Matthew 3:12 13:30).

Ver. 29. [*Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord*, etc.] The legal part of it is as fire; it is called a “fiery law”, (^{<6312>}Deuteronomy 33:2); like fire, it is quick and piercing, and penetrating into the hearts and consciences of men; and works wrath there, and raises a fearful expectation of fiery indignation; it threatens with everlasting fire; it sentences men to the fire of hell; and the righteous Judge, in the execution of it, will be a consuming fire to wicked men. The Gospel part of the word is like fire, on account of the light the entrance of it gives to sinners; by which they see their own impurity, impotence, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and the way of life and salvation by Christ; and by the light of this fire saints are directed in their walk and conversation; and by it immoralities, errors, and superstition, are detected: also on account of the heat of it; it is the means of a vital heat to sinners, the savour of life to them; and is warming and comforting to saints, and causes their hearts to burn within them; it inflames them with love to God, Christ, and one another, and with zeal for truth and the interest of a Redeemer; though it has a scorching and tormenting heat to wicked men, and fills them with

burning malice and envy, (^{<4116>}Revelation 11:5,10); and, through the corruption of human nature, is the occasion of contention and discord, for which reason Christ calls it fire, (^{<4124>}Luke 12:49); and indeed it has different effects on different objects, as fire, which hardens some things and softens others; (see ^{<4126>}2 Corinthians 2:16); moreover, it may be compared to fire for its purifying, separating, and trying nature: as fire purifies gold and silver, and separates the dross, and tries the metal, and shows it what it is; so the Gospel tries men's principles, and discovers what they are, and separates one from another: and also for its consuming nature; it opposes, weakens, and burns up the worst in man, his lusts and corruptions, which it teaches him to deny; and the best in man, all his holiness and righteousness he depended upon; and it burns up the chaff of false doctrine and human inventions before mentioned.

and like a hammer [that] breaketh the rock in pieces? to which the heart of man may be compared, being hardened by sin, confirmed in it; destitute of spiritual life; stupid and senseless; stubborn and inflexible; on which no impressions are made, and is impenitent and inflexible; (see ^{<3072>}Zechariah 7:12); now the word of the Lord, in the hand of the Spirit, is a means of breaking such hard hearts, and taking away the Obduracy and hardness of them; there is a legal contrition of it, through the law part of the word, by which there is a knowledge of sin, and the soul is wounded with a sense of it, and sore broken, but without any view of pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; and there is an evangelical contrition or brokenness of heart, through the Gospel part of the word, by means of which the stony heart is not only broken, but melted and dissolved into true evangelical repentance for sin, through the discoveries of a Saviour bruised and broken for its sin, and through a view of free and full pardon by his blood, and justification by his righteousness. Now the word is only an instrument; it is not the efficient cause of all this; as a hammer is but an instrument, and a passive one, can do nothing of itself; it must be taken up and used by a powerful hand, or it can do no execution; what is a hammer without a hand? so the Gospel is only an instrument in the hand of, he Lord; but when he takes it into his own hand, and strikes with it, it will break the hardest heart in pieces, and make a stony heart a heart of flesh, (^{<3065>}Ezekiel 36:26 ^{<4112>}Acts 11:2 ^{<4116>}Romans 1:16 ^{<3105>}1 Thessalonians 1:5 ^{<4704>}2 Corinthians 10:4,5).

Ver. 30. *Therefore, behold, I [am] against the prophets, saith the Lord,* etc.] The false prophets, with whom the Lord was displeased; he set

himself against them, and was determined to bring wrath and ruin on them. So the Targum,

“therefore, behold, I send my fury against the false prophets;”

that steal my word, or “words”^{f499},

everyone from his neighbour; either from the true prophets; beginning their prophecies as they did, with a “thus saith the Lord”; and mingling some words and phrases used by them, the better to ingratiate themselves among the people, and that they might be taken for the prophets of the Lord; as Pelagius, Austin says, used the word “grace”, the better to hide his sentiments, and cause them the more easily to be received by the people: or from the false prophets; they privately meeting, and consulting, and agreeing together what they should say to the people, as if they were the words of the Lord: or else from the people themselves; lessening their esteem for the words of the Lord; making them negligent of them and indifferent to them; and causing them to forget what they had heard and received.

Ver. 31. *Behold, I [am] against the prophets, saith the Lord*, etc.] Not another sort of prophets distinct from the former, or those that follow; but the same under another character, and against whom he was, and set his face on another occasion;

that use their tongues; at their pleasure, their lips being their own. So the Targum,

“who prophesy according to the will of their own hearts;”

talk in a haughty and insolent manner, speaking bold and daring things of the divine Being; or in a boasting bragging manner, extolling themselves, and speaking highly in their own commendations; or rather in a flattering way to the people: so some read it, by a transposition of a radical letter^{f500}, “that smooth their tongues”, as Kimchi; or speak smooth things with their tongues, to please the people:

and say, he saith; that is, “the Lord”, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions express it; that so they, might be the more easily believed by the people; but this was highly provoking to God, to father their lies and falsehoods upon him.

Ver. 32. *Behold, I [am] against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord*, etc.] And not true ones, such as the Lord spoke in to his prophets, and which they communicated from him to his people; (see ^{Q1126}Numbers 12:6);

and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; by the false doctrines and prophecies which they delivered, and by their loose and disorderly lives which they led; so that they debauched the principles of the people by the former, and their practices by the latter. Kimchi interprets the word translated “lightness” of lightness of their knowledge; as if it was through the shallowness of their judgments, and want of capacity in teaching, that the people were made to err by their false doctrines. The Targum interprets it of their temerity or rashness; and Schultens^{f501}, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, explains it of their pride and false glorying;

yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; wherefore they lied, and acted a vainglorious part, when they pretended they were sent by him, and had their orders from him what they should say; (see ^{Q1227}Jeremiah 23:21);

therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord; so far from it, that they did them a great deal of hurt by their lies and flatteries; seducing them from the ways and worship of God, and leading them on in such as would issue in their destruction, and did.

Ver. 33. *And when this people, or a prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee*, etc.] Any of the people, who were grown very profane; or any of the false prophets, who encouraged them in their irreligion and impiety; or any of the priests, who were in combination with them against the true prophets of the Lord; when any of these, in a scoffing jeering manner, should ask the Prophet Jeremiah,

saying, what [is] the burden of the Lord? or prophesy in the name of the Lord, as the Targum; and because some of the prophecies are called “burdens”, (see ^{Q1300}Isaiah 13:1); hence, by way of derision, they called every one so; and because many of these, though not all, were predictions of judgments and calamities that were to come on men; therefore they accounted all that the true prophets brought from the Lord as such, and sneering asked, what bad news do you bring now? what calamities are now to befall us? as if he was always a bringer of evil tidings;

thou shalt then say unto [them], what burden? making as if he was ignorant of what they meant; or rather as expressing indignation and resentment at the question; do you ask me such a question? I will tell you what it is, as follows: though the words may be rendered without an interrogation, “thou shalt then say unto [them], that which is a burden”^{f502}; which will fall heavy upon them, and be a burden unto them, and sink them down into ruin and destruction;

I will even forsake you, saith the Lord; so that they should have no more of his presence among them, or of prophecy with them, or of his protection of them.

Ver. 34. *And [as for] the prophet, and the priest, and the people,* etc.] Be they one or the other, or all of them; no regard will be had to their character and office, rank and dignity:

that shall say, the burden of the Lord; using that phrase in a bantering and ludicrous manner:

I will even punish that man and his house; not only he, but his family, shall suffer for it. This shows how much it is resented by the Lord, and what a dangerous thing it is to lampoon the word of God, to make a jest of Scripture phrases, or to joke with them; this is foolish jesting, which is not convenient, yea, impious and abominable. It is also hard jesting with edge tools.

Ver. 35. *Thus shall ye say everyone to his neighbour, and everyone to his brother,* etc.] When conferring about religious things, and the word of God in particular; when any inquiry is made of another, whether any message from the Lord by his prophets? or what is it? that it should not be put in such deriding and calumniating words, “what is the burden of the Lord?” but in more decent and becoming language, thus,

what hath the Lord answered? and what hath the Lord spoken? they might lawfully and laudably inquire of the prophet what answer he had received from the Lord, and what it was that he had said to him, provided they were serious in it, and asked with meekness and fear: the word of God should be reverently spoken of, and attended to.

Ver. 36. *And the burden of the Lord shall be mentioned no more,* etc.] Or the word of the Lord under that name, speaking of it in a ludicrous and scoffing manner:

for every man's word shall be his burden; every flout, scoff, and jeer of his, at the word of God, shall fall heavily upon him, with weight upon his conscience, and press him with guilt to the lowest hell; or, however, a heavy punishment for his sin shall light upon him: or, as the words may be rendered, “for his word is a burden to everyone”^{f503}; that is, the word of the Lord is reckoned by everyone a burden; and with them a burden and the word of the Lord are synonymous terms; which ought not to be, and was offensive to the Lord; and therefore he forbids the use of such a phrase, and threatens to punish for it;

for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the Lord of hosts, our God; derided them, and put a wrong sense upon them; and which is aggravated by their being the words of “the living God”, who is the true God and his words true; and he lives and is able to resent and punish any ill usage of him, and ill treatment of his words; and not the oracles of lifeless idols: and they are the words of “the Lord of hosts”, of all armies above and below, and so was able to make them good: and besides, they were the words of “our God”, the God of Israel; who had in all ages kept his covenant with them, performed his promises to them, and had done great and good things for them.

Ver. 37. *Thus shall thou say to the prophet*, etc.] To Jeremiah, or any true prophet of the Lord; after the following manner should everyone address him, that made any inquiry of the will of the Lord by him:

what hath the Lord answered thee? and what hath the Lord spoken? this is repeated from (²⁰³⁵Jeremiah 23:35); for the confirmation of it, and for the direction of the people, and to show how much the Lord approved of such a way of behaving towards his prophet, and himself by him.

Ver. 38. *But since ye say, the burden of the Lord*, etc.] Seeing, notwithstanding all prohibitions of it, and directions to the contrary, they still persisted to call prophecy by this name, and that in a jocose and bantering way, and asked for it, and what it was, in a scoffing manner:

therefore thus saith the Lord, because you say this word, the burden of the Lord; will continue to use it, though so displeasing to me:

and I have sent unto you, saying, ye shall not say, the burden of the Lord; and therefore could not plead ignorance of his will, or excuse themselves, by saying they would have avoided it, had they known it was disagreeable to him: this was an aggravation of their impiety, that they should

obstinately persist in it, after he had remonstrated against it by his messages to them.

Ver. 39. *Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you*, etc.] That is, so behave towards them, as though they were entirely out of his sight and mind; show no affection to them; take no care of them; bestow no favours upon them; and no more have them under his protection. In the word here used, and rendered “forget”, and the word before used for a “burden”, there is an elegant play on words^{f504}, which another language will not easily express; no doubt there is an allusion to that word in this;

and I will forsake you; neither vouchsafe them his gracious presence, nor his powerful protecting presence, but give them up to the enemy:

and the city that I gave you and your fathers; the city of Jerusalem, which he had given to them to dwell in, and their fathers before them; but now they having sinned against him, and provoked him; therefore, notwithstanding this grant of the place to them, and which is mentioned that they might not depend upon it, and buoy up themselves with hopes that they should be in safety on that account; as he had forsaken them, he would forsake that, and the temple in it, and give it up into the hand of the Chaldeans:

[and cast you] out of my presence; as useless and loathsome. The Targum is,

“I will remove you far away, and the city which I save you and your fathers from my word.”

it signifies their going into captivity.

Ver. 40. *And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you*, etc.] Which was a just retaliation for reproaching, vilifying, and bantering his word: they who had been honoured so much and so long as the people of God, and their city counted the glory of the earth; yet now both they and that should be the byword of the people, and had in the utmost contempt, and that for ever, or at least a long time, even for a series of ages; which has been their case ever since their destruction by the Romans, and still is; for this cannot be restrained to the short captivity of seventy years in Babylon; though this reproach began then, and they never recovered their former honour and glory;

and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten; the same thing in different words, to heighten their disgrace, and confirm the perpetuity of it.

CHAPTER 24

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 24

This chapter contains a vision of two baskets of figs, representing the Jews both in captivity, and at Jerusalem. The vision is declared, (^{<2401>}Jeremiah 24:1-3); where both time and place are pointed at, in which the vision was seen, and the nature of the figs described, and what passed between the Lord and the prophet concerning them. The explication of the vision begins, (^{<2404>}Jeremiah 24:4); and continues to the end of the chapter. The good figs were an emblem of the good people that were carried captive with Jeconiah into Babylon, which the Lord says was for their good; and he promises to own them, and set his eyes upon them for good, and that they should return to their own land, and have a heart to know him as their God, and return unto him, (^{<2405>}Jeremiah 24:5-7); the bad figs signify the people that were with Zedekiah at Jerusalem, and those that were in Egypt, who are threatened to be carried captive into all lands, and there live under the greatest reproach and disgrace; or be destroyed in their own land by the sword, famine, or pestilence, (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 24:8-10).

Ver. 1. *The Lord showed me*, etc.] A vision, or in a vision, what follows; for by this it appears that what was seen was not real, but what was exhibited in a visionary way by the Lord, and represented to the mind of the prophet:

and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the Lord; or “pots”, as Jarchi; these do not signify the law and Gospel, or the synagogue and church, or the Jews and Christians, or hell and heaven, as some have interpreted it, observed by Jerom; but the Jews that were in captivity with Jeconiah, and those that remained in Jerusalem with Zedekiah, as it is explained in some following verses. These baskets are said to be “set before the temple of the Lord”, not to be sold there, but to be presented to the Lord; in allusion to the baskets of firstfruits, which, according to the law, were thither brought for that purpose, (^{<4802>}Deuteronomy 26:2); and signify, that the two people represented by them were before the Lord, in his sight, were known to him, and judged by him;

after that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon: this was done when Jeconiah had reigned but little more than three months, and in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, (^{<1248>}2 Kings 24:8,12 ^{<1319>}2 Chronicles 36:9,10). This is mentioned, not only to show the time of this vision, which was a little after this captivity, in the beginning of Zedekiah's reign; but to let us know who the captives were, signified by the good figs. The "carpenters" and "smiths" were carried away with the king and the princes, partly that they might be serviceable to the king of Babylon in his country; and partly that they might not be assisting to their own country in repairing their fortifications, and making instruments of war for them. There were a "thousand" of this sort carried captive, (^{<1246>}2 Kings 24:16); where the former of these are called "craftsmen". Jarchi interprets both of the scholars of the wise men; and Kimchi, of counsellors and wise men. The word for "carpenters" is used both of carpenters and blacksmiths; and that for "smiths" may be rendered "enclosers", or "shutters up"; which the Targum understands of porters or shutters of gates; and some think goldsmiths are meant, that set or enclose precious stones in gold; and others are of opinion that masons are intended, so called from the building of walls for the enclosing of places. The Syriac version renders it "soldiers"; but those are distinguished from them, (^{<1244>}2 Kings 24:14,16). The Septuagint version translates it "prisoners"; but so all the captives might be called; and it adds, what is not in the text, "and the rich"; and the Arabic version following that; though it is true they were carried captive; for it is said, "none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land", (^{<1244>}2 Kings 24:14). This, according to Bishop Usher^{f505}, was in the year of the world 3405, and before Christ 599; and so the authors of the Universal History^{f506} place it; and Mr. Whiston^{f507} also; and Mr. Bedford^{f508} a year later; and in the same year that this captivity began was Cyrus the Persian born, who was the deliverer of the Jews from it.

Ver. 2. *One basket [had] very good figs, [even] like the figs [that are] first ripe, etc.]* As there are some figs that are ripe sooner than others, and which are always the most desirable and acceptable; and such were they that were presented to the Lord, (^{<300>}Micah 7:1 ^{<631>}Deuteronomy 26:2); these signified those that were carried captive into Babylon with Jeconiah, among whom were some very good men, as Ezekiel, and others; and all

might be said to be so, in comparison of those that were at Jerusalem, who were very wicked, and grew worse and worse:

and the other basket [had] very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad; as nothing is more sweet and luscious, and agreeable to the taste than a sound ripe fig, and especially a first ripe one; so nothing is more nauseous than a naughty rotten one: these signified the wicked Jews at Jerusalem indulging themselves in all manner of sin; so those who seemed to be the worst, through their being carried captive, were the best; and those who, seemed to be the best, by their prosperity, were the worst. This is to be understood in a comparative sense, as Calvin observes; though this does not so much design the quality of persons, as the issue of things, with respect unto them. The captivity of the one would issue in their good, and so are compared to good figs; when the sins of the other would bring upon them utter ruin and destruction without recovery, and therefore compared to bad figs that cannot be eaten.

Ver. 3. *Then said the Lord unto me, what seest thou, Jeremiah?* etc.] This question is put, in order that, upon his answer to it, he might have an explication of the vision:

and I said, figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil; or “so bad”, or “because of badness”^{f509}; which may be applied to mankind in general; who may be distinguished into good and bad: those that are good, who are made so by the grace of God; for none are so by nature, or of themselves; they are very good: they have many good things in them; they have a good heart, a new and a clean heart, and a right spirit created in them; they have a good understanding of spiritual things; they have a good will to that which is good, and good affections for God and Christ, and divine things; they have the good Spirit of God and his graces in them, and Christ and his word dwelling in them: and they do good things, and are prepared for every good work; they are good to others; pleasantly and acceptably good to God through Christ; and profitably good to their fellow saints and fellow creatures. On the other hand, those that are bad are exceeding bad; as they are by nature children of wrath, unclean, corrupt, loathsome, and abominable in the sight of God; so they are from their youth upward, and continue so, and are never otherwise; all in them, and that comes from them, are evil; their hearts are desperately wicked, the thoughts and imaginations of their hearts are evil continually; their words are idle, corrupt, and filthy, and all their actions

sinful; there is no good in them, nor any done by them; they are good for nothing; they are of no use to God, to themselves, or others; sin has made them like itself, exceeding sinful: and now between these two sorts there is no medium; though all sins are not alike; and some in a comparative sense may be called greater or lesser sinners; yet all are exceeding bad, even the least: they are all of the same nature, and have the same wicked hearts; though some may be outwardly righteous before men; and hypocrites and formal professors are worst of all. There never were but two sorts of persons in the world; the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent; the children of God, and the children of the devil; and so things will appear hereafter at the great day; the one will be placed at Christ's right hand as good and righteous men, the other at his left hand as wicked, and will have separate states to all eternity: and so those figs are explained in the Talmud^{f510}; the good figs, they are the perfect righteous; the bad figs, they are the perfect wicked.

Ver. 4. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] As follows; where an explanation is given of the above vision, to which this is a transition.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel,* etc.] Of all the tribes of Israel; of the ten tribes that had been carried captive long ago by the king of Assyria; and of the other two tribes, part of whom were in Babylon, and the other in Judea, who were not wholly cut off by the Lord; but he still had a regard for them; and therefore introduces what he was about to say in this manner:

like those good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah; that they are good men, and like those good figs, even those that were; and though they are carried captive: or, "I will know them"^{f511}; take notice of them; show an affectionate love to them, and care of them; make himself known unto them, and own them for his, in the furnace of affliction:

whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for [their] good; or "for good things", as the Septuagint and other versions; for their temporal good; some were raised to great honours, as Daniel, and his associates; others got and possessed estates in Babylon, and some returned with favours and riches: and this was also for their spiritual good; to bring them to a sense of their sins, to repentance for them, and acknowledgment of them; and particularly to cure them of idolatry, which

it effectually did; so the Lord makes all “things to work together for good”, to them that love him, (~~see~~ Romans 8:28); and it may be observed, that though the Chaldeans carried the Jews captive out of their own land, and the city of Jerusalem, meant by “this place”, into the land of Babylon, yet they were only instruments; it was the Lord’s doing; he sent them thither. Jarchi connects the phrase “for good” with the word “acknowledge”, supposing a transposition of the words, thus, “I will acknowledge them for good”.

Ver. 6. *For I will set mine eyes upon them for good*, etc.] His eyes of omniscience, providence, and grace; to communicate good things to them; to take care of them in the furnace of affliction, that they were not lost, but made the better; to watch over them, protect and defend them; to deliver them out of their troubles, and to bring them into their own land; as follows:

and I will bring them again into this land: the land of Judea, and city of Jerusalem, where Jeremiah now was, and saw this vision: this was accomplished when the seventy years’ captivity was ended:

and I will build them, and not pull [them] down; and I will plant them, and not pluck [them] up; alluding to the building of houses, and planting of vineyards; signifying that they and their families should be built up and continue; yea, that they should be a habitation for God, and the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, of his planting, and which should remain: this will be more fully accomplished in the latter day; though it had in part a fulfilment upon the Jews’ return from captivity.

Ver. 7. *And I will give them an heart to know me, that I [am] the Lord*, etc.] God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; the unchangeable Jehovah; the everlasting I AM; a covenant keeping God; faithful and true to his promises; able and willing to perform them; and does all things well and wisely; and was their Lord and God. This knowledge designs not the first knowledge of the Lord, but an increase of it; and not head knowledge, but heart knowledge; a knowledge of God, joined with love and affection to him, high esteem, and approbation of him; and including communion with him, and an open profession and acknowledgment of him: and it is an appropriating knowledge also; a knowing him for themselves, and as their own; and such a knowledge or heart to know the Lord is a pure gift of his, and without which none can have it: and it may be observed, that in

captivity it was given them; afflictions were the means of it; and happy it is when hereby men come to have a knowledge of God, and to be better acquainted with him, (^{<192D>}Psalm 92:12);

and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; that is, it shall appear that they are so, by the above blessings of grace and goodness bestowed upon them; the Lord hereby owning them for his people, and they hereby coming to know that he is their God:

for, or “when”^{f512}

they shall return unto me with their whole heart; affectionately, sincerely, and unfeignedly. It supposes that they had backslidden from God, his ways and worship; but now should return by sincere repentance to him, and to his worship, and obedience to his commands; so the Targum,

“for they shall return to my worship with their whole heart;”

all this will have an entire accomplishment in the latter day, when the Jews will be converted and turn to the Lord, and fear him and his goodness.

Ver. 8. *And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil*, etc.] Here follows an explication of the evil figs, and an application of them to the wicked Jews:

surely thus saith the Lord, so will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah; who was then the reigning king of Judah, Jeconiah’s father’s brother; whom the king of Babylon had made king in his stead, and changed his name from Mattaniah to Zedekiah, (^{<124H>}2 Kings 24:17); him the Lord threatens to give up to ruin and destruction, or to deliver into the hands of the enemy:

and his princes, and the residue of them, that remain in this land; the rest of the inhabitants of Jerusalem that continued in the land of Judea, and were not carried captive:

and them that dwell in the land of Egypt; who had fled thither for safety upon the invasion of their land, and besieging their city; all these being like to the bad figs, exceeding evil and wicked, are threatened to be delivered into the hands of their enemies, though they might think themselves safe and secure where they were.

Ver. 9. *And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for [their] hurt*, etc.] Jeconiah and the captives with him were only

carried into Babylon; but these should be scattered one from another into the several parts of the world. The former were carried captive for their good, and it issued in that; but these were carried away for their hurt, to the injury of their persons and properties, and without having any effect upon them to the good of their souls: though this might begin to be fulfilled by the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, yet it had a more complete fulfilment in the destruction of this people by the Romans; to which these and the following words seem more particularly to refer:

[to be] a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them; their names to be used as a proverb for their riches ill gotten, their falsehood and tricking; and under the curse of God, and the reproach of man, as they are this day; (see ~~Exod~~ Deuteronomy 28:37).

Ver. 10. *And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them,* etc.] Meaning not in other lands, where they should be driven, but while in their own land, by which many should perish; and the rest that escaped these dreadful judgments should be carried captive. The Targum is,

“I will send those that kill with the sword, etc.”

till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers; so that none of them should be left there to inhabit it, which is now their case; and it is an aggravation of their calamity and punishment, that they are no more the inhabitants of that good land, which was God's gift to them, and to their fathers before them.

CHAPTER 25

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 25

This chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of Judea by the king of Babylon; and also of Babylon itself, after the Jews' captivity of seventy years; and likewise of all the nations round about. The date of this prophecy is in (²⁴⁵¹Jeremiah 25:1); when the prophet puts the Jews in mind of the prophecies that had been delivered unto them by himself and others, for some years past, without effect, (²⁴⁵²Jeremiah 25:2-7); wherefore they are threatened with the king of Babylon, that he should come against them, and strip them of all their desirable things; make their land desolate, and them captives for seventy years, (²⁴⁵³Jeremiah 25:8-11); at the expiration of which he in his turn shall be punished, and the land of Chaldea laid waste, and become subject to other nations and kings, (²⁴⁵⁴Jeremiah 25:12-14); and by a cup of wine given to all the nations round about, is signified the utter ruin of them, and who are particularly mentioned by name, (²⁴⁵⁵Jeremiah 25:15-26); which is confirmed by beginning with the city of Jerusalem, and the destruction of that, (²⁴⁵⁶Jeremiah 25:27-29); wherefore the prophet is bid to prophesy against them, and to declare the Lord's controversy with them, and that there should be a slaughter of them from one end of the earth to the other, (²⁴⁵⁷Jeremiah 25:30-33); upon which the shepherds, kings, and rulers of them, are called to lamentation and howling, (²⁴⁵⁸Jeremiah 25:34-38).

Ver. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah,* etc.] Not only in the city of Jerusalem, but in the whole land of Judea. This prophecy concerns them all; their repentance and reformation, to which they are exhorted; or their invasion, desolation, and captivity, with which they are threatened. Before the prophet was sent to the king of Judah only, (²⁴⁵⁹Jeremiah 22:1); now to all the people:

in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; in the latter part of the third, and beginning of the fourth year of his reign; (see ²⁴⁶⁰Daniel 1:1);

this [was] the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon: in which he began to reign with his father, for he reigned two years with him; who is the Nabopolassar of Ptolemy. This was in the year of the world 3397, and before Christ 607, according to Bishop Usher^{f513}.

Ver. 2. *The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah,* etc.] Perhaps at one of the three feasts, at which all the males appeared in Jerusalem; for it cannot be thought that he went up and down throughout all parts of the land to deliver this prophecy, but to as many of them as he found in Jerusalem in any place, at any time; and none so likely as what is mentioned:

and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem: to whom he had an opportunity of speaking frequently:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 3. *From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day,* etc.] The year in which Jeremiah began to prophesy, (~~2400~~Jeremiah 1:2);

(that [is], the three and twentieth year); for Josiah reigned one and thirty years; so that Jeremiah prophesied nineteen years in his reign; and now it was the fourth of Jehoiakim's, which make twenty three years; so long the prophet had been prophesying to this people:

the word of the Lord hath come unto me; from time to time, during that space of twenty three years; and which he diligently, constantly, and faithfully delivered unto them; as follows:

and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking: as soon as ever he had a word from the Lord, he brought it to them, and took the most proper and seasonable time to inculcate it to them; in the morning, and after, he had had a vision or dream in the night from the Lord;

but ye have not hearkened; they took no notice of it; turned a deaf ear to it; however, did not obey or act as they were directed and exhorted to.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets,* etc.] Not only him, but many others, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and others:

rising early and sending [them]; not only the prophet, but the Lord himself is said to rise early, and send his prophets to them; which denotes his great care and concern for this people for their good; (see ^{<4075>}Jeremiah 7:25);

but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear; which is an aggravation of their sin; that whereas they had one prophet after another sent to them, and sent by the Lord himself; he rising early, and sending them; and they rising early, being sent to do their message; and yet were not hearkened and attended to.

Ver. 5. *They said*, etc.] The prophets: this was the substance of their discourses and prophecies, what follows:

turn ye again now everyone from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings; repent of sins, and reform from them; particularly their idolatries, to which they were prone, and are after mentioned:

and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you to your fathers for ever and ever; that is, the land of Canaan, which was given to them, and their fathers before them, by the Lord, for an everlasting inheritance, provided they behaved towards him aright; for they held the possession of it by their obedience to his law; and now, notwithstanding all that they had done, or had been threatened with; yet, if they repented and reformed, they should still dwell in the land, and enjoy it, and all the blessings and privileges of it.

Ver. 6. *And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them*, etc.] So long as they served the Lord God, they continued in their own land, in the comfortable enjoyment of all the blessings of it; for their government was a theocracy; God was their King; and as long as they served and worshipped him only, he protected and defended them; but when they forsook him, and went after other gods, and served and worshipped them, then they were threatened to be turned out of their land, and carried captive into other lands; and yet, after all, if they returned from their idolatries, and left off worshipping idols, the Lord was ready to receive them kindly, and continue his favours to them:

and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; their idols, which their own hands made, and then fell down to worship them; than which nothing can be more provoking to God:

and I will do you no hurt; by sword, or famine, or pestilence, or captivity; signifying the hurt he had threatened them with should not be done, provided they forsook their idolatrous worship; God does no hurt to his true worshippers; yea, he makes all things work together for their good.

Ver. 7. *Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord*, etc.] Though it was he that spake unto them by his prophets; and though it was so much to their own good and advantage; and the neglect of him and his word were so much to their disadvantage, and even ruin:

that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, to your own hurt: which, though not signed to do either, yet eventually did both; both provoked the Lord, and brought destruction upon themselves; for whatever is against the glory of God is to the hurt of man; and whatever provokes him is pernicious to them in its consequences.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts*, etc.] Of armies above and below; and so can do what he pleases in heaven and in earth:

because ye have not heard my words; by the prophets, so as to obey them; they had heard them externally, but did not observe to do them.

Ver. 9. *Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord*, etc.] The Targum is, the kingdoms of the north, the same with those in (²⁰¹⁵Jeremiah 1:15); even all those kingdoms which were subject to the king of Babylon, and lay north of Judea:

and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon my servant: though a great king, he was a servant of the Lord of hosts; his servant, both as a creature of his make, and as a king that ruled under him; and as he was an instrument in his hand to chastise his people the Jews; though it was not knowingly and with intention that he served the Lord:

and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof; the land of Judea, and its inhabitants; this was the Lord's doing; it was he that stirred, up the king of Babylon, and by his secret instinct and powerful providence brought him and his armies into Judea to spoil it, and the inhabitants of it Jehovah as it were marched at the head of them, and led them on, and brought them against the Jews, and delivered them into their hands:

and against all these nations round about; Egypt and others; so that the Jews could have no help from them; nor would application to them, and alliance with them, signify anything:

and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations; both the Jews and their neighbours; who should be an astonishment to some, and a hissing to others, and remain desolate for a long time; even till the seventy years were ended after mentioned.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness*, etc.] At their festivals, and nuptial solemnities:

the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; expressing their mutual love unto, and delight in, each other; so agreeable to one another and their friends: or it may mean those epithalamies, or nuptial songs, sung unto them by their friends:

the sound of the millstones; either the voice of those that sing at the mill while grinding; or rather the sound of the stones themselves used in grinding; either in grinding spices for the bride cakes; or rather in grinding corn for common use; and so denotes the taking away of bread corn from them, and the want of that. The sense is, there should be corn to grind, and so no use of the mill:

and the light of the candle; at their feasts and weddings, or rather, for common use; signifying that houses should be desolate, without inhabitants, no light in them, nor work to be done. The whole shows that they should be deprived of everything both for necessity and pleasure. John seems to have borrowed some phrases from hence, (⁴⁶⁸²Revelation 18:22,23); in which he appears to have followed the Hebrew text, and not the Greek version. The Targum of the last clause is,

“the voice of the company of those that sing at the light of candles.”

Ver. 11. *And this whole land shall be a desolation*, etc.] Not only the city of Jerusalem, but all Judea, without inhabitants, or very few, and shall be uncultivated, and become barren and unfruitful:

[and] an astonishment; to all other nations, and to all persons that pass through, beholding the desolations of it:

and other nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years; both the Jews, and other nations of Egypt, reckoning from the date of this prophecy, the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, when Daniel and others were carried captive, (~~2000~~Daniel 1:1-6); to the first year of Cyrus.

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished,* etc.] Which were accomplished in the first year of Cyrus: they began with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned two years and two months with his father Nabopolassar; after that forty three years by himself; Evilmerodach two years: Neriglissar four years; Belshazzar or Nabonadius seventeen years; and Darius the Median two years; which all make sixty nine years and two months; and if ten months more be added to complete the said seventy years, it will carry the end of them to the first year of Cyrus^{f514}. These years are differently reckoned by others; by Spanhemius, from the first of Nebuchadnezzar, or fourth of Jehoiakim, to the destruction of the city under Zedekiah, nineteen years; thence to the death of Nebuchadnezzar, twenty four; then Evilmerodach, two; then the reign of Neriglissar, including some months of Laborosoarchod, five; then the years of Nabonadius, or Belshazzar, seventeen; and from his death, or the taking of Babylon, to the death of Darius the Mede, two years; which make sixty nine, exclusive of the first of Cyrus; and comes to much the same as the former. By James Alting thus; from the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, complete, to his death, twenty six years; Evilmerodach, twenty three; Belshazzar, three; Darius the Mede, eighteen, after the destruction of the Babylonish empire; which seems very wrong; better, by Dr. Lightfoot, thus; Nebuchadnezzar, forty five current; Evilmerodach, twenty three; and Belshazzar, three^{f515}. So the Jewish chronicle^{f516}:

[that] I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity; the king for his tyranny, and the nation for their idolatry; and both for these and other sins they were guilty of; for, though they did the will of God in carrying the Jews captive, they no doubt in their usage of them exceeded their commission, and were justly punishable for their iniquities. This is not to be understood of the present king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar; but of Nabonadius, or Belshazzar, whom the Lord punished by Cyrus; who appears to have been a very wicked man, and in the excess of not, profaning the vessels of the temple the night he was slain, (~~2000~~Daniel 5:1,2,30);

and the land of the Chaldeans; and will make it perpetual desolations; even as other nations had been made by them, (^{<239>}Jeremiah 25:9).

Ver. 13. *And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it,* etc.] By his prophets, and particularly by Jeremiah, as follows; for not one word that is spoken by the Lord, either in a way of promise or threatening, shall fail; his truth, power, and faithfulness, are engaged to accomplish all:

[even] all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations; the Egyptians, Philistines, Moabites, Edomites, Arabians, Persians, and also the Babylonians, in (^{<240>}Jeremiah 46:1-51:64), which prophecies, in the Greek version, immediately follow here, though in a confused manner; where some have thought they might be more regularly placed than as they are in the Hebrew copies, at the end of the book; but of this there seems to be no absolute necessity.

Ver. 14. *For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also,* etc.] Take their cities, seize upon the kingdoms, spoil them of their wealth and riches, and bring them into servitude to them: these “many nations”, which should and did do all this, were the Medes and Persians, and those that were subject to them, or were their allies and auxiliaries in this expedition; and the “great kings” were Cyrus and Darius, and those that were confederate with them:

and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands; as they have done to others, it shall be done to them; as they have served themselves of other nations, other nations shall serve themselves of them; as they have cruelly used others, they shall be used with cruelty themselves; and as they have made other countries desolate, their land shall become desolate also; not only their tyranny and cruelty, but all their other sins, shall receive a just recompence of reward.

Ver. 15. *For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me,* etc.] The prophet: *take the wine cup of this fury at my hand;* in a vision the Lord appeared to Jeremiah with a cup of wine in his hand, which he bid him take of him. It is usual in Scripture for the judgments of God on men to be signified by a cup of hot and intoxicating liquor, (^{<2517>}Isaiah 51:17,22) (^{<24912>}Jeremiah 49:12); particularly in (^{<4978>}Psalms 75:8); to which reference may be had; as John seems to refer to the passage here in (^{<640>}Revelation 14:10 16:19); called a cup, because they are in measure, and but small in comparison of what will

be inflicted in the world to come; and a cup of “fury”, because they proceed from the wrath of God, stirred up by the sins of men. Jarchi interprets this cup of the prophecy of vengeance, which the Lord delivered to Jeremiah; and not amiss:

and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it; prophesy unto them what wrath and ruin shall come upon them.

Ver. 16. *And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad,* etc.] The judgments foretold shall come upon them, whether they will or not; which will have such effects upon them, as intoxicating liquor has on drunken persons; make them shake and tremble, and reel to and fro, and toss and tumble about, and behave like madmen:

because of the sword that I will send among them; this explains what is meant by the wine cup of fury, the sword of a foreign enemy that shall enter among them and destroy; and which would make them tremble, and be at their wits’ end, like drunken and mad men.

Ver. 17. *Then took I the cup at the Lord’s hand,* etc.] In a visionary way, and did as he commanded, and prophesied as he directed him. The prophet was obedient to the heavenly vision, as became him:

and made all the nations to drink, unto whom, the Lord had sent me; not that he travelled through each of the nations with a cup in his hand, as an emblem of what wrath would come upon them, and they should drink deep of; but this was done in vision, and also in prophecy; the prophet publishing the will of God, denouncing his judgments upon the nations, and declaring to them what would befall them.

Ver. 18. *[To wit], Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah,* etc.] Which are mentioned first, because God’s judgments began with them, as they usually do with the house of God, (⁴⁰⁰⁷1 Peter 4:17); and even now began; for this very year, in which this prophecy was delivered, Nebuchadnezzar came up and besieged Jerusalem, and carried away some captives, (²⁰⁰⁰Daniel 1:1); this was the beginning of what afterwards were more fully executed:

and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof: the Kings Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, with those of their families, the princes of the blood, and their nobles:

to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; to strip them of their crowns and kingdom, of their wealth, and riches, and honour, and bring them into slavery and bondage; so that they became an astonishment to some, to see the change that was made in them; and were hissed stand cursed by others:

(*as [it is] this day*); which is added, either because of the certainty of it, or because it began to take, place this very year; though more fully in Jeconiah's time, and still more in Zedekiah's; or rather this clause might be added by Jeremiah after the captivity; or by Baruch, or by Ezra, or whoever collected his prophecies, and put them into one volume, as (²⁴⁵¹Jeremiah 52:1-34) seems to be added by another hand.

Ver. 19. *Pharaoh king of Egypt*, etc.] Who is mentioned first after the kings of Judah; not only because the Jews were in alliance with Egypt, and trusted to them; and therefore this is observed, to show the vanity of their confidence and dependence; but because the judgments of God first took place on the king of Egypt; for in this very year, in which this prophecy was delivered, Pharaohnecho king of Egypt was smitten by Nebuchadnezzar, (²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 46:2); though the prophecy had a further accomplishment in Pharaohhophra, who was given into the hands of his enemies, as foretold, (²⁴⁴³Jeremiah 44:30);

and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; his menial servants, his domestics, and his nobles and peers of the realm, and all his subjects. It expresses an utter destruction of the kingdom of Egypt; and the particulars of it may be the rather given, to show the vain trust of the Jews in that people.

Ver. 20. *And all the mingled people*, etc.] Not the Arabians, who are mentioned afterwards, (²⁴⁵²Jeremiah 25:24); but rather a mixed people in the land of Egypt, such as came out of it along with the Israelites; or were near it, and bordered upon it, as the Targum; which renders it, all the bordering kings; or rather a mixture of people of different nations that dwelt by the sea coasts, either the Mediterranean, or the Red sea, as others think:

and all the kings of the land of Uz; not the country of Job, called by the Greeks Ausitis, as the Vulgate Latin version; but rather a country of Idumea, so called from Uz the son of Dishan, the son of Seir, (²⁴⁴¹Lamentations 4:21 ⁰¹³³Genesis 36:28);

and all the kings of the land of the Philistines; the petty kings of it, called the lords of the Philistines elsewhere, who were great enemies to the people of the Jews: the prophecy of their destruction is in forty seventh chapter, and whose principal cities are next mentioned:

and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; of Ashkelon, and the sword in it, and ruin, (see ^{<2475>}Jeremiah 47:5,7). “Azzah” is the same with Gaza, whose destruction is also foretold in (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:1,5); (see ^{<483>}Acts 8:26); “Ekron” was another of the cities of the Philistines; (see ^{<950>}1 Samuel 5:10); and “Ashdod” is the same with Azotus, another of their cities, (^{<480>}Acts 8:40); called “the remnant of Ashdod”, because the remains only of a once very strong and fortified place; but was so weakened and wasted by Psammiticus, king of Egypt, in a blockade of it, for the space of nine and twenty years^{f517}, before he took it, that when he had got in it, it was but as the carcass of a city, to what it was before^{f518}.

Ver. 21. *Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon.*] All well known and implacable enemies of Israel. The Edomites descended from Esau; and the Moabites and Ammonites from Moab and Ammon, the two sons of Lot by his daughters. Their destruction is prophesied of in the forty eighth and forty ninth chapters.

Ver. 22. *And all the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon,* etc.] Two very ancient cities in Phoenicia, frequently mentioned together in Scripture, being near each other. Their ruin is foretold in (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:4);

and the kings of the isles which [are] beyond the sea; which some understand of Greece and Italy; others of Rhodes, Cyprus, and Crete, and other islands in the Mediterranean sea; the Cyclades, as Jerom: but the words may be rendered, “and the kings of the country by the seaside”; and may design those that dwell upon the coast of the Mediterranean sea.

Ver. 23. *Dedan, and Tema, and Buz,* etc.] These seem to be places in Edom or Idumea, of whose destruction Jeremiah prophesies in (^{<2497>}Jeremiah 49:7,8,20); or rather in Arabia and Mesopotamia. Jerom reckons them among the Ishmaelites and Saracens, The persons from whom they descended are mentioned in (^{<1022>}Genesis 22:21 25:8,15);

and all [that are] in the utmost corners; that is, either of the above countries, or of the whole earth: or “all that had their hair shorn”^{f519}; or the corners of their beards; which Jerom says is applicable to the Saracens.

Ver. 24. *And all the kings of Arabia*, etc.] Of Arabia Petraea;

and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert; the other Arabians or mixed people, that dwell in Arabia Deserta, as the Scenites, Nomades, Kedarenes, and others; and so the Targum,

“and all the kings of the Arabians, that dwell in tents in the desert.”

Of these, see the prophecy in (~~244B~~Jeremiah 49:28,29).

Ver. 25. *And all the kings of Zimri*, etc.] Of Arabia Felix, so called from Zimran, a son of Abraham by Keturah, (~~028D~~Genesis 25:2); the same whom Pliny^{f520} calls Zamerenes;

and all the kings of Elam; or Persia; who are prophesied against in (~~244B~~Jeremiah 49:34-39);

and all the kings of the Medes; who commonly go together with the Persians.

Ver. 26. *And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another*, etc.] That were on the north of Judea, the kings of Syria, and those that were near to the kingdom of Babylon, whether more remote from Judea, or nearer it and which joined one another in that part of the world;

and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; the whole Babylonian monarchy, called the whole world; as the Roman empire afterwards was, (~~400B~~Luke 2:1);

and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them; or the king of Babylon, as the Targum; and that Babylon is meant by “Sheshach” is certain from (~~254E~~Jeremiah 51:41); but why it is so called is not so easy to say. The Jewish writers make it to be the same with Babylon, by a change of the letters in the alphabet, put in such a situation, which they call “Athbash”, in which “shin” is put for “beth”, and “caph” for “lamed”; and so, instead of Babel or Babylon, you have “Sheshach”, which is thought to be used rather than Babylon, that Nebuchadnezzar, now besieging Jerusalem, might not be irritated: but others take it to be the name of an idol of the Babylonians, from whence the city was called, which is not improbable; for, as Hillerus^{f521} has observed, their god Bel and Sheshach signify the same thing. Bel is the same as Behal, “swift”; and “Sheshach” may be derived from the Arabic word <Arabic> which signifies “to move swiftly”^{f522}; and may both be names of the sun, worshipped by the Chaldeans, so called

from the swiftness of its motion. Now in Babylon stood the temple of Bel or Sheshach, and so might have its name from thence: and it may be further observed, what has been by others, that the Babylonians had a public festival, like the Saturnalia of the Romans, which held five days, and was called Sacchoea or Shace, as is supposed from their god Shach, to whom it was kept: to which may be added, that Mishael had the name of Meshach given him in Babylon; “Shach”, in the one, answering to “El” in the other; which signifies God, (~~2000~~ Daniel 1:7). Shach is used for a king or prince in the Persic language to this day. And now the king of Sheshach or Babylon must drink of the cup, or be punished last of all; who was the instrument of destroying most of the rest, yet should not go unpunished.

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou shalt say unto them,* etc.] To the several nations before mentioned, prophesied against:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; the Lord of armies, above and below, the Sovereign of the whole universe; but in a special and peculiar manner the God of Israel:

drink ye, and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more; as is sometimes the case of drunken men; they drink till they are quite intoxicated; and become drunk, and then they spew up what they have drunk; and, attempting to walk, fall, and sometimes so as never to rise more; not only break their bones, but their necks, or fall into places where they are suffocated, or in one or other, where they lose their lives. So it is signified, that these nations should drink of the cup of God’s wrath and fury; or his judgments should come upon them in such a manner as that they should be obliged to part with all their riches, power, and authority; and should fall and sink into such a ruinous condition, as that they should never be able to the more to a prosperous one:

because of the sword that I will send among you; by which they should be destroyed. The Targum joins this with the preceding clause, thus,

“and ye shall not rise from before those that kill with the sword, whom I send among you.”

Ver. 28. *And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink,* etc.] To give credit to the prophecies of ruin and destruction delivered by the prophet, but say, these things shall not be:

then shalt thou say unto them, thus saith the Lord of hosts, ye shall certainly drink; or those judgments shall certainly be inflicted; there will be no possibility of escaping, whether they were believed or not; or how unwilling soever they were to believe the denunciations of them, or to have them come upon them; yet assuredly so it would be; for thus saith the Lord of hosts, who is omnipotent, and does what he pleases in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, over whom he has a despotic power and government,

Ver. 29. *For, lo, I begin to bring evil upon the city which is called by my name*, etc.] Jerusalem, the city of God, the holy city, where his name was called upon, and he was worshipped; on this he would first bring down his judgments; and indeed he had already begun to bring evil on it; for this very year Nebuchadnezzar came up to besiege it, and carried some away captives:

and should ye be utterly unpunished? or could they expect to go free from punishment, who had so grossly sinned, and were guilty of such abominable idolatries, and had been the means of drawing in the people of God into the same; and therefore, since the professing people of God, who had been drawn in by their examples, were punished, they could not, they ought not, to think of escaping. See the like argument in (^{423b} Luke 23:31 ⁴⁰⁴⁷ 1 Peter 4:17,18);

ye shall not be unpunished; or cleared, or acquitted, or go free; but made instances and examples of vindictive justice:

for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts; or I will call them that kill with the sword, as the Targum; who will obey the call, answer to it, and come forth and slay the inhabitants of the earth, and none shall escape.

Ver. 30. *Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them*, etc.] What follows, as well as declare all that is before spoken concerning the cup of fury all nations must drink of:

the Lord shall roar from on high: from, heaven, like a lion, in violent claps of thunder; or in such dreadful dispensations of his providence, as will be very amazing and terrifying:

and utter his voice from his holy habitation; from heaven, as before; and though it will be terrible, yet quite consistent with his holiness and justice:

he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; the temple at Jerusalem, where he had his residence; but now should be deserted by him, and feel the effects of his wrath in the destruction and desolation of it: or rather, since the address is made to the nations of the world, and not to the Jews, it may be rendered, “in” or “out of his habitation”^{f523}; and so designs heaven, as before; and all these expressions are intended to show both the certainty and terribleness of the dispensation;

he shall give a shout, as they that tread [the grapes], against all the inhabitants of the earth; or, “answer a shout”^{f524}; give the onset for battle against the inhabitants of the earth, as the general of an army; which is accompanied with a shout, like that which is made by workmen treading in the wine press, to encourage one another to go on the more cheerfully in their work.

Ver. 31. *A noise shall come up [even] to the ends of the earth*, etc.] Wars, and rumours of wars, everywhere, till the cup has gone round, and all nations have drank of it, and have felt the power of divine wrath for their sins:

for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations; will enter into a judicial process with them; will litigate the point with them, and try it openly; that it may be seen who is in the right, and who in the wrong:

he will plead with all flesh; or enter into judgment with them, as Kimchi; or reprove them in judgment, as Jarchi; he will be too many for them; he will carry his case, overcome them in judgment, and reprove and condemn them. Or the words may be rendered, “he will be judged by all flesh”^{f525}; he will submit it to the judgment of the whole world, if it is not a righteous thing in him to do what he is about to do, and will do; he will make it clear and manifest that he does nothing unjustly, but all according to the strict rules of justice and equity:

he will give them [that are] wicked to the sword, saith the Lord; to be destroyed by it, and none but them; and seeing they are such that deserve it, he is not to be charged with unrighteousness in so doing.

Ver. 32. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation*, etc.] Begin in one nation, and then go on to another; first in Judea, and then in Egypt; and so on, like a catching distemper, or like fire that first consumes one house, and then another; and thus shall the cup go round from nation to nation, before prophesied of: thus, beginning at

Judea, one nation after another was destroyed by the king of Babylon; then he and his monarchy were destroyed by the Medes and Persians; and then they by the Macedonians; and then the Greeks by the Romans;

and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth; or “from the sides of [it]”¹⁵²⁶; that is, “from the ends of [it]”; as the Targum, which paraphrases it,

“and many people shall come openly from the ends of the earth;”

this was first verified in the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar, compared to a whirlwind, (~~24113~~ Jeremiah 4:13); and then in the Medes and Persians under Cyrus; and after that in the Greeks under Alexander; the great and last of all in the Romans under Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 33. *And the slain of the Lord*, etc.] Slain by his permission, yea, by his orders, according to his will, in his wrath and sore displeasure, and to glorify his vindictive justice:

shall be at that day from [one] end of the earth even unto the [other] end of the earth; not that this should be at one and the same time; for there never was such a time, that there was such a general slaughter in the world, that the slain should reach from one end to the other; but that within the dispensation, in which the cup should go round to all nations, meant by “that day”, the slain of the Lord would be in all parts of the world; or that, according to his will, there would be a great slaughter everywhere, as the cup went round, or the sword was sent, first ravaging one country, and then another;

they shall not be lamented; having no pity from their enemies; and as for their friends, they will share the same rite with them; so that there will be none to mourn over them:

neither gathered; taken up from the field of battle where they fall; but, where they should fall, there they should lie; none gathering up their bodies or bones, in order for interment:

nor buried; in the sepulchres of their fathers, nor indeed in any place, or in any manner; as not in any grand and magnificent manner, so not so much as in a common way;

they shall be dung upon the ground; spread upon it, and lie above it, as dung, to manure the earth.

Ver. 34. *Howl, ye shepherds, and cry,* etc.] The Targum is,

“howl, ye kings, and cry;”

and the rulers and governors of the nations before threatened with destruction are meant; who are here called upon to lamentation and mourning for the ruin and loss of their kingdoms; though Calvin thinks that this is an apostrophe to the Jewish nation, and the rulers of it. It is no uncommon thing in Scripture to call kings and civil magistrates shepherds; (see ²²⁷Jeremiah 23:1,2 ³¹⁸Zechariah 10:3 11:3);

and wallow yourselves [in the ashes], ye principal of the flock; or “roll yourselves [in dust]”, as a token of mourning; as being in the utmost distress, and incapable of helping themselves, and redressing the grievances of their people; and therefore lie down and tumble about as in the greatest anxiety and trouble, the Targum is,

“cover your heads with ashes, ye mighty of the people;”

meaning those who were in the highest posts of honour and profit; the chief as to authority and power, riches and wealth;

for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; the time is come when they who were the fat of the flock, and were nourished up for slaughter, should be slain. The allusion to shepherds and sheep is still kept up; and such who should escape that, should be scattered up and down the world, as a flock of sheep is by the wolf, or any other beast of prey, when some are seized and devoured, and others dispersed; and this was not the case of the Jews only, but of other nations in their turn;

and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel; a vessel of worth and value, and so desirable; as vessels of glass, of gems, or of earth, as of Venice glass, of alabaster, of China; which when they fall and are broken, become useless, and are irreparable; signifying hereby, that their desirableness and excellency would not secure them from destruction, and that their ruin would be irretrievable.

Ver. 35. *And the shepherds shall have no way to flee,* etc.] Or, “and flight shall perish from the shepherds”^{f527}; though they may attempt it, they shall not be able to accomplish it; neither the dignity of their persons, the

greatness of their power, or the abundance of their riches, would make a way for them; their enemies being so numerous, powerful, and watchful:

nor the principal of the flock to escape; this was particularly verified in Zedekiah and his princes, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:4-6). The Targum is,

“and the house of fugitives shall perish from the kings, and deliverance from the mighty of the people.”

Ver. 36. *And a voice of the cry of the shepherds*, etc.] Or of the kings, as the Targum:

and an howling of the principal of the flock, [shall be heard]; of the mighty of the people, as the same; what is before called for is here represented as in fact, because of the certainty of it:

for the Lord hath spoiled their pastures: their kingdoms, provinces, cities, and towns; or their people, as the Targum, among whom they lived, and by whom they were supported; still keeping up the metaphor of the shepherd and flock. This the Lord is said to do because he suffered it to be done, yea, ordered it to be done, as a punishment for their sins.

Ver. 37. *And the peaceable habitations are cut down*, etc.] Or, “their peaceable ones”, as the Targum; the palaces and stately dwellings, in which they lived in great pomp and prosperity, in great peace, plenty, and safety, are destroyed by the enemy, and laid waste, and become desolate; yea, even those that lived peaceably and quietly, and neither were disturbed themselves, nor disturbed others, yet, as is usual in times of war, share the same fate with their neighbours, who have been more troublesome and molesting:

because of the fierce anger of the Lord; or “from before [it], from the face [of it]”; shall be destroyed by it, that being displayed; and using enemies as instruments in the destruction of them. Sin is the cause of God’s wrath and fierce anger, and his wrath and anger the cause of the destruction of men and their habitations, Whoever are the instruments.

Ver. 38. *He hath forsaken his covert as a lion*, etc.] Which some understand of God leaving Jerusalem, or the temple, where he dwelt; who, while he made it his residence, protected it; but when he forsook it, it became exposed to the enemy. Kimchi says it may be understood of the destruction of the first temple by Nebuchadnezzar; but he thinks it is most

correct to interpret it of the destruction of the second temple; that is, by the Romans, when it was left desolate by Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. But it may be understood of Nebuchadnezzar leaving Babylon, his den, and ranging about like a lion for his prey; (see ²⁰⁰⁷Jeremiah 4:7 50:17). So the Targum,

“and a king has removed from his tower or fortress;”

and the land is desolate; the land of Judea, or whatsoever country he comes into with his army; that, or Egypt, or any other:

because of the fierceness of the oppressor; the tyrant Nebuchadnezzar; or “oppressing sword”^{f528}, as some supply it, it being feminine; and so the Targum,

“from before the sword of the enemy.”

Some render it, “because of the fierceness of the dove”; so the Vulgate Latin; and understand it of the Babylonians or Chaldeans; who, as the Romans had an eagle, they had the dove on their standards or ensigns; which they received from the Assyrians, when they succeeded them in their monarchy; and those from Semiramis their first queen, who had it, it is said, on her standard^{f529}; and was retained in honour of her, and in memory of her being nourished by a dove, and turned into one after her death, as commonly believed^{f530}; and who had her name, as is affirmed^{f531}, from the word *arymx*, “semira”, signifying, in the Chaldee language, the song or cooing of the dove; but fierceness ill agrees with the dove, which is a meek and harmless creature;

and because of his fierce anger; either of God, or of the king of Babylon his instrument, in destroying nations; not Judea only, but many others.

CHAPTER 26

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 26

This chapter gives an account of Jeremiah's preaching; of his being apprehended by the people; of his defence of himself, and acquittance upon it. The time when, place where, and persons to whom the prophet delivered his discourse, are pointed at in (~~2481~~Jeremiah 26:1,2); the substance of it was, that if the people of the Jews would repent of their sins and turn from them, the Lord would avert the evil he had threatened them with; but if not, he would make their temple like Shiloh, and their city a curse to all the earth, (~~2488~~Jeremiah 26:3-6); upon hearing which the people seized him, and vowed he should die, because he had prophesied of the destruction of their city and temple, (~~2497~~Jeremiah 26:7-9); which the princes hearing of, came from the king's house to one of the gates of the temple, and sat as a court of judicature; to whom the priests and prophets accused Jeremiah of the above things as worthy of death, (~~2498~~Jeremiah 26:10,11); and before whom the prophet made his defence, alleging his mission and orders from the Lord; and therefore, instead of recanting, repeats his exhortation; and as for himself, he was not careful what they did to him; but advises them not to shed innocent blood, since it would bring evil upon them, (~~2499~~Jeremiah 26:12-15); upon which the princes acquit him, and declare him innocent, (~~2506~~Jeremiah 26:16); and this is confirmed by a like instance of Micah the prophet, in the times of Hezekiah, who prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem, and yet was not put to death, (~~2497~~Jeremiah 26:17-19); and by a contrary instance of Uriah, in the then present reign of Jehoiakim, who had been put to death for the like, but wrongly, (~~2498~~Jeremiah 26:20-23); and, in the issue, Jeremiah, through the good office of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, particularly, was saved from being put to death, (~~2498~~Jeremiah 26:24).

Ver. 1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah*, etc.] So that the prophecy of this chapter, and the facts and events connected with it, were before the prophecy of the preceding chapter, though here related; that being in the fourth year, this in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. Josiah was lately dead; Jehoahaz his son

reigned but three months, and then was deposed by Pharaohnecho king of Egypt; and this Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah, who before was called Eliakim, was set on the throne; and quickly after his coming to it

came this word from the Lord, saying; as follows, to the prophet. This was in the year of the world 3394, and before Christ 610, according to Bishop Usher^{f532}; with whom agree Mr. Whiston^{f533}, and the authors of the Universal History^{f534}.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, stand in the court of the Lord's house*, etc.] It, the great court of Israel, where the people used to meet together for worship:

and speak unto all the cities of Judah; the inhabitants of them; not only to those that dwelt at Jerusalem but in the rest of the cities of Judah; for what he was to say concerned them all, they having all sinned, and needed repentance and reformation; without which they would be involved in the general calamity of the nation:

which come to worship in the Lord's house; as they did three times in the year, at the feasts of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; and it was now the last of these, as Bishop Usher thinks, when this prophecy was to be delivered to them:

all the words that I command thee to speak to them: nothing must be kept back, the whole counsel of God must be declared; not a word suppressed through affection to them, or fear of them; God commanded, and must be obeyed, let the consequence be what it will:

diminish not a word; soften not any expression or alter any word, by putting one more smooth for one rough; or change the accent, or abate of the vehemency of delivering it; but both for matter manner, and form let it be as directed, without any subtraction and diminution, change or alteration: a rule which every minister of the word ought to attend to; seeking not to please men, but God that sends him and Christ whose minister he is.

Ver. 3. *If so be they will hearken*, etc.] And obey; which is expressive not of ignorance and conjecture in God, but of his patience and long suffering, granting space and time for repentance, and the means of it; which disregarded, leave without excuse:

and turn every man from his evil way; his series and course of life, which was evil, and was the case of everyone; so that as their sin was general, the reformation ought to be so too:

that I may repent me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them; or “am thinking”, or “devising^{f535} to do unto them”; which repentance must be understood not of a change of mind, but of the course of his providence towards them, which, by his threatenings, and some steps taken, portended ruin and destruction; yet, in case of repentance and reformation, he would change his method of action agreeably to his will:

because of the evil of their doings; this was the reason why he had threatened them with the evil of punishment, because of the evil of their actions; which were breaches of his law, and such as provoked the eyes of his glory.

Ver. 4. *And thou shalt say unto them*, etc.] What follows is the substance of the prophecy, and the sum of the sermon or discourse he was sent to deliver, without diminishing a word of it:

thus saith the Lord, if ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law which I have set before you; first by Moses, by whose hands it was given to their fathers; and by the prophets, the interpreters of it to them; before whom it was set as a way for them to walk in, and a rule to walk by; a directory for them in their lives and conversations; and which continues to be so, as it is set before us Christians by our King and Lawgiver Jesus Christ; though not to obtain righteousness and life by the works of it; which should not be sought for, nor are attainable thereby.

Ver. 5. *To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets*, etc.] The interpretations they give of the law; the doctrines they deliver; the exhortations, cautions, and reproofs given by them in the name of the Lord, whose servants they were; and therefore should be hearkened to; since hearkening to them is hearkening to the Lord himself, in whose name they speak, and whose message they deliver:

whom I sent unto you, both rising up early and sending [them]; they had their mission and commission from the Lord; and who was careful to send them early, if they might be instruments to do them good and prevent their ruin; they had the best of means, and these seasonable, and so were left without excuse:

(but ye have not hearkened); neither to the Lord, nor to his prophets; but went on in their own ways, neglecting the law of the Lord and the instructions of his servants.

Ver. 6. *Then will I make this house like Shiloh*, etc.] Where the ark was until it was taken by the Philistines; and then the Lord forsook his tabernacle there, (³⁹⁸⁰Psalm 78:60); and so he threatens to do the like to the temple at Jerusalem, should they continue in their disobedience to him; (see Gill on “²⁴⁷²Jeremiah 7:12”) and (see Gill on “²⁴⁷⁴Jeremiah 7:14”);

and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth; that is, the city of Jerusalem, which should be taken up, and used proverbially in all countries; who, when they would curse anyone, should say, the Lord make thee as Jerusalem, or do unto thee as he has done to Jerusalem.

Ver. 7. *So the priests, and the prophets, and all the people*, etc.] As it was in the temple, in one of the courts of it, that Jeremiah was, and said the above things, it is no wonder to hear of the “priests”, since they were there about their work and service; the “prophets” were the false prophets, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions expressly call them; and “all the people” were all the males out of the several cities of Judah, who were come up to the temple on the account of the feast; (see ²⁴¹²Jeremiah 26:2); now these

heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord; in the temple; in the court of Israel; they heard him out, and did not interrupt him while he was speaking; and having heard him, they were angry with him, and were witnesses against him; they did not hear him so as to obey his words, receive his instructions, and follow, his directions; but they heard him with indignation, and were determined to prosecute him unto death.

Ver. 8. *Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking*, etc.] For they let him alone till he had done, either out of reverence of him as a priest and prophet; or they were awed by a secret influence on their minds that they might not disturb him:

all that the Lord had commanded [him] to speak unto all the people; he did as he was ordered, kept back nothing, not fearing the resentment of the people, but fearing God:

that the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, took him; the priests and the prophets were the leading men in this action; they stirred up the

people against him, and through their instigation he was seized and laid hold on:

saying, thou shall surely die; signifying that they would bring a charge against him, which they were able to support, and which by the law would be death; unless they meant in the manner of zealots to put him to death themselves, without judge or jury; and which they would have put in execution, had not the princes of the land, or the great sanhedrim, heard of it; and therefore to prevent it came to the temple, as is afterwards related.

Ver. 9. *Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord*, etc.] Made use of his name in declaring a falsehood, as they would have it; this was the crime: had he said what he thought fit to say in his own name, they suggest it would not have been so bad; but to vent his own imaginations in the name of the Lord, this they judged wicked and blasphemous, and deserving of death; especially since what he said was against their city and temple:

saying, this house shall be like Shiloh; forsaken and destroyed; that is, the temple:

and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? so they wrested his words; for this he did not say, only that it should be a curse to all the nations of the earth:

and all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the Lord; besides those that were in the temple that heard him, others, upon a rumour that he was apprehended by the priests, and prophets, and people in the temple, got together in a mob about him: or, they were “gathered to”^{f536} him; to hear what he had to say in his own defence; and it appears afterwards that they were on his side, (²⁰³⁶Jeremiah 26:16).

Ver. 10. *When the princes of Judah heard these things*, etc.] The tumult there was in the temple; these were the princes of the blood, or the nobles of the realm, particularly the courtiers, and who were of the king’s privy council; or else the great sanhedrim, consisting of seventy persons, and were the chief court of judicature:

then they came up from the king’s house to the house of the Lord; from the royal palace where they resided; by which it should seem that they were the king’s courtiers, and counsellors, and officers of state; unless in those times the sanhedrim sat there; from hence they came up to the temple, where

Jeremiah and the priests, etc. were, which, being built on a hill, was higher than the king's palace; and therefore are said to "come up" to it:

and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the Lord's [house]; as a court of judicature, to hear and try the cause between the prophet and his accusers. This gate of the temple is thought to be the higher gate, which Jotham built, (⁴²⁵⁵⁶2 Kings 15:35). The Targum calls it the eastern gate; and so Kimchi says it was; and that it was called the new gate, according to the Rabbins, because there they renewed the constitutions and traditions; though he thinks the better reason is, because newly repaired, or some new building was added to it. Jarchi also says it was the eastern gate; and gives this reason for its being called new; that when Jehoiakim was carried captive, and some of the vessels of the temple, Nebuchadnezzar's army broke the eastern gate, which Zedekiah afterwards repaired, and made new; but if so, it is here called new by a prolepsis; or this account was written after that time.

Ver. 11. *Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes, and to all the people*, etc.] The priests and the prophets they were the accusers; the princes were the court before whom the cause was brought; and the people were the hearers of it; though it does not seem as if they were a sort of jury, or had any vote in determining; though they sometimes had in instigating a court, and the judges of it, to take on the side of the question they were for:

saying, this man [is] worthy to die; or, "the judgment of death [is] to this man"^{f537}; he is guilty of a capital crime, and judgment ought to be given against him, and he condemned to die:

for he hath prophesied against this city; the city of Jerusalem; saying that it should be a curse to other nations; or, as they interpreted it, that it should be utterly destroyed, and become desolate, and none should inhabit it:

as ye have heard with your ears; this must be directed to the people only; for the princes did not hear Jeremiah's prophecy.

Ver. 12. *Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes, and to all the people, saying*, etc.] In his own defence; which, as Jerom observes, was with prudence, humility, and constancy:

the Lord sent me to prophesy against this house, and against this city, all the words that ye have heard; he does not deny but that he had prophesied

against the city of Jerusalem and against the temple, and that they should both come to ruin, unless the people repented and reformed; but then he urges, that he was sent by the Lord on this errand, and that every word that he had said, and they had heard, he was ordered to say by the Lord; and therefore what was he, that he should withstand God? he surely was not to be blamed for doing what the Lord commanded him to do; besides, all this was threatened only in case they continued obstinate and impenitent; wherefore he renews his exhortations to them in (⁴⁰³Jeremiah 26:13).

Ver. 13. *Therefore now amend your ways and your doings*, etc.] Make them good; leave your evil ways, and walk in good ways; forsake your evil works, and do good works:

and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and that because he is your God, as well as what his word directs to is good, and for your good:

and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you; will do as men do when they repent, change their method of acting, and manner of behaviour; so the Lord is said to repent or turn, when he changes the method and conduct of his providence towards men, though he never changes his mind or counsel.

Ver. 14. *As for me, behold, I [am] in your hand*, etc.] In their power, as they were the chief court of judicature; and to whom it belonged to judge of prophets, and to acquit or condemn them, as they saw fit; wherefore he submits to their authority:

do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you; he was not careful about it; he readily submitted to their pleasure, and should patiently endure what they thought fit to inflict upon him; it gave him no great concern whether his life was taken from him or not; he was satisfied he had done what he ought to do, and should do the same, was it to do again; and therefore they might proceed just as they pleased against him.

Ver. 15. *But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death*, etc.] Take this along with you, and then do as you will; that if ye take away my life on this account, you may depend upon it; nothing is more certain than this:

ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; that is, the guilt of innocent blood, which would cry for vengeance upon them that brought the accusation, and insisted upon his being brought in guilty; and upon those that sat in

judgment, and condemned him; and upon all the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, who should agree to the putting him to death:

for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears; and therefore I am no false prophet, and am clear of the charge brought against me; and have said nothing but what I had a mission and an order from the Lord for, of which you may assure yourselves; and therefore he will avenge my blood, should it be shed on that account; so that you will only increase your guilt, and add to that great load that lies upon you, and will be your ruin, unless you repent and reform.

Ver. 16. *Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets*, etc.] Hearing Jeremiah's apology for himself, by which it appeared that he was to be justified in what he had done, took his part, and acquitted him; and the people, who before were on the side of the priests and false prophets; yet hearing what Jeremiah had to say for himself, and also the judgment of the princes, took his part also, and joined with the court in an address to the priests and prophets, who were the chief accusers, and who would fain have had him brought in guilty of death:

this man [is] not worthy to die; or, "the judgment of death is not for this man"; we cannot give judgment against him; he is not guilty of any crime deserving death; (see Gill on "[Jeremiah 26:11](#)");

for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God; not in his own name, and of his own head; but in the name of the Lord, and by his order; and therefore was not a false, but a true prophet: what methods they took to know this, and to make it appear to the people, is not said; very probably the settled character of the prophet; their long acquaintance with him, and knowledge of him; his integrity and firmness of mind; the plain marks of seriousness and humility, and a disinterested view, made them conclude in his favour.

Ver. 17. *Then rose up certain of the elders of the land*, etc.] The same with the princes; some of the court, who rose up as advocates for the prophet:

and spake to all the assembly of the people: to justify the vote of the court, and to confirm the people in a good opinion of it, by giving them examples and instances of the like kind:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 18. *Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah*, etc.] Or, Micah of Maresha, as the Targum. Mareshah was a city of the tribe of Judah, (⁴⁶⁵⁴Joshua 15:44); the native place, of this prophet; who appears, by the following quotation, to be the same Micah that stands among the minor prophets; and who is also so called, and lived in the times of Hezekiah, (³⁰⁰¹Micah 1:1);

and spake to all the people of Judah; very openly and publicly, and just as Jeremiah had done, (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 26:2,7,8);

saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be ploughed [like] a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps; Mount Zion, on part of which the temple was built, and on the other the city of David, together with the city of Jerusalem, should be so demolished, as that they might be ploughed, and become a tillage; as the Jews say they were by Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, as they call him, after their last destruction by the Romans:

and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest; covered with grass and shrubs, and thorns and briars; even Mount Moriah, on which the temple stood, which is designed by the house; and so the Targum calls it the house of the sanctuary. Now this was saying as much against the city and temple as Jeremiah did; and was said in the days of a good king too, who encouraged a reformation, and carried it to a great pitch. (see ³⁸⁸²Micah 3:12).

Ver. 19. *Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death?* etc.] No, they did not: neither the king, by his own authority; nor the sanhedrim, the great court of judicature, for the nation; they never sought to take away his life, nor sat in council about it; they never arraigned him, and much less condemned him:

did he not fear the Lord, and besought the Lord; that is, Hezekiah; he did, as knowing that Micah was a prophet of the Lord, and sent by him; wherefore he received his prophecy with great awe and reverence, as coming from the Lord, and made his supplications to him that he would avert the judgments threatened:

and the Lord repented of the evil which he had pronounced against them? the king and his people, the city and the temple; and so the threatened evil came not upon them in their days:

thus might we procure great evil against our souls; should we put Jeremiah to death: it is therefore much more advisable to do as Hezekiah did, pray unto the Lord to avert the threatened evil, or otherwise it will be worse with us. This precedent is urged to strengthen the decree of the council in favour of Jeremiah.

Ver. 20. *And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the Lord*, etc.] These are not the words of the same persons continued; because the following instance is against them; but of some other persons in the sanhedrim, who were on the side of the priests and prophets; who in effect said, why tell you us of an instance in Hezekiah's time, when there is so recent an one in the present reign, of a man that prophesied just as Jeremiah has done, and was put to death, and so ought he? after this manner Kimchi interprets it; and so Jarchi, who adds, that it is so explained in an ancient book of theirs, called Siphri; though some think they are the words of the same persons that espoused the prophet's cause; and observe the following instance with this view; that whereas there had been one prophet of the Lord lately put to death for the same thing, should they take away the life of another, it would be adding sin to sin, and bring great evil upon their souls; and it might be observed, that Hezekiah prevented much evil by the steps he took; whereas, should they proceed as they had begun in the present reign, they might expect nothing but ruin, which they might easily see with their own eyes was coming upon them: others are of opinion that this instance is added by the penman of this book, either the prophet himself or Baruch, to show the wonderful preservation of him; that though there had been very lately a person put to death for the very same thing, yet he was preserved through the good offices of a person mentioned at the close of the chapter; and which seems to make this account probable. The name of the prophet was

Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjathjearim; which was a city of Judah, (~~Joshua~~ Joshua 18:14); but who he was is not known, there being no account of him elsewhere:

who prophesied against this city, and against this land, according to all the words of Jeremiah; just as he had done, in much the same words, if not altogether; so that their case was similar.

Ver. 21. *And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men*, etc.] Either his courtiers, or his soldiers, or both:

and all the princes, heard his words; the words of the Prophet Urijah; not with their own ears very probably, but from the report of others:

the king sought to put him to death; as being a messenger of bad tidings, tending to dispirit his subjects, and allay the joy of his own mind upon his advancement to the throne:

but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt; which some understand as a piece of prudence in him; but rather it was the effect of pusillanimity and cowardice: it seems to show want of faith and confidence in the Lord; and the fear of man, which brings a snare; and besides, it was no piece of prudence to go to Egypt, whatever it was to flee; since there was such an alliance between the kings of Egypt and Judah; and the latter, though dependent on the former, yet the king of Egypt would easily gratify him in delivering up a subject of his, and a person of such a character.

Ver. 22. *And Jehoiakim sent men into Egypt*, etc.] To seek for him; and to require the delivery of him upon being found:

[*namely*], *Elnathan the son of Achbor*; the father of this man very probably is the same we read of in Josiah's time, (¹²²²2 Kings 22:12,14); who is called Abdon in (⁴⁸⁴⁰2 Chronicles 34:20);

and [certain] men with him, into Egypt; to assist him in taking him, whose names are not mentioned; Elnathan's is, as being the principal, and to fix an eternal infamy upon him.

Ver. 23. *And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt*, etc.] Having found him, they seized him, and brought him away, with the leave of the king of Egypt: which, no doubt, was easily obtained:

and brought him to Jehoiakim the king, who slew him with the sword; very probably with his own hand; or however it was done by his order, and in his presence, most likely:

and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people; either where they were buried in heaps promiscuously, as some think; or in the common burying ground; and not where persons of distinction were laid, as prophets, and others^{f538}; this he did to reflect dishonour upon the prophet.

Ver. 24. *Nevertheless, the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah*, etc.] Though this instance was urged as a precedent to go by,

being lately done; or though the king's cruelty had been so lately exercised in such a manner; yet this man, who had been one of Josiah's courtiers and counsellors, (~~1221~~2 Kings 22:12); stood by Jeremiah, and used all his power, authority, and influence, in his favour:

that they should not give him into the hand of the people, to put him to death; that the sanhedrim should not; who, by the last precedent mentioned, might seem inclined to it; but this great man, having several brothers, as well as other friends, that paid a regard to his arguments and solicitations; he prevailed upon them not to give leave to the people to put him to death, who appear to have been very fickle and mutable; at first they joined with the priests and false prophets against Jeremiah, to accuse him; but upon the judgment and vote of the princes, on hearing the cause, they changed their sentiments, and were for the prophet against the priests; and now, very probably, upon the instance of Urijah being given as a precedent, they altered their minds again, and were for putting him to death, could they have obtained leave of the court; and which only Ahikam's interest prevented.

CHAPTER 27

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 27

This chapter contains a prophecy of the subjection of the king of Judah, with five neighbouring kings, to the king of Babylon; signified by bonds and yokes on the prophet's neck, which they are exhorted patiently to bear, as being most for their good; and not to give heed to false prophets, who would persuade them to the contrary. The date of the prophecy is in (^{<271>}Jeremiah 27:1); the order to make the yokes, and send them to the several neighbouring princes by their messengers at Jerusalem, (^{<272>}Jeremiah 27:2,3); what they should say to their masters from the God of Israel, who is described from his power in the creation of the earth, and the disposal of it, (^{<274>}Jeremiah 27:4,5); as that he had given all their lands into the hand of the king of Babylon, whom they should serve, or it would be worse for them, (^{<276>}Jeremiah 27:6-8); and therefore should not hearken to their prophets, who prophesied lies; if they did, it would be to their hurt; whereas, if they quietly submitted, they would dwell in their own land, (^{<279>}Jeremiah 27:9-11); particularly Zedekiah king of Judah is exhorted to submit; and both he, and the priests and the people, are advised not to hearken to the false prophets, (^{<2712>}Jeremiah 27:12-15); particularly as to what they said concerning the speedy return of the vessels of the temple, which were carried away to Babylon; but might assure themselves they should remain there; and the rest also should be taken, and not returned until the end of the seventy years, (^{<2716>}Jeremiah 27:16-22).

Ver. 1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah,* etc.] This is the same date with the prophecy of the preceding chapter and some think that this verse should conclude that, as belonging to it; and by which they would reconcile a difficulty that arises here; the orders for making the yokes being given in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, which yet were to be sent to the messengers of the neighbouring kings that were come to Zedekiah at Jerusalem, who did not begin to reign until eleven years after this time; but the word "saying", at the end of the verse, shows it not to belong to the preceding, but to what follows: others think it is a mistake of the copy, and that Jehoiakim is put for Zedekiah;

and the Syriac and Arabic versions read Zedekiah; but he was not the son of Josiah, as this king is said to be, but his brother: others therefore think, that though the prophecy was delivered to Jeremiah, and the orders were given him to make the bonds and yokes after mentioned, at this time; yet this prophecy was concealed with him, and the orders were not executed till Zedekiah's time; or that the prophet, in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, made the yokes as he was ordered, and put one on his neck, to signify the subjection of Judah to the king of Babylon, which quickly took place, about the third or fourth year of this reign; and that the rest were sent to the ambassadors of the neighbouring nations in Zedekiah's time; which latter seems most probable:

came this word unto Jeremiah from the Lord, saying; as follows. This verse is not in the common editions of the Septuagint; but it is in the king of Spain's Bible.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord to me, make thee bonds and yokes,* etc.] The yokes were made of wood, as appears from (²⁸¹³Jeremiah 28:13); and the bonds were strings or thongs, which bound the yoke together, that it might not slip off the neck, on which it was put:

and put them upon thy neck; not all of them together, but one after another, at different times; and this was very significant; for the prophet being seen abroad with a yoke upon his neck, it would be natural to inquire the meaning of it; when they would be told it was to signify the subjection of Judah, and so of other nations, to the king of Babylon; and that he did wear at times such a yoke, even fifteen years after, in the fourth of Zedekiah's reign, appears from (²⁸¹⁰Jeremiah 28:1,10).

Ver. 3. *And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon,* etc.] All neighbouring kings and states, to whom the wine cup of God's wrath was to be sent, and they made to drink of it, (²⁵²¹Jeremiah 25:21,22); and against whom Jeremiah afterwards prophesies:

by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; who were sent by their masters, either to congratulate Zedekiah upon his accession to the throne; or to enter into a league with him against the king of Babylon, and shake off his yoke; or to reside at his court, as ambassadors of nations at peace and in alliance usually do; and it may be for all those purposes. The yokes therefore are ordered to be sent

to them, as being the most proper and easy way and method of conveying them, with the meaning of them, to their respective masters.

Ver. 4. *And command them to say unto their masters*, etc.] The prophet is sent with authority, and ordered to speak in a very high strain, having his orders from the King of kings and Lord of lords; a greater master than those messengers had; and to enjoin them to tell their several masters in his master's name; as follows:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; who, though in a peculiar manner the God of Israel, yet was Lord of the whole world, and had all the armies of heaven and earth at his command, to enforce his power and authority; wherefore what he says ought to be attended to:

thus shall ye say to your masters; deliver to them the following words of the great Jehovah.

Ver. 5. *I have made the earth, the man and the beast that [are] upon the ground*, etc.] The earth was made by him on the first day, and man and beast on the sixth day, of the creation; the earth is still supported in its being, and man and beast are continued on it in succession: this is mentioned to show his right and authority to dispose of the earth, and all in it, at his pleasure; which is founded on his creation and sustaining of it, and all creatures in it: which was, and is, as he says,

by my great power, and by my outstretched arm; for nothing less could have created the original chaos out of nothing, and brought that into form and order, and produced out of it such creatures as man and beast; and nothing less than that could continue it in being, and a succession of creatures on it:

and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me; some part of it to one, and some to another; and more to one than to another; but to none according to their merit, but according to his own sovereign will and pleasure; (see ^{115:16} Psalm 115:16).

Ver. 6. *And now I have given all these lands*, etc.] Before mentioned; of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Zidon, and Judea:

into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; whom God used as an instrument in correcting and chastising the nations; and who obeyed his will, though he knew it not; nor did what he did in

obedience to it; and yet had the honour of being called his servant, and of being rewarded with a very large empire; which was owing, not so much to his prowess and valour, wisdom and management, as to the providence of God; who delivered the above kingdoms, with others, into his hands, as being the sole proprietor and sovereign disposer of them:

and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him; either to bring him, and his armies, and his carriages of provisions for them, and warlike stores, for the invasion and taking the above countries; or the cattle found there, which belonged to these countries, and the inhabitants thereof, which would fall into his hands with them.

Ver. 7. *And all nations shall serve him*, etc.] That is, all those, all above mentioned; though there were others also that were tributary to him, but not every nation under heaven:

and his son, and his son's son; their Scripture names were Evilmerodach and Belshazzar, (^{<2828>}Jeremiah 52:31 ^{<2780>}Daniel 5:1); and by Ptolemy, in his canon, are called Iloarudamus and Nabonadius; between whom he places Niricassolassarus, or Neriglissarus; who was not a son of Evilmerodach, but his sister's husband. A son of his succeeded him, called Laborosoarchod; who, reigning but nine months, is not placed in the canon; agreeably to which is the account of Berosus^{f539}; by whom the immediate son of Nebuchadnezzar is named Evilmaradouchus; or Evilmalaurouchus, as in Eusebius^{f540}; who, after he had reigned two years, was slain by Neriglissoor, or Neriglissar, as in the above writer, his sister's husband; who, after he had enjoyed the kingdom four years, died, and left it to his son, whom he calls Chabaessoarachus, or Laborosoarchados, as before, who reigned but nine months; and then Nabonnidus succeeded, the name he gives him who was conquered by Cyrus in the seventeenth year of his reign; and not very different is the account of Nebuchadnezzar's successors, and the names of them, as given by Abydenus, out of Megasthenes^{f541}; according to whom, Evilmalaurouchus, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, was his successor; then Neriglissar, his sister's husband, who left a son called Labassoarascus; and after him Nabannidochus, in whose times Cyrus took Babylon; and who appears to be the same with Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar; so that the Scripture is very just and accurate in mentioning these two only as the son, and son's son of Nebuchadnezzar, whom the nations should serve; for in the last of these ended the Babylonish monarchy:

until the very time of his land come; or that “itself; also he himself”^{f542} or, “also of himself”, as the Vulgate Latin version. The Targum is,

“until the time of the destruction of his land come, also of himself;”

there was a time fixed for his life, and so long the nations were to serve, and did serve, him personally; and there was a time fixed for the continuance of his monarchy, in his son, and son’s son; when it was to end, as it did, in Belshazzar’s reign; and when the seventy years’ captivity of the Jews was up:

and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him; and his kingdom; subdue it, and make it tributary to them. This was accomplished by the Medes and Persians, with Darius and Cyrus at the head of them, and other nations and kings, allies and auxiliaries to them, and associates with them; (see ^{<2514>}Jeremiah 25:14). The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “and many nations and great kings shall serve him”; so the Targum; which falls in with the former part of the verse; wherefore the other sense is best.

Ver. 8. *And it shall come to pass, [that] the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon*, etc.] Will not, upon his approaching to them, invading and besieging them, submit and become tributary to him, as is more fully expressed in the next clause:

and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon; or voluntarily become subject to him, and pay a tax he shall impose upon them. This refers to, and explains the symbol of, Jeremiah’s making and wearing yokes, (^{<2712>}Jeremiah 27:2);

that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence; with one judgment after another; some will perish by the sword of the enemy, sallying out upon them, or endeavouring to make their escape; others by famine their provisions being spent through the length of the siege; and others by pestilence, or the plague, by the immediate hand of God:

until I have consumed them by his hand; Nebuchadnezzar’s; by means of him; by his sword, and strait besieging them; or, “into his hand”; and so the Targum,

“until I have delivered them into his hand;”

having consumed multitudes by the sword, famine, and pestilence, will deliver the rest into his hands to be carried captive by him.

Ver. 9. *Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets*, etc.] False prophets, as the Targum. These words are not directed to the Jews, but are a continuation of what the messengers of the nations should say to their masters from the God of Israel, by the mouth of his prophet; for they had their prophets as well as the Jews; as the prophets of Baal, and others:

nor to your diviners; or soothsayers; such an one as was Balaam:

nor to your dreamers; or “dreams”; such as they had themselves, and laid great stress upon; or to those who pretended to interpret them to them:

nor to your enchanters; or stargazers; astrologers, who pretended by the position of the stars to foretell what would come to pass:

nor to your sorcerers; or wizards, or necromancers; who, by unlawful methods, pretended to acquire knowledge of future things:

which speak unto you, saying, ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; meaning, either that they ought not to become tributary to him; or they should not be brought into subjection by him: and so were stirred up to oppose him, and not submit to him.

Ver. 10. *For they prophesy a lie unto you*, etc.] That which was vain and false, and proved so; though they might not know it was when delivered:

to remove you far from your land; not that they designed it by their prophecies, but so it was eventually; for, standing it out against Nebuchadnezzar, encouraged by the lies and dreams of their prophets, he, in process of time, took them, and carried them captive into Babylon; whereas, had they surrendered at once, they might have continued in their own land, paying a tax or tribute to the king of Babylon:

and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish; drive them out of their own land, and so perish in a foreign land: God is said to do that which his servant or instrument did, being provoked by the sin and disobedience of the people, hearkening to their lying prophets, and not to him.

Ver. 11. *But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him*, etc.] That at once, and readily, submit unto him, and pay him tribute:

those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord; undisturbed by any other enemy; peaceably dwelling in their own habitations; following their occupations and business of life; and enjoying their substance and estates, only paying the tax imposed on them:

and they shall till it, and dwell therein; manure and cultivate it, and gather and eat the fruit of it, and continue to do so, they and their posterity after them.

Ver. 12. *I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah,* etc.] At the same time that he delivered the above message from the Lord to the ambassadors of several nations, who were then residents in Zedekiah's court, or however in Jerusalem:

according to all these words; the same things, and much in the same language, he said to the king of Judah, as to the messengers of the nations:

saying; as follows:

bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon; you, O king, your nobles, and your people. Zedekiah was set upon the throne by the king of Babylon, was a tributary to him, and had took an oath to be faithful to him; and yet was now meditating rebellion against him; and was consulting and entering into a confederacy with the neighbouring nations to throw off the yoke, and be independent on him: wherefore the sense of this advice must be to bring themselves, he and his people, to a cheerful submission to it, and a patient bearing it, and not attempt to shake it off:

and serve him and his people, and live: the king of Babylon, and the Chaldeans, by faithfully paying the tribute, and acknowledging subjection to him; and so "live" in their own land, enjoying all other civil and religious privileges.

Ver. 13. *Why will ye die, thou and thy people, the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence,* etc.] Through a blockade of the Chaldean army, which would invade their land, and besiege their city, upon a refusal to be subject to their yoke:

as the Lord hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? as the Lord has threatened shall be the case of any and everyone of the above nations that should refuse to be tributary to him; of which, no doubt, Zedekiah and his court had been apprized; (see ^{<27>}Jeremiah 27:8).

Ver. 14. *Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets,* etc.] The false prophets, as the Targum; such bad kings always had about them, to whom they listened, and which often proved of bad consequence to them:

that speak unto you, saying; as follows:

ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; ye ought not to do it, but cast off his yoke; to which if ye do not willingly submit, he will never be able to force you to it:

for they prophesy a lie unto you; and therefore should not be hearkened to, particularly when they promise safety from the king of Babylon.

Ver. 15. *For I have not sent them, saith the Lord,* etc.] (see ^{<2020>}Jeremiah 23:21); yet they prophesy a lie in my name; to deliver out a lie was a very wicked thing, sinful in them, and fatal to others; but to make use of the name of the Lord, and cover it with that, and back it with his authority, was much more wicked and abominable:

that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish; being driven out of their own land, perish in another; which, though the false prophets did not intend by their prophesying, yet such would be, and was, the issue of it:

ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you; for it would end in the ruin and destruction of them both; both of the false prophets, as the Targum here again calls them, and those that listened to their prophecies; both would fall into the same ditch.

Ver. 16. *Also I spake to the priests, and to all this people, saying,* etc.] From the court he went to the temple, and spoke to the priests that were ministering there, and to all the people that were assembled for divine worship; either at the ordinary time of it, or at some one of the solemn feasts: this was a proper time and place to meet with the people and the priests; which latter especially had a concern in what he had to say concerning the vessels of the temple:

thus saith the Lord, hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you: your false prophets, as the Targum:

saying; as follows:

behold, the vessels of the Lord's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon; which were carried thither, both in the times of Jehoiakim,

and of Jeconiah, (~~4807~~ 2 Chronicles 36:7,10); these the false prophets gave out would in a short time be returned; that the king of Babylon, either willingly and of his own accord, or being pressed or forced to it, would send them back; so little reason had they to fear an invasion from him, or captivity by him:

for they prophesy a lie unto you; that which is false, and will never be accomplished, at least in any short time.

Ver. 17. *Hearken not unto them,* etc.] The false prophets:

serve the king of Babylon, and live; pay homage and tribute to him; which is the way to live in your own land, and enjoy the benefits of that, and of the temple worship; which, if not, you will be utterly deprived of:

wherefore should this city be laid waste? as it certainly will, should you rebel against the king of Babylon; and as it was in a few years after, when they did.

Ver. 18. *But if they be prophets, and if the word of the Lord be with them,* etc.] The true prophets of the Lord are sent by him, and have his word put into them:

let them now make intercession to the Lord of hosts: use their interest with him, as they must have one, if they are true prophets; let them pray unto him, who doubtless will hear them; and this will be acting in character, for prophets ought to be praying persons; and this will turn to some good account:

that the vessels which are left in the house of the Lord, and [in] the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon; instead of prophesying about the return of what are gone, let them pray for the preservation and continuance of what are left, that they do not go also; of which there was great danger, yea, certainty, in case of non-submission to, and rebellion against, the king of Babylon; there were some vessels of the sanctuary which yet remained, as well as others in the king's palace, and in the houses of the noble and rich men in Jerusalem; for the keeping of which they would do well to show a proper concern, and make use of proper means; and nothing more effectual than prayer to God; and, next to that, submission to the Chaldean yoke.

Ver. 19. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the pillars,* etc.] The pillars of brass that stood in the temple; the one called Boaz, and the other Jachin, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:15,21);

and concerning the sea; the sea of molten brass, which stood upon twelve oxen, (^{<1073>}1 Kings 7:23,25);

and concerning the bases: the ten bases, which also were made of brass, (^{<1077>}1 Kings 7:27-37);

and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city; in the king's palace, and in the houses of the noblemen, and of the rich and wealthy inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ver. 20. *Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not,* etc.] For he seems only to have taken the vessels of gold, and left the vessels of brass, as the above were; (see ^{<1243>}2 Kings 24:13);

when he carried away captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem; of which (see ^{<1242>}2 Kings 24:12-16).

Ver. 21. *Yea, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain [in] the house of the Lord,* etc.] Which are mentioned in (^{<2079>}Jeremiah 27:19); together with others:

and [in] the house of the king of Judah, and of Jerusalem; (see ^{<2078>}Jeremiah 27:18).

Ver. 22. *They shall be carried to Babylon,* etc.] As they were; and of which, with others, there is a particular account in (^{<1253>}2 Kings 25:13-17);

and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith to the Lord; the Chaldeans in a way of wrath, and the Jews in a way of grace and favour; which was at the end of the seventy years' captivity; and so long the vessels of the sanctuary continued there; here we read of them as in use the very night that Belshazzar was slain, and Babylon taken, (^{<2082>}Daniel 5:2,30);

then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place; which was fulfilled when the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia to give leave to the Jews to return to their own land, and rebuild their temple; and

at the same time delivered into the hands of Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah, the vessels of the temple, (~~5000~~ Ezra 1:1,7).

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 28

Thus chapter relates a false prophecy of Hananiah, who broke off the yoke from Jeremiah; but in return the people are threatened with an iron yoke, and he with death; which came to pass. The time, place, and substance of his prophecy, are in (~~2481~~Jeremiah 28:1-4); Jeremiah's answer to it, (~~2485~~Jeremiah 28:5-9); Hananiah breaks Jeremiah's yoke, and explains the meaning of it to the people, (~~2480~~Jeremiah 28:10,11); Jeremiah prophesies that iron yokes should be given instead of wooden ones, (~~2482~~Jeremiah 28:12-14); and foretells the death of the false prophet, (~~2485~~Jeremiah 28:15-17).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass the same year*, etc.] That the prophet was bid to make yokes and bonds, and send them to the neighbouring kings, whose ambassadors were in Zedekiah's court; and when he spoke the things related in the preceding chapter to Zedekiah, the priests, and people:

in the beginning the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah; perhaps in the first year of his reign:

in the fourth year, [and] in the fifth month; not in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign, though the Septuagint and A table versions so render it; since his reign was but eleven years in all, and therefore the fourth could not be called with so much propriety the beginning of his reign: though, according to Jarchi, it was the fourth of Zedekiah's reign, the same year in which he paid a visit to the king of Babylon, (~~2459~~Jeremiah 51:59); and was not only confirmed in his kingdom by him, but, according to the same writer, had it enlarged, and was made king over five neighbouring kings; and so this, though the fourth of his reign over Judah, was the first of his enlarged dominions: but rather this was the fourth year of the sabbatical year, or the fourth after the seventh year's rest of the land, as Kimchi observes; which was the first of Zedekiah's reign, who reigned eleven years, and the temple was destroyed at the end of a sabbatical year; in which he is followed by many, though there is nothing in the text or context that directs to it. Some divide Zedekiah's reign into three parts, the

beginning, and middle, and end; and so what was done within the first four years of his reign might be said to be in the beginning of it. Others think that here are two distinct dates; that the former respects the things in the preceding chapter, which were in the beginning of his reign; and the latter that affair of Haniah, which was in the fourth year of it. But Noldius^{f543}, after Glassius^{f544}, gets clear of the difficulties of this text, by rendering the words, “and it was from that year, the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, unto the fourth year of his reign”; that is, the prophet went on for the space of four years, signifying the will of the Lord by words and types; when in the fifth month of the fourth year, which was the month of Ab, answering to part of our July and of August,

Haniah the son of Azur the prophet; the false prophet, as the Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions call him,

which [was] of Gibeon; a city of the priests; so might be a priest, though not the high priest, as some have thought:

spake unto me in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests, and of all the people; he came to the temple, where Jeremiah was, to confront him; and he addressed himself to him, the priests and all the people being present, who were come thither to minister and worship:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] Using the language of the true prophets, and describing the Lord just in the same manner they do, when coming from him, and speaking in his name: a bold and daring action, when he knew the Lord had not sent him, nor had said any such thing to him: he next relates with all assurance,

saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon; which he had put upon the neck of the king of Judah; signifying that he should be no more subject to him; that is, he had determined to do it, and would do it, in a very short time.

Ver. 3. *Within two full years*, etc.] Or, “within two years of days”^{f545}; when they are up to a day. The Targum is,

“at the end of two years;”

what the false prophets before had said would be done in a very little time; this fixes the precise time of doing it; a very short time, in comparison of the seventy years that Jeremiah had spoken of, (^{<251>}Jeremiah 25:11,12);

will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place; the temple, where he now was; namely, all such vessels as before this time had been taken by him, both in Jehoiakim's reign, and at the captivity of Jeconiah:

and carried them to Babylon; where they still remained, and according to Jeremiah still would; and were so far from being brought back in a short time, that what were left would be carried thither also, (^{<279>}Jeremiah 27:19-21).

Ver. 4. *And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah,* etc.] This he knew would please the people, who looked upon Zedekiah only as a deputy of the king of Babylon, and not properly their king; but Jeconiah, as he is here called; and he knew that Zedekiah dared not resent this, but was obliged to feigned a desire of Jeconiah's return, though otherwise not agreeable to him:

with all the captives of Judah that went into Babylon, saith the Lord; the princes, officers, and others, that should be living at the time fixed:

for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon; weaken his power over other nations, and particularly deliver the king of Judah from his bondage, and from subjection to him.

Ver. 5. *Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah,* etc.] The false prophet, as he is called by the Targum, Syriac, and Arabic versions:

in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the Lord; waiting and worshipping in the temple; and said boldly and before them all, in answer to Hananiah's prophecy, what follows.

Ver. 6. *Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen,* etc.] Or, "so be it"; he wished it might be so as Hananiah had said, if it was the will of God; as a prophet he knew it could not be; as an Israelite, out of respect to his country, he wished it might be; or, however, he wished that they would repent of their sins, that the evil he had threatened them with might not

come upon them, and the good that Hananiah had prophesied might be fulfilled:

the Lord do so: the Lord perform the words which thou hast prophesied; such a hearty regard had he for his country, that, were it the Lord's pleasure to do this, he could be content to be accounted a false prophet, and Hananiah the true one; it was very desirable to him to have this prophecy confirmed and fulfilled by the Lord. The Jews^{f546} have a saying, that whoever deals hypocritically with his friend, at last falls into his hand, or the hands of his son, or son's son; and so they suppose Jeremiah acted hypocritically with Hananiah, and therefore fell into the hands of the son of his son's son, (²⁸⁷¹³Jeremiah 37:13); but he rather spoke ironically, as some think:

to bring again the vessels of the Lord's house, and all that is carried away captive, to Babylon into this place; as a priest, this must be very desirable to Jeremiah, the Jews observe, since he would be a gainer by it; being a priest, he should eat of the holy things; when Hananiah, being a Gibeonite, would be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water to him.

Ver. 7. *Nevertheless, hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears,* etc.] Though this would be very acceptable to me, and I should be glad to have it fulfilled; yet carefully attend to what I am about to say, it being what greatly concerns thee to observe, as well as all present to listen to: and therefore it is added,

and in the ears of all the people; that stood round to hear the conversation that passed between the two prophets.

Ver. 8. *The prophets that have been before me, and before thee of old,* etc.] Such as Isaiah, Hoses, Joel, Amos, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and others: these

prophesied both against many countries and against great kingdoms; as Egypt, Babylon, Syria, Ethiopia, Moab, etc. as Isaiah particularly did:

of war, and of evil, and of pestilence; by evil some think is meant famine, because that usually goes along with the other mentioned, and there being but one letter in which the words for evil and famine differ; and now the prophets that prophesied of these were sent of God, were the true prophets of the Lord; and therefore this ought not to be objected to the prejudice of Jeremiah, that his prophecies were of this sort: yea, if they should not come

to pass, yet a man is not to be counted a false prophet, because such things are threatened in case nations do not repent of their sins and reform, which they may do; and then the evils threatened are prevented, as in the case of the Ninevites.

Ver. 9. *The prophet which prophesieth of peace*, etc.] Of prosperity, of good things, as Hananiah did, and which are always acceptable to men; and such a prophet is agreeable to them:

when the word of the Lord shall come to pass; when the prophecy of good things, which he delivers in the name of the Lord, shall be filled:

[then] shall the prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him; and not till then; it is the event that must make it manifest: in the other case it may be in a good measure known before it comes to pass, and, whether it comes to pass or not, that a prophet is a true prophet; because his prophecies are agreeable to the word and the declared will of God; contain evils threatened on account of sin, and in order to bring men to repentance, which must needs be right; and besides, they have no interest of their own to serve, but run contrary to the stream of the people, and are exposed to their rage and censure: whereas, a man that prophesies of peace, he is more to be suspected of flattering the people, and of prophesying out of his own heart; and nothing but the event can show him a true prophet; which if he delivers with a proviso, that the people do not do that which is evil in the sight of God, to provoke him to deny them the promised good, is always certainly fulfilled; and if it is not, then he appears manifestly a false prophet.

Ver. 10. *Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck*, etc.] Which he wore as a symbol of the subjection of Judea, and other nations, to the king of Babylon: an impudent and insolent action this was, to take the prophet's yoke from his neck; and the more so, as it was by the command of God that he made it, and wore it:

and brake it; being made of wood, as it afterwards appears, and so might easily be broken.

Ver. 11. *And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people*, etc.] Explaining to them his meaning, in taking the yoke, and breaking it:

saying, thus saith the Lord; wickedly making use of the Lord's name, to give countenance to his words and actions:

even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations, within the space of two full years; the time he had fixed for the bringing back of the vessels of the sanctuary, (^{<243B>}Jeremiah 28:3);

and the prophet Jeremiah went his way; showing thereby his dissent from him, and his dislike and detestation of his lies and blasphemies; patiently bearing his affronts and insolence; and prudently withdrawing to prevent riots and tumults; returning no answer till he had received one from the Lord himself, which he quickly had.

Ver. 12. *Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah [the prophet]*, etc.] When in his own house or apartment, to which he retired; and this came to him either in a vision or dream, or by some articulate voice, or by an impulse upon his spirit, directing him what to say to the false prophet:

after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the Prophet Jeremiah: how long afterwards is not known, perhaps the same day; or, however, it is certain it was in the same year, and less than two months after, (^{<243T>}Jeremiah 28:17); and very probably in a few hours after:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 13. *Go and tell Hananiah, saying, thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Whose name he had abused; whose prophet he had ill treated; and whose prophecies he had contradicted, and the symbols of them had contumeliously used:

thou hast broken the yokes of wood: or, “bonds”, or “the thongs”^[547]; with which the yokes of wood were bound and fastened, as Kimchi interprets it:

but thou shall make for them yokes of iron; not Hananiah, but Jeremiah; who should prophesy of a more severe bondage the nations should be brought into by Nebuchadnezzar, in direct contradiction to Hananiah’s prophecy; instead of wooden yokes, they should have iron ones; which should lie heavier, and bear harder upon them, and which could not be broken nor taken off.

Ver. 14. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] Under which titles he is often spoken of; and which he uses, when he delivered anything to his prophets to declare in his name to others:

I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations: mentioned in (^{227B}Jeremiah 27:3);

that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they shall serve him; directly contrary to what Hananiah had prophesied, (^{228B}Jeremiah 28:11); that his yoke should be broke off from them; but instead of that, it should become heavier unto them, and they should be obliged to serve him, whether they would or not; and refusing to pay tribute to him, should be carried captive by him, as had been foretold:

and I have given him the beasts of the field also; as he had said he would, (^{227B}Jeremiah 27:6); and which is repeated, to show that the whole would be punctually fulfilled; that not only those nations, the men, the inhabitants of them, would be delivered to him; but even the very cattle, and all that belonged to them.

Ver. 15. *Then said Jeremiah the prophet unto Hananiah the prophet,* etc.] The false prophet, as he is again called by the Targum, and in the Syriac version; where he went to him, and met with him, whether in the temple or elsewhere, is not mentioned; very probably in some public place, that there might be witnesses of what was said; for it was for the conviction of others, as well as for his own confusion, the following things are observed:

hear now, Hananiah, the Lord hath not sent thee; though he spoke in his name, and pretended a mission from him, when he had none, which was abominable wickedness:

but thou makest this people to trust in a lie: that the Lord would break off the yoke of the king of Babylon, and free the nations from servitude to him, particularly Judea; and that the king, and his princes, and people, and the vessels of the temple, carried away with him, would be returned within two years; this the people depended on as coming from the Lord, when he was not sent by him.

Ver. 16. *Therefore thus saith the Lord,* etc.] Because of this heinous offence, in lying in the name of the Lord, and deceiving the people:

behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth; with the utmost indignation and abhorrence, as not worthy to live upon it: it signifies that he should die, and that not a natural, but violent death, by the immediate hand of God, by some judgment upon him; and so be by force taken off the earth, and buried in it, and be no more seen on it:

this year thou shalt die; within the present year, reckoning from this time; so that, had he died any time within twelve months from hence, it would have been sufficient to have verified the prophecy:

because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord; to despise his word by his prophet; to contradict his will; to refuse subjection to the king of Babylon; to neglect his instructions, directions, and exhortations; and to believe a lie.

Ver. 17. *So Hananiah the prophet died the same year*, etc.] That he had delivered out his prophecy; in the same year in which Jeremiah said he should die; which proved him to be a false prophet, and Jeremiah to be a true one:

in the seventh month: it was two months after he had prophesied; for it was in the fifth month that he prophesied, and in the seventh he died; not after seven months, as Theodoret remarks, but in two months; so he that prophesied, that within two years what he foretold would come to pass, in two months time dies himself, according to the word of the Lord, and his prophecies die with him. The Jewish writers move a difficulty here, how he should be said to die the same year, when the seventh month was the beginning of another year; for the civil year of the Jews began from the seventh month, or the month Tisri; as their ecclesiastical year from the month Nisan or Abib. To solve this they observe a tradition, that he died the last day of the sixth month, or the eve of the new year; and ordered his sons and his servants, before his death, to hide it, and not bring him out to be buried till after the year was begun, to make Jeremiah a liar: to which agrees the Targum, both of the clause in (~~28:16~~ Jeremiah 28:16); and this; the former of which it paraphrases thus,

“this year shall thou die; and in the other year (or the year following) thou shalt be buried;”

and this verse thus,

“and Hananiah the false prophet died this year, and was buried in the seventh month:”

but there was no occasion to raise such a difficulty, since it would have been enough to have verified the prediction, that he died any time within the twelve months from the date of it; and, besides, the solution makes the

difficulty greater, and contradicts the very text, which says, he died in the seventh month.

CHAPTER 29

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 29

Thus chapter contains a letter of Jeremiah to the captives in Babylon; and gives an account of another sent from thence by Shemaiah to the people at Jerusalem; and is closed with threatening him with punishment for so doing. Jeremiah's letter concerns both the captives at Babylon, and the people left at Jerusalem, The persons to whom and by whom it was sent, and the time of writing and sending it, are mentioned in (^{29:1-3}Jeremiah 29:1-3); and though the prophet was the amanuensis, God was the author of it, as well as of their captivity, (^{29:4}Jeremiah 29:4); the contents of, it, respecting the captives, are advices to them to provide for their comfortable settlement in Babylon, and not think of returning quickly, by building houses, planting gardens, marrying, and giving in marriage, (^{29:5,6}Jeremiah 29:5,6); and to seek and pray for the prosperity of the place where they were; in which their own was concerned, (^{29:7}Jeremiah 29:7); to give no heed to their false prophets and diviners, (^{29:8,9}Jeremiah 29:8,9); and to expect a return to Jerusalem at the end of seventy years; which they might be assured of, since God had resolved upon it in his own mind, (^{29:10,11}Jeremiah 29:10,11); and especially if they called upon him, prayed to him, and sought him heartily, (^{29:12-14}Jeremiah 29:12-14); the other part of the letter respects the Jews in Jerusalem; concerning whom the captives are directed to observe, that both the king and people should suffer much by sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity, with the reason of it, (^{29:15-19}Jeremiah 29:15-19); particularly it is foretold, that Ahab and Zedekiah, two lying prophets, should be made an example of vengeance; and a proverbial curse should be taken of them, because of their villany, lewdness, and lies, (^{29:20-23}Jeremiah 29:20-23); next follows some account of Shemaiah's letter from Babylon, to the people and priests at Jerusalem, stirring them up against Jeremiah the prophet; which came to be known, by the priests reading it to him, (^{29:24-29}Jeremiah 29:24-29); upon which Shemaiah is threatened with punishment, and his seed after him, (^{29:30-32}Jeremiah 29:30-32).

Ver. 1. *Now these [are] the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem,* etc.] The argument and tenor, the sum and substance, of an epistle, which the prophet Jeremiah, being at Jerusalem, wrote, under the inspiration of God, to his countrymen abroad, afterwards described; so the prophets under the Old Testament instructed the people, sometimes by their sermons and discourses delivered by word of mouth to them, and sometimes by letters and epistles; as did the apostles of the New Testament; and they were both ways useful and profitable to men:

unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captive; some perhaps dying by the way, and others quickly after they came to Babylon; some were left, who had been rulers or civil magistrates in Judea, and perhaps of the great sanhedrim:

and to the priests, and to the prophets: false prophets, as the Syriac version; for we read only of one true prophet that was carried captive, and that was Ezekiel; but of false prophets several:

and to all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon; which was eleven or twelve years before their last captivity thither. This was a catholic epistle, common to all the captives of every rank and class, age or sex.

Ver. 2. *After that Jeconiah the king,* etc.] Of Judah; the same with Jehoiachin, who was carried captive into Babylon when he had reigned but three months:

and the queen; not Jeconiah's wife, for he had none; but his mother, whose name was Nehushta, and who was carried captive with him, (¹²⁴⁸2 Kings 24:8,12);

and the eunuchs; or "chamberlains" to the queen; the Targum calls them princes; these were of the king's household, his courtiers; and such persons have been everywhere, and in all ages, court favourites:

and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem; the noblemen and grandees of the nation:

and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem; whom Nebuchadnezzar took with him, partly for his own use in his own country; and partly that the Jews might be deprived of such artificers, that could

assist in fortifying their city, and providing them with military weapons; (see Gill on “^{240E}Jeremiah 24:1”).

Ver. 3. *By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan*, etc.] Perhaps the brother of Ahikam, and of Jaazaniah, (^{242E}Jeremiah 26:24 ^{248E}Ezekiel 8:11);

and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah; to distinguish him from Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, (^{266E}Jeremiah 36:10);

whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; as his ambassadors, on what account it is not certain; perhaps to pay the tribute money to him; or to treat with him about the restoration of some of the captives; or to cultivate friendship, and promise submission, and that he would faithfully keep the covenant he had made with him: and perhaps he might be jealous of Jeconiah using his interest with the king of Babylon for his restoration, which could not be acceptable to Zedekiah; and this might be one reason why he admitted his messengers to carry Jeremiah’s letter to the captives, if he knew of it, or saw it; since it exhorted them not to think of a returns, but provide for a long continuance where they were; however, by the hand of these messengers Jeremiah sent his letter to them:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] For the letter was written by the order of the Lord, was ended by him, and was sent in his name, the prophet was only his amanuensis; and the titles which the Lord here takes are worthy of notice: “the Lord of hosts”: of the armies above and below, that does according to his pleasure in heaven and in earth, with whom nothing is impossible; who could easily destroy the enemies of his people, and deliver them, either immediately by his power, or mediately by means of armies on earth, whom he could assemble, and send at pleasure; or by legions of angels at his command: “the God of Israel”; their covenant God; who still continued to be so, notwithstanding their sins and transgressions, and though in captivity in a foreign land; and a good him this, to preserve them from the idolatry of the country they were in, and to observe unto them that he only was to be worshipped by them:

unto all that are carried away captives: or, “to all of the captivity”; or, “to the whole captivity”^{f548}; high and low, rich and poor; this letter was an interesting one to them all:

whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; for though their sins and iniquities were the moving, meritorious, and procuring causes of their captivity; and Nebuchadnezzar and his army the instruments; yet God was the efficient cause: the Chaldeans could never have carried them captive, if the Lord had not willed it, or had not done it by them; for there is no “evil [of this kind] in a city, and the Lord hath not done it”, (^{<OR6>}Amos 3:6).

Ver. 5. *Build ye houses, and dwell [in them]*, etc.] Intimating hereby that they must not expect a return into their own land in any short time, but that they should continue many years where they were; suggesting also, that as they had ability, so they should have liberty, of building themselves houses; nor should they be interrupted by their enemies; nor would their houses be taken from them, when built; but they should dwell peaceably and quietly in them, as their own; which they might assure themselves of from the Lord, who gives these, and the following directions:

and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; and live as comfortably as you can in a foreign country; plant your gardens with vines and pomegranates, and all sorts of fruitful trees the country produces; and fear not the fruit being taken away from you; depend upon it, you shall eat the fruit of your own labour, and not be deprived of it.

Ver. 6. *Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters*, etc.] That is, such as had no wives, who were either bachelors or widowers; not that they were to take wives of the Chaldeans, but of those of their own nation; for intermarriages with Heathens were forbidden them; and this they were to do, in order to propagate their posterity, and keep up a succession:

and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands; or “men”^{f549}; preserving and establishing the right of parents to give their children in marriage, and pointing to them their duty to provide suitable yoke fellows for them; and hereby is signified, that not only they, but their children after them, should continue in this state of captivity:

that they may bear sons and daughters, that ye may be increased there; and not diminished; like their ancestors in Egypt, who grew very numerous amidst all their afflictions and bondage.

Ver. 7. *And seek the peace of the city*, etc.] The prosperity and happiness of Babylon, or any other city in Chaldea, were they were placed: this they

were to do by prayer and supplication to God, and by all other means that might be any ways conducive to the good of the state where they were:

whither I have caused you to be carried away captives; and as long as they continued so; for being under the protection of the magistrates of it, though Heathens, they owed them submission, and were under obligation to contribute to their peace and welfare:

and pray unto the Lord for it; the city, where they dwelt; for the continuance, safety, peace, and prosperity of it; and therefore much more ought the natives of a place to seek and pray for its good, and do all that in them lies to promote it; and still more should the saints and people of God pray for the peace of Jerusalem, or the church of God, where they are born, and brought up in a spiritual sense; (see ^{<5011>}1 Timothy 2:1,2 ^{<49216>}Psalm 122:6-9);

for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace; which is an argument taken from self-interest; intimating, that while the city in which they were was in safety and prosperity, was in a flourishing condition, as to its health and trade, they would partake more or less with them of the same advantages; and on the other hand, should they be distressed with the sword, famine, or pestilence, or any grievous calamity, they would be involved in the same.

Ver. 8. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] (See Gill on ^{<29116>}Jeremiah 29:4”);

let not your prophets and your diviners, that [be] in the midst of you, deceive you; their false prophets, as the Targum; and there were many such in the captivity; (see ^{<29111>}Ezekiel 13:2-4); and such who pretended to divine and foretell future things, and so impose upon the people, who were too apt to believe them; these insinuated, that in a little time they should have their liberty, and return to their own land again, contrary to the prophecies that came from the Lord himself:

neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed; for that of a speedy return to their own land was no other than a dream, which they both dreamed themselves; their thoughts running on it in the daytime, they dreamed of it at night; and fancied it was from the Lord; a divine dream; and so built much upon it; and also which they encouraged the false prophets and diviners to dream, and tell their dreams, by their listening to them, and being pleased with them, giving credit to them as if they came from God.

Ver. 9. *For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name*, etc.] They pretended to have the authority of God for what they said; that their prophecies and dreams were from him, and as such they delivered them in his name; though they were false ones; that they might be the better received by the people:

I have not sent them, saith the Lord; they had no mission or commission from the Lord, no warrant or authority from him; they set up themselves; and ran without being sent; and prophesied out of their own hearts what came into their heads, the fancies of their own brain, or the delusions of Satan, under whose power and influence they were; therefore sad must be the case of a people giving heed to such seducing spirits.

Ver. 10. *For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon*, etc.] These seventy years are not to be reckoned from the last captivity under Zedekiah; nor from the precise present time; nor from the first of Jeconiah's captivity; but the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the first of Nebuchadnezzar, when he first came up against Jerusalem; (see ^{<251>}Jeremiah 25:1,2,11);

I will visit you; in a way of mercy, by stirring up Cyrus king of Persia to grant them their liberty:

and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place; meaning the promise of return from their captivity to their own land; which was a good word of promise, a promise of good things; which was good news to them, and of which there was no doubt of its performance, since God is faithful who has promised, and is able also to perform. It was from hence, and (^{<251>}Jeremiah 25:11,19); that Daniel learned the time of the captivity, and the return from it, (^{<210>}Daniel 9:2).

Ver. 11. *For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord*, etc.] The purposes and resolutions of his heart concerning their welfare, particularly the restoration of them to their own land; these were within him, and known to him, and him only; they were remembered by him, and continued with him, as the "thoughts of his heart are to all generations"; and so would not fail of being performed; men think and forget what they have thought of, and so it comes to nothing; but thus it is not with God; he has taken up many thoughts in a way of love, grace, and mercy, concerning sinful men; about their election in Christ; a provision of all spiritual

blessings for them; redemption and salvation by Christ; their effectual calling, adoption, and eternal life:

thoughts of peace, and not of evil: or “for evil”^{f550}; these thoughts were concerning the temporal peace and prosperity of the Jews in Babylon, and not of anything to their hurt; yea, even their captivity was for their good, (²⁰¹⁵Jeremiah 24:5); and thoughts concerning his spiritual Israel, their peace and reconciliation with God, and the manner of bringing it about, by the blood, sufferings, and death of his Son in human nature, with whom he consulted and agreed about this matter; and concerning their inward spiritual peace of mind and conscience now, and their eternal peace hereafter: nor does he ever think of evil for them; whatever evil he thinks towards others, angels or men, he thinks none towards them; and whatever evil befalls them, he means it for good, and it does work for good unto them; he cannot think otherwise concerning them, consistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them; since he has designed so much good for them, does so much to them, and has so much to bestow upon them. The issue of all which is,

to give you an expected end; a very desirable one; such as they wished and hoped to have, and expected; such as would put an end to all their troubles, and put them into the enjoyment of all good things promised and waited for. This, in the mystical sense, may have reference to the Messiah, in whom all God’s thoughts of peace, concerning his special people, issue; he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, of all things, (⁶⁰⁰³Revelation 1:8); of all things in creation; of the Scriptures, promises and prophecies of it: “the end of the law for righteousness”, (⁵¹⁰⁴Romans 10:4): the fulfilling end of it, by his obedience, and sufferings, and death; and who was to come, and did come, at the end of the Jewish world, at the end of their civil and ecclesiastical state: he was long promised and prophesied of and was much waited for and expected, by the saints before the flood; from thence to Moses; from Moses to David; from David to the Babylonian captivity; from thence to the times of his coming, when there was a general expectation of him; and expected end was then given, as an instance of grace and good will to men. It may also be applied to salvation by Christ; the end of all God’s gracious purposes and designs; the end of the covenant of grace, the provisions, blessings, and promises of it; the end of Christ’s coming into the world, and of his obedience and death; the end of his prayers and preparations now in heaven; and the end of the faith of the saints on earth: this is an end hoped, waited for, and expected by faith;

and for which there is good reason; since it is wrought out, prepared, and promised; saints are heirs of it; and now it is nearer than when they believed; and will be bestowed as a free grace gift, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and will be enjoyed as the issue and result of God's eternal thoughts of peace concerning them. Some render it, "an expected reward"^{f551}; which is given at the end of the work: others, "posterity and hope"^{f552}; a numerous posterity, and hope and expectation of good things from the Lord, promised in the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 12. *Then shall ye call upon me*, etc.] When the expected end is about to be given; when God intends and is about to bestow a mercy, he gives his people a spirit of prayer to ask for it; and even the promise of it is a considerable argument to encourage and engage more to pray for it:

and ye shall go and pray unto me: walk in my ways; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; or rather ye shall go into your private closets, or into those public places where prayer was wont to be made, and there put up your petitions; or it may be the meaning is, that they should continue praying unto him; should pray without ceasing, until they enjoyed the blessing, and had the expected end given them:

and I will hearken unto you: God is a God hearing prayer; he listens to the requests of his people, and answers them in his own time and way; which is no small encouragement to pray unto him.

Ver. 13. *And ye shall seek me, and find [me]*, etc.] When persons seek the Lord aright, they always find him; a God hearing prayer; a God in Christ; bestowing favours upon them; granting them his presence; indulging them in communion with him; and favouring them with fresh supplies of his grace, and everything needful for them; every mercy, temporal and spiritual; that is, when they seek him in Christ, who is the only way to the Father, under the guidance and influence of the blessed Spirit; in the exercise of faith upon him and his promises; with fervency of spirit and ardour of mind; with diligence and importunity; with earnest desires and strong affections; and, as follows, with all sincerity of soul:

when ye shall search for me with all your heart; which, as Calvin rightly observes, does not design perfection, but integrity and sincerity; when they draw nigh with a true heart, and call upon him in truth, and search for him with eagerness, with a hearty desire to find him, as men search for gold, and silver, and hid treasure.

Ver. 14. *And I will be found of you, saith the Lord,* etc.] As he is; when his favour is shown, his presence is enjoyed, and the blessing sought for is obtained:

and I will turn away your captivity; this designs the captivity of Jeconiah, or of the Jews that were carried captive with him; and which had its accomplishment when the Jews returned to their own land, upon the edict of Cyrus:

and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; for though the greatest part might be carried to Babylon, and continue there; yet others might be removed or moved into other countries; and besides, this may respect their brethren who should come into captivity, and return with them at the end of the seventy years; for the expressions are very large and general:

and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive; that is, Jerusalem, and the land of Judea; though the Vulgate Latin version renders it,

“and I will make you to return from the place to which I have caused you to go captive;”

meaning Babylon. The sense comes to the same; but the common rendering is most agreeable to the Hebrew text.

Ver. 15. *Because ye have said,* etc.] That is, some of them; for here the Lord, by the prophet, turns from the godly among the captives, whom he had been advising, encouraging, and comforting before, to those who gave heed to the false prophets, who promised them a speedy return to their own land, and which they believed; and therefore rejected and despised the prophecies of Jeremiah, and others:

the Lord hath raised us up prophets in Babylon; and therefore stood in no need of other prophets that were in Judea, or in Jerusalem, nor should hearken to them; but believe those that were raised up among themselves, rather than others at a distance; and though these were false prophets, yet, being such that prophesied to them things that were agreeable, they were willing to believe them, and to consider them, and receive them, as prophets sent of God, when they were not.

Ver. 16. [*Know that thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Or “for”, or “wherefore thus saith the Lord”^{f553}; for the word “know” is not in the text, and seems needless; though it is also supplied by other interpreters^{f554}. The words are illative, and follow upon the former; and the sense is, that since they gave heed to their false prophets in Babylon, who told them that they should quickly return; therefore the Lord sent the following message to them, informing them that it was so far from being true that they should in a short time return to Jerusalem, that, on the other hand, they that were there should soon be with them in captivity, or be destroyed:

of, or “concerning”

the king that sitteth on the throne of David; that is, King Zedekiah, who was then the reigning king at Jerusalem:

and of all the people that dwelleth in this city; the city Jerusalem, where Jeremiah was, and from whence this letter was written, in the name of the Lord, to the captives at Babylon:

and of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity; that lived in the several parts of the land of Judea, who were left behind, and not carried captive, when those were to whom these words are directed.

Ver. 17. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold, I will send upon them the sword*, etc.] The sword of the Chaldeans, by which many of them should fall, as they did. The Targum is,

“I will send upon them those that kill with the sword:”

who, though they were prompted to come against the Jews, through a natural and ambitious desire of conquering and plundering, yet were sent of God; nor would they have come, had he not willed and suffered it:

the famine and the pestilence; to destroy others that escaped the sword; both these raged while Jerusalem was besieged by the Chaldeans:

and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil; to which they are compared, (^{24:8}Jeremiah 24:8). The sense is, that as they had made themselves wicked and corrupt, like naughty and rotten figs, so the Lord would deal with them as men do with such, cast them away, as good for nothing. The word^{f555} for “vile” signifies something horrible; and designs such figs so bad, that they even strike the eater of them with horror.

Ver. 18. *And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence,* etc.] Or, “follow after^{f556} them”; such as should make their escape out of the city, and go into Egypt, or other countries, for shelter and safety, should be pursued by the vengeance of God, and should fall by sword, famine, or pestilence, in other places:

and will deliver them; such as should not perish by the above mentioned calamities:

to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth; where they should be scattered, and live in exile: or “for a shaking to all the kingdoms of the earth”^{f557}; who should shake and tremble at such a dreadful spectacle of vengeance; or rather they should shake and tremble at the wrath of God upon them; or else their enemies, among whom they should be, should shake their heads at them, by way of insult and triumph over them:

to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them; where men shall look at them with amazement, and curse them, and hiss at them, and reproach them, as the offscouring of the world.

Ver. 19. *Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord,* etc.] Which were spoken to them by the prophets; not hearkening to them, but despising them, were the same as not hearkening to him, and despising him; contempt of God, and his word, was the cause of their ruin; (see ⁴⁸⁶⁵2 Chronicles 36:15,16);

which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets; such as Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, and others:

rising up early, and sending [them]; which denotes the frequency of their mission; the diligent care of God towards them; and his earnest solicitude for their welfare; and the plenty of means they were favoured with; all which were aggravations of their sin:

but ye would not hear, saith the Lord; the words of the Lord by his prophets; the counsel and admonitions he gave them; but pursued their own ways and counsels, and listened to the false prophets.

Ver. 20. *Hear ye therefore the word of the Lord,* etc.] What he was now about to say concerning their false prophets:

all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon; all that were carried captive along with Jeconiah. Some parts of this letter are directed to one sort of the captives, and others to another sort of them; some being good men, some bad; but what follows all are called upon to observe, good and bad; it being a prediction of a certain event, which they would see fulfilled in a short time; and therefore might be of service of them; to the godly, for the confirmation of them in the belief of what the Lord had promised; and to the rest, to make them stop giving heed to false prophets, that should here after arise.

Ver. 21. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] (See Gill on ^{29:4}Jeremiah 29:4”);

of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you: two false prophets, of whom we have no account any where else but here; and are, no doubt, the prophets, or however two of them, that they of the captivity boasted of that God had raised unto them in Babylon, (^{29:15}Jeremiah 29:15). The Jews^{f558} say, and so Jerom relates, that these are the two elders that attempted the chastity of Susannah:

behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon: they should be suffered to commit some crime against the state, of which notice should be given, and they should be seized as seditious persons; which was so permitted in providence, that they might be brought to punishment for other sins they were guilty of:

and he shall slay them before your eyes; by roasting them with fire: as follows:

Ver. 22. *And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which [are] in Babylon*, etc.] A form of cursing; when they cursed anyone, or wished him ill, it should be in such like manner as follows; so odious and detestable would these men be afterwards to them, whom they, at least some of them, took to be the prophets of the Lord:

saying, the Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire; or “burnt them”^{f559}; not at once, but with a slow fire; so the Maccabees were roasted,

“Then the king, being in a rage, commanded pans and caldrons to be made hot: “ (2 Maccabees. 7:3)

Burning persons with fire, and casting them into a fiery furnace, were ways used by the Chaldeans in putting persons to death, (²⁰⁸⁶Daniel 3:6); and roasting men at a fire was used by the Chinese^{f560}.

Ver. 23. *Because they have committed villany in Israel*, etc.] Or “folly”^{f561}; as the sins of adultery, and prophesying falsely, are afterwards mentioned. This was not the reason why the king of Babylon put them to death; though the Jews^{f562} have a tradition that they attempted the chastity of Nebuchadnezzar’s daughter, for which reason he cast them into a furnace; but rather it was on account of their prophesying immediate destruction to Babylon; and telling the captives that they should be delivered in a short time; and stirring them up to prepare to go to their own land; but the reasons here given are those which moved the Lord to deliver them into the hands of the king of Babylon for their destruction:

and have committed adultery with their neighbours’ wives; which was a piece of villany, as well as folly; and which abundantly showed that these men were not the prophets of the Lord, or were sent by him, being such impure wretches:

and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; as that the people should return to their own land in a short time; this was another part of their villany and folly, and for which they were given up into the hands of the king of Babylon, to be punished:

even I know, and [am] a witness, saith the Lord; for though their adulteries might be very secretly committed, and their lying prophecies were not seen to be such by the people in common; yet God, who is omniscient, saw all their impurity, and knew all their lies and falsehood, and was, and would be, a swift witness against them, here and hereafter. The Targum is,

“and before me it is manifest, and my word is a witness, saith the Lord.”

Ver. 24. *[Thus] shalt thou speak to Shemaiah the Nehelamite*, etc.] Or, “the dreamer”^{f563}; because he pretended to have dreams from the Lord; or because what he delivered as prophecies were mere dreams; as that the captives should quickly return to their own land; so Kimchi: but Jarchi takes it to be the name of a place, from whence he was so called; perhaps the place of his birth, or habitation formerly; so the Targum, paraphrasing

“who was of Halem;”

he was, another of the false prophets in Babylon. This latter part of the chapter is of a later date than the former; and refers to what was done after the above letter of Jeremiah came to the captives in Babylon; and after, the return of the messengers from thence, who brought, account how it was received, and what umbrage it gave to the false prophets:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 25. *Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying,* etc.] (See Gill on ^{“2904”}Jeremiah 29:4”);

because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that [are] at Jerusalem; not in the name of the captives, whom he consulted not; nor with Ezekiel the prophet of the Lord, who was of the captivity; but in his own name, taking upon him to direct and order what should be done in Jerusalem. These letters were sent, very probably, by the hands of the king’s messengers, when they returned, whose names are mentioned, (²⁹¹⁸Jeremiah 29:3); some of them were sent to the people, to set them against the prophet of the Lord, Jeremiah, that they might not give any heed and credit to him; and others to the priests, as follows:

and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest; not the high, priest, but his sagan or deputy; the second priest, as he is called, (²⁶²⁴Jeremiah 52:24); for Seraiah was high priest, unless he was now become high priest in his room. This Maaseiah was either his immediate parent, or else the head of that course to which Zephaniah belonged, as a common priest, which was the twenty fourth in order, (¹³¹⁸1 Chronicles 24:18);

saying: as follows:

Ver. 26. *The Lord hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest,* etc.] The same with Seraiah, who might have more names than one, and Jehoiada be one of them, who either was removed, or carried captive; and this Zephaniah, his sagan of deputy, succeeded him. Some think he refers to the famous Jehoiada in the times of Joash, a great reformer; and that this man was another such an one for his zeal, or at least ought to be, which he would have him exert against Jeremiah; but the former seems most probable:

that ye should be officers in the house of the Lord; or “visitors”, or “overseers”^{f564} there; that is, Zephaniah, and the rest of the priests; or that he should see to it, that there were proper officers set there, to take care of

it, and suffer none to come in and prophesy there, to the hurt of the people, as he would insinuate:

for every man [that is] mad, and maketh himself a prophet; or, “against every man”^{f565}; to prevent all enthusiastic persons, and such as are troubled with a frenzy in their brain, and set up themselves for prophets, from speaking in the name of the Lord; so the true prophets of old, and the apostles of Christ, and faithful ministers of the word, have always been represented as beside themselves, and as taking upon them an office that did not belong to them; and therefore should be restrained and persecuted by the higher powers:

that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks; the former of these words, according to the Hebrew, signifies an engine or instrument, in which the neck was put, like our pillory; and the latter an iron instrument for the hands, a manacle, or handcuff, as Kimchi; (see ²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 20:2); though this rather better agrees with the pillory, being a strait narrow place, in which the hands, feet, and neck, were put^{f566}.

Ver. 27. *Now therefore why hast thou not reprov'd Jeremiah of Anathoth*, etc.] Not by words only, but by actions; by beating and scourging, by pillory or imprisonment, and so restraining him from prophesying to the people:

which maketh himself a prophet unto you? takes upon him such an office, though not sent of the Lord, as he would insinuate: this shows the haughtiness and insolence of the false prophets in Babylon, to assume such authority to themselves, to dictate to the high priest, as Kimchi takes him to be, or however the second priest, what he should do, and to rebuke him for not doing his office.

Ver. 28. *For therefore he sent unto us [in] Babylon, saying*, etc.] That is, Jeremiah the prophet; and this was the reason, because his mouth was not stopped, and he restrained from prophesying; so that Shemaiah lays all the blame on Zephaniah, and his brethren the priests; who, had they done their duty, would have prevented Jeremiah's letter to the captives, as he suggests; the purport of which was,

this [captivity] is long; so Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Ben Melech, supply it; or, “it [is] long”^{f567}; it will be a long time before the captives shall return to their own land; and therefore they should not think of it, or provide for it;

but, on the contrary, for their continuance in Babylon; giving the following advice:

build ye houses, and dwell [in them]; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; referring to Jeremiah's letter; (see Gill on “^{אֲבִיבִים}Jeremiah 29:5”).

Ver. 29. *And Zephaniah the priest read this letter,* etc.] Of Shemaiah's to him, and the other priests:

in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet: whether out of good will, to let him know who were his enemies abroad; or out of ill will, to stir up the people against him; or in pretence of proceeding equitably with him; not taking him up, and punishing him before he brought the accusation and charge against him; and acquainted him who were his accusers, and what evidence there was, and heard what he had to say in his own defence whether one or the other is uncertain; however, by this means Jeremiah came to the knowledge of Shemaiah's letter.

Ver. 30. *When came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah,* etc.] After he had heard the letter read:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 31. *Send to all them of the captivity,* etc.] Another letter; not to Shemaiah, but to the people, that they might all know that he was a false prophet; and how his lies were resented by the Lord; and what punishment should be inflicted on him and his, on account of them:

saying, thus saith the Lord concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; the letter, though written by the prophet, must be sent in the name of the Lord, declaring what he would do with the person mentioned, and the reason of it; which follows:

because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie; that they should in a very little time return from their captivity to Jerusalem.

Ver. 32. *Therefore thus saith the Lord,* etc.] Because he prophesied without being sent of God, and prophesied lies, by which the people were deceived:

behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed; not him only, but his posterity also: thus God sometimes visits the sins of parents on their

children, they being, as it were, a part of themselves, and oftentimes partners with them in their iniquities:

he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; either at Babylon, or at Jerusalem, whither he had promised a speedy return:

neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the Lord; by returning them, after seventy years captivity, to their own land, and to the enjoyment of all their privileges, civil and religious:

because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord; or, “a departure^{f568} from [him]”; taught men to revolt from him, and not give heed to his prophets; to disbelieve what he said by them, concerning their continuance in Babylon; which is called a rebellion against him; and being so heinous a crime, deserved the punishment denounced on him and his; rebels and their offspring are punished among men.

CHAPTER 30

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 30

This chapter contains a prophecy of the call and conversion of the Jews in the latter day; which being a matter of moment and importance, and that it might continue, and be read hereafter, it is ordered to be written in a book, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:1,2); the thing itself is expressed by a return from captivity to their own land, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:3); but previous to this there would be most dreadful times, as never were the like, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:4-7); yet there would be a deliverance from them, and from the yoke of the oppressor; when the Jews should serve the Lord God, and the true Messiah, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:8,9); of which deliverance and salvation they are assured in the strongest terms, though all other nations should be made an end of, among whom they were, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:10,11); and though their ease might seem to be desperate, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:12-17); nevertheless they should be brought into a very comfortable and happy estate; their city rebuilt; their offspring increased; and religious worship established; and, above all, the Messiah should be made known to them as their King and Priest, and they appear to be the Lord's covenant people, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:18-22); and the chapter is concluded with threatening utter destruction to the wicked, (^{2R0B}Jeremiah 30:23,24).

Ver. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord*, etc.] The word of prophecy, us the Targum. Some make this to be the “thirteenth” sermon of the prophet's; it is a consolatory one, as Kimchi observes:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel*, etc.] Who is their covenant God; has not forgotten them; still has a regard for them; and speaks after the following comfortable manner concerning them:

saying, write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book; being things of consequence, that they might remain to after ages; and be read to the use, comfort, and edification of the Lord's people, in times to come; and be a support to their faith and hope, as well as be a testimony of the truth and faithfulness of God. Some think this charge refers to all the

prophecies that go before, as well as follow after, to put them all together in a book or roll, that they might be preserved; though others think it refers only to the present prophecy; and so Kimchi interprets it, write all the words “that I am now speaking unto thee”^{f569} in a book; which should come to pass in the latter day. So John is bid to write in a book what he saw; the things that are, and shall be hereafter, (⁶⁰¹¹Revelation 1:11,19).

Ver. 3. *For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] And they are yet to come; the prophecy is not yet fulfilled. Kimchi says this belongs to the days of the Messiah; but not to his first coming, or to his coming in the flesh, which the Jews vainly expect; but to his spiritual coming in the latter day:

that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; which cannot be understood of their return from the Babylonish captivity; for, as Kimchi rightly observes, only Judah and Benjamin returned from thence; and though there were some few of the other tribes that came with them, especially of the tribe of Levi, yet not sufficient to answer to so great a prophecy as this, which refers to the same time as that in (²⁸⁸⁵Hosea 3:5); as appears by comparing that with (²⁸⁰⁰Jeremiah 30:9); and when, as the Apostle Paul says, “all Israel shall be saved”, (⁶¹²⁵Romans 11:25);

and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it; the land of Canaan, given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and which shall be again by the Jews their posterity; for, without that the Jews upon their call and conversion shall return to their own land, in a literal sense, I see not how we can understand this, and many other prophecies.

Ver. 4. *And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel, and concerning Judah.*] Which follow in this chapter and the next; first concerning Israel, the ten tribes; and then concerning the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, even concerning all Israel; whereas, if this prophecy only respects the return from the captivity in Babylon, there is very little in it which concerns the ten tribes, or but a very few of them. The words may be rendered, “unto Israel, and unto Judah”; as being the persons to whom they were directed, as well as were the subjects of them.

Ver. 5. *For thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Yet what follows are the words of others; wherefore some supply it, “for thus saith the Lord, the nations shall say”^{f570}; so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it as what the Gentiles will

say in the times of the Messiah; but it might be better supplied, “ye shall say”; that is, Israel and Judah; to whom the words of the Lord are spoken in (^{281B}Jeremiah 30:3); or else the Lord here represents his people, saying:

we have heard a voice of trembling, ear, and not of peace; which is to be understood, of the fear and dread injected into them by the Babylonians when they besieged their city, and burned that, and their temple; nor of the fear and dread which came upon the Babylonians at the taking of their city by Cyrus, upon which followed the deliverance of the Jews. Kimchi interprets this of something yet future, the war of Gog and Magog, which he supposes will be when their Messiah comes; and Jarchi says it is so understood in their Midrash Agadah. This distress, I think, refers to the slaying of the witnesses, and to that hour of temptation which shall come upon all the earth to try the inhabitants of it; and which will be followed with the destruction of antichrist; and that will make way for the call and conversion of the Jews.

Ver. 6. *Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child?* etc.]

Look into the histories of former times, inquire of those most versed in them, whether ever there was such a thing in the world as that a man should travail with child; ask one and, another you see in distress, whether that is their case or not, which looks so much like it; and since there never was such an instance, nor is it possible that there should:

wherefore do I see every man with his hands his loins, as a woman in travail; the usual posture of women in such a condition, trying hereby to abate their pain, and ease themselves. This metaphor is made use of, both to express the sharpness and shortness of this distress; as the pains of a woman in travail are very sharp, yet short, and, when over, quickly forgotten; and so it will be at this time; it will be a sharp trial of the church and people of God; but it will last but for a short time; and the joy and happy times that will follow will soon cause it to be forgotten:

and all faces are turned into paleness? at the departure of the blood, through fear and trembling. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it “the yellow jaundice”; their faces were of the colour of such persons that have that disease upon them; or, as others, the green sickness. Some render it, “the king’s evil”^{f571}.

Ver. 7. *Alas! for that day [is] great,* etc.] For sorrow and distress:

so that none [is] like it; such were the times of Jerusalem's siege and destruction by the Romans; and which was an emblem of those times of trouble from antichrist in the latter day; (see ^{<4121>}Matthew 24:21,22 ^{<2711>}Daniel 12:1,2);

it [is] even the time of Jacob's trouble: of the church and people of God, the true Israel of God; when Popery will be the prevailing religion in Christendom; when the outward court shall be given to the Gentiles; the witnesses shall be slain; antichrist will be "in statu quo"; and the whore of Rome in all her glory; though it shall not last long:

but he shall be saved out of it; shall come out of those great tribulations into a very happy and comfortable estate; the spirit of life shall enter into the witnesses, and they shall live and ascend to heaven; the vials of God's wrath will be poured upon the antichristian states; the kings of the earth will hate the whore, and burn her with fire; the Gospel will be preached everywhere; the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in; and an end be put to all trouble; of which there will be no more, nor any occasion of it: or, "therefore he shall be saved out of it"^{f572}; as the effect of the divine compassion to him in such great trouble.

Ver. 8. *For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, etc.]* When the time is come for Jacob to be saved out of his trouble:

[that] I will break his yoke from off thy neck; not the yoke of the king of Babylon, but of antichrist, and of all the antichristian states, by whom the people of God have been oppressed; so the Targum,

"I will break the yoke of the peoples (the antichristian nations) from off your necks."

Jarchi interprets it of the yoke of the nations of the world from off Israel; and Kimchi of the yoke of Gog and Magog, or of every nation:

and will burst thy bonds; by which they were kept in bondage, both with respect to civil and religious things; but now he that led into captivity shall go into captivity himself, (^{<6630>}Revelation 13:10);

and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him; this shows that this prophecy cannot be understood of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; because, after this, strangers did serve themselves of the Jews, and they were servants unto them; as to the Persians, and Grecians, and

especially the Romans, by whom they were entirely subdued and ruined; and to this day all nations almost serve themselves of them; but when they shall be called and converted, as they shall be free from the yoke of sin and Satan, and from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of their elders, in a religious sense; so from the yoke of the nations of the world, in a civil sense.

Ver. 9. *But they shall serve the Lord their God*, etc.] And him only, in a spiritual manner, in righteousness and true holiness, with reverence and godly fear; having respect to all his precepts and ordinances, and every branch of religious worship; joining themselves to Gospel churches, and worshipping along with them, before them, and in the midst of them; (see ^{<AR>}Revelation 3:9);

and David their king; not literally, who shall be raised up from the dead, and reign over them, which Kimchi supposes possible, though he does not assert it; nor his successors called by his name, as the kings of Egypt were called Pharaohs and Ptolemies, and the Roman emperors Caesars, of which we have no instance; nor were there any kings of David's line upon the throne of Israel after the Babylonish captivity, until the Messiah came, and who is the Person here meant; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“and they shall hearken to, or obey, Messiah the son of David their king;”

and Kimchi owns that it may be interpreted of Messiah the son of David, whose name is called David, as it is in many prophecies, (^{<AR>}Ezekiel 34:23,24 37:24,25 ^{<AR>}Hosea 3:5); and this prophecy is understood of the Messiah by several Jewish writers^{f573}; and in the Talmud^{f574} it is said,

“the holy blessed God will raise up unto thee another David; as it is said, “and they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them”; it is not said, “he hath raised up”, but “I will raise up”;”

and Christ is called David, not only because he is his son, but because he is his antitype. David was a type of Christ in his birth and parentage; the son of Jesse, born of mean parents, and at Bethlehem; in his outward form, ruddy and beautiful; in his inward character, a man of holiness, wisdom, and courage; in his offices of shepherd, prophet, and king; in his afflictions and sorrows, and in his wars and victories. The same Person is here meant as in the former clause, “the Lord their God”; since it is Jehovah that is

here speaking; and he does not say “they shall serve me”, but “the Lord their God”; and since the same service is to be yielded to David as to the Lord their God; and who is, in his divine nature, the Lord God, and so the object of all religious worship and service; and, in his human nature, of the seed of David; and by office a King, appointed by his Father, and owned by his people, as King of saints; so the words may be rendered, “they shall serve the Lord their God, even David their King”; (see ^{<5013>}Titus 2:13 ^{<5004>}Jude 1:4);

whom I will raise up unto them; which is said of him in all his offices, (^{<2235>}Jeremiah 23:5 ^{<5015>}Deuteronomy 18:15 ^{<4123>}Acts 13:23); and is expressive of his constitution as Mediator; and includes the Father’s pitching upon him, appointing him, calling him, fitting and qualifying him, and sending him in the fulness of time, under this character, as a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; all which was for the good of his people; as a favour to them, for their profit and advantage: his incarnation is for them; his obedience, sufferings, and death; his righteousness, and the salvation he wrought out; he is raised up, and sent to them to bless them, with all spiritual blessings that are in him, (^{<4123>}Acts 3:26).

Ver. 10. *Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord, etc.]* Since the Messiah, who is the Lord God, should be raised up to thorn, whom they should serve, and he should save them; and so had nothing to fear from their enemies; and had no reason to doubt of salvation and deliverance, seeing so great a person was engaged for them. The language is very much like the Prophet Isaiah’s:

neither be dismayed, O Israel: the same thing in other words; for Jacob and Israel are the same; and to fear and be dismayed are much alike:

for, lo, I will save thee from afar; from a far country; not from Babylon only, but from all distant countries where they are dispersed, east, west, north, or south; distance of place should be no hinderance to their salvation, and so need be no objection in their minds to it:

and thy seed from the land of their captivity; their children should come forth with them: it seems to respect future times; that though this should not be accomplished in the persons of the Israelites then living, yet should be in their posterity:

and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make [him] afraid; which was not fulfilled upon the Jews’ return from the

Babylonish captivity; for they quickly met with much opposition and disturbance in the rebuilding of their city and temple; and afterwards from Antiochus, in the times of the Maccabees, by whom they were greatly disquieted; and at last by the Romans, by whom their nation was subdued and ruined; wherefore this respects the quiet and peaceable times they shall have when they are converted, and have embraced the Christian religion.

Ver. 11. *For I [am] with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee*, etc.] Not only from temporal enemies, but from spiritual ones, sin, Satan, and the world; and to save them with a spiritual and everlasting salvation, which the presence and power of God, through his rich grace, will bring all his people to:

though I will make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; a full end has been made of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians; these people and their names are no more; and of Rome Pagan, which, upon the opening of the sixth seal, departed as a scroll that is rolled together; and so will all the antichristian states be made a full end of, when the vials of God's wrath are poured out upon them; and yet the people of the Jews, a poor, mean, and despicable people, have been continued a distinct people, notwithstanding their dispersion so many hundreds of years; and will continue so until they are called and converted:

but I will correct thee in measure; or "in", or "according to judgment"⁵⁷⁵; as in (^{200B}Jeremiah 10:24); wisely, moderately, and with clemency; which the Targum paraphrases "judgment remitted"; which is not strict and rigorous, but is abated of its rigour, and is mixed with mercy:

and will not leave thee altogether unpunished; or, "let thee go free"; from correction and chastisement in a merciful way. The Targum is,

"in destroying I will not destroy thee;"

or utterly destroy thee. And Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of cutting off, from the use of the word in (^{300B}Zechariah 5:3).

Ver. 12. *For thus saith the Lord, thy bruise [is] incurable*, etc.] By themselves or others, in all human appearance; there was no help for them from men; their case seemed desperate; there was no likelihood of their recovery to their former state and glory, as at this day the case of the Jews appears to be; there seems to be no probability of their conversion and

restoration; and whenever it is, it will be as life from the dead, (^{<5115>}Romans 11:15); like quickening Ezekiel's dry bones, or raising persons from the dead, which none but the hand of omnipotence can effect:

[and] thy wound [is] grievous; an expression signifying the same as before: the metaphor is taken from a body wounded and bruised in such a manner, as to be past the skill of the most able surgeon to cure it.

Ver. 13. *[There is] none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up*, etc.] None that will give themselves the trouble to look into their wound to judge of it; to consult, and reason, and debate about the nature of it; and what methods are most advisable to take for the healing and binding of it up: or, as others, "for the compression",^{>f576} of it; the squeezing out the corrupt matter, in order to bring it to a cure:

thou hast no healing medicines; either of thine own, or of others, preparing for thee: the design of all these expressions is to show the helpless and hopeless state of the people of Israel, before their call, conversion, and restoration; by which it will appear to be the Lord's work, and his only; and since he was able to do it, and would do it, therefore Jacob and Israel had no reason to be afraid and dismayed, though their case might seem desperate.

Ver. 14. *All thy lovers have forgotten thee*, etc.] The Egyptians and Assyrians, whom they sought unto for help, and entered into an alliance with, and who promised them great things; but forgot their promises and forsook them:

they seek thee not; to ask of thy welfare, as the Targum adds; they do not, visit thee, nor inquire after thine health, or how it is with thee, having no manner of care and concern for thee; this has been the case of the Jews for many ages:

for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one; so it might seem to be; and thus it might be interpreted by them, as if the Lord acted the part of an enemy, and a very cruel one, that had no mercy; though he corrected them, as in (^{<3811>}Jeremiah 30:11), in measure, moderation, and mercy: or else the meaning is, that he wounded them, when their nation, city, and temple, were destroyed, by the hand and means of an enemy, even a very cruel and merciless one, the Romans:

for the multitude of thine iniquity; [because] thy sins were increased; a very wicked people the Jews were, not only before they went into the Babylonish captivity, but after their return; and in the times of Christ and his apostles; who complain of their covetousness, hypocrisy, adultery, thefts, murders, and sacrilege; and particularly they were in the above manner chastised by means of the Romans, for their unbelief and rejection of the true Messiah, and the persecution of his followers.

Ver. 15. *Why criest thou for thine affliction?* etc.] Or complainest of the hardness, and heaviness, and continuance of it, when there was such a just cause for it? when men have sinned at a high rate, they have no reason to complain of the punishment of their sins, (~~2183~~Lamentations 3:39);

thy sorrow [is] incurable, for the multitude of thine iniquity; such were the number of their iniquities, that they brought them into such a sorrowful and wretched estate and condition that there was no recovery of them, nor hope of recovery of them, by their own power, or by the help and assistance of others:

[because] thy sins were increased I have done these things unto thee; which shows the justice of God, and is a vindication of it under all the seeming severity of it. The Jews^{f577} acknowledge, that under the second temple there was a great increase of capital crimes, such as murders, adulteries, etc. for which, and other sins, wrath came upon them to the uttermost by the Romans; and they still continue under the visible marks of the divine displeasure.

Ver. 16. *Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured,* etc.] Thus rendering the words, they are to be connected with (~~2800~~Jeremiah 30:10,11); and all between to be put into a parenthesis: but rather, in connection with the preceding words, they should be rendered “nevertheless”, or “notwithstanding”^{f578}; though they had sinned at so great a rate, and were so much afflicted and chastened by the Lord, yet their enemies should not go unpunished, and mercy in the issue would be showed to them. Jarchi calls it an oath, that so it should be; the Romans that devoured them, and ate up their substance, were devoured by the Goths and Vandals; for this may be carried further than to the destruction of the Babylonish empire by the Persians;

and all thine adversaries, everyone of them shall, fro into captivity; or be conquered and subdued, as were the Assyrians, Egyptians, Chaldeans,

Grecians, Romans; and not only Rome Pagan has been destroyed, but Rome Papal also will go into captivity; (see ⁶⁶³⁰ Revelation 13:10);

and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey: they shall be used according to the law of retaliation; the same measure they have measured shall be measured to them again.

Ver. 17. *For I will restore health to thee,* etc.] That is, bring thee into a comfortable and prosperous condition, both in church and state, with respect to things religious and civil: as the afflictions and distresses of the Jewish nation are expressed by sickness, wounds, and bruises; so their prosperity, both spiritual and temporal, is signified by health. The words may be rendered, “I will cause length to ascend unto thee”; or a long plaster^{f579}; or rather, that which has been long looked for, and long in coming, prosperity; or else, that whereas they were before bowed down with afflictions and sorrows, now they should be as a man in an erect posture, that rises up in his full height and length, being in a robust and healthful state;

and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; pardon their sins, remove their afflictions, and bring them into a comfortable situation, into a Gospel church state, and into their own land:

because they called thee an outcast; as the Jews now are, cast out of their own land, rejected from being the people of God; so they are reckoned by the nations among whom they are:

[saying], this [is] Zion, whom no man seeketh after: after their good, either temporal or spiritual; despised by most, pitied and prayed for by few; and fewer still they are that seek after, and are solicitous about, or take any methods, or make use of any means, for their conversion; but though man does not, God will, and his work will appear the more manifest.

Ver. 18. *Thus saith the Lord, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob’s tents,* etc.] That is, the captives of Israel, the inhabitants of them; alluding to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelling in tents, and to the Israelites in the wilderness; and fitly expresses the present unsettled state of the Jews:

and have mercy on his dwelling places; by restoring Israel, or Jacob’s posterity, to their dwelling places in Jerusalem, and other places rebuilt by them and for them. The Targum is,

“I will have mercy on his cities;”

and the city shall be builded upon her own heap; the city of Jerusalem, as the Targum expresses it, as it was in the times of Zerubbabel; it was built in its place, as the same Targum; upon the very spot of ground where it before stood, which was become by its desolation a heap of rubbish: or, “upon its hill”^{f580}; Mount Moriah, on which some part of the city was built; so likewise in the latter day: though Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and is now in a desolate condition, yet it shall be rebuilt, as it seems by this prophecy, upon the very spot where it formerly stood;

and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof; which the Targum interprets of the house of the sanctuary, the temple; so Jarchi; and it was true of it in Zerubbabel’s time: but as this prophecy has a further view to future times, something else seems intended. Kimchi says it is either the king’s palace or the temple. The singular may be put for the plural, and design “palaces”, noble and stately buildings; signifying that the city shall be rebuilt in a very grand manner: and so “shall remain after the manner of it”; or, “according to its right” or “judgment”^{f581}; it shall be continued and established by or upon that justice and judgment that shall be done in it; for it shall be called a city of righteousness, and a faithful city, (²⁰⁰⁶Isaiah 1:26).

Ver. 19. *And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry*, etc.] That is, out of Jacob’s tents and dwelling places, the city and palaces of Jerusalem; for those who will inhabit them, when thus rebuilt, sensible of the divine favours, and thankful for them, will offer not any ceremonial sacrifices, as when before in their own land, which they will now see are abolished; but the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving only, which will be attended with great spiritual mirth and melody: perhaps this is said in allusion to the mirth and music used formerly in the solemn and religious festivals; (see ⁶⁹⁰Revelation 19:1,7);

and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; the Jews, at the time of their conversion, will be very numerous, (²⁰¹⁰Hosea 1:10,11); especially the number of God’s spiritual Israel will then be very great; though Jacob is now small, he shall then arise and become a great multitude; the church’s converts will be surprisingly many, (²³⁰⁸Isaiah 49:18-21 60:4-8);

and I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small; numbers of converts add to the glory of the church; it will be a glorious time; and this

is what will make a considerable part of the latter day glory; namely, the conversion of the nation of the Jews at once, and the bringing in the fulness and forces of the Gentiles. The Targum is,

“I will strengthen them, and they shall not be weak.”

It may be rendered, “I will honour them, and they shall not be little”^{f582}; or “mean” and contemptible; they shall be honoured with temporal and spiritual blessings, and be in great esteem, especially among the Christian nations.

Ver. 20. *Their children also shall be as aforetime*, etc.] In the streets of Jerusalem, numerous and free; no more in a strange land, or subject to others, (~~3036~~ Zechariah 8:5); and educated in a religious manner. Some think it refers to the times of the patriarchs before the law was given; and that the meaning is, that the law being abrogated, and they now sensible of it, shall live without it, as their forefathers did. It may be understood of the church’s children in a spiritual sense; that great numbers should be born again in her as formerly, who shall profess the Christian religion, and behave according to it:

and their congregation shall be established before me; the church, consisting of them; or their church state shall be settled and confirmed, and no more be destroyed, as it formerly was:

and I will punish all that oppress them; or rather, have oppressed them; all the antichristian nations, who will now suffer the wrath of God; and after this there will be no more oppressors and persecutors of the church of God.

Ver. 21. *And their nobles shall be of themselves*, etc.] Or, “his noble One”^{f583}; Jacob’s noble One, the Messiah, in whom all the promises centre; and whose incarnation and priesthood are the foundation of all the things above predicted. The Targum interprets these words of him;

“their King shall be anointed from them, and their Messiah shall be revealed from the midst of them.”

And so it is applied to him in the Talmud^{f584}, and in other writings of the Jews^{f585}. Kimchi on the place says,

“it is known that the King Messiah shall be of Israel.”

He may be called a “noble One”, as he is a Nobleman in (^{<2192>}Luke 19:12); because he descended from illustrious persons; from David king of Israel, and from a race of kings in his line, as the genealogy of Matthew shows. Or, “his glorious One”^{f586}, as it may be rendered; he is glorious in his nature, being the brightness of his Father’s glory; glorious in his perfections, which are the same with his divine Father’s; glorious in his names and titles, the King and Lord of glory; glorious in his works and worship, which are the same that are ascribed to God the Father; glorious in his office as Mediator, which he has so well performed; glorious when he was raised from the dead, and had a glory given him; and when he ascended on high, and sat down at his Father’s right hand, crowned with glory and honour; glorious in the eyes of God, and of all his people; and, when his kingdom shall be in a more glorious condition, he will reign before his ancients gloriously; and when he comes a second time, he will come in exceeding great glory. Or, his “mighty One”^{f587}; Christ is the mighty God, the mighty Mediator, the mighty Saviour; he is the most Mighty, he is the Almighty. Now, as man, his descent was from them, the Israelites; from Abraham, from Jacob, from Judah, from Jesse and David, and from the people of the Jews; (see ^{<8104>}Romans 9:4,5 ^{<8101>}John 4:20);

and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them; meaning the King Messiah, as before; who has the government of the church upon his shoulders; is worthy of all power and authority and has received it; has a power of making laws, and of obliging men to keep them; has a power of pardoning, justifying, and saving men; is the lawgiver that is able to save, and to destroy; and can subject all to his feet, as he will in a short time. This seems to refer to a law in Israel, that not a stranger, but one of their brethren, should be set as king over them, (^{<6175>}Deuteronomy 17:15); which is true of the Messiah;

and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; expressive of his priestly office; it being the business of a priest to draw nigh to God with the sacrifices of the people, and to intercede for them, (^{<8103>}Leviticus 10:3 21:17). Christ in eternity drew nigh to his Father, and offered himself as a surety for his people, and became one; and the Greek word for surety, *εγγυος*, has the signification of being “near”: he drew nigh and interposed between them and his father, and became a Mediator for them; he proposed to do everything for them law and justice required, and whatsoever was his Father’s will should be done: he drew nigh and struck hands, stipulated and agreed with him, about the salvation of his people; he

asked them of him, and all blessings of grace and glory for them: he drew nigh in time, having assumed their nature, and offered himself a sacrifice unto God, made satisfaction to his justice for them, and redeemed them unto God by his blood; by which means they are made nigh to God, and draw near to him with humble boldness; and now he is gone to heaven, and has taken his place at the right hand of God, where he appears in the presence of God, and makes intercession for them, presenting himself, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. Now this is ascribed unto God, as causing him to draw nigh; because he chose, appointed, and called him to be a priest, Mediator, and surety, to which he was entirely free of himself; and therefore it follows,

for who [is] this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord; his drawing to God in the council and covenant of grace, to be the surety of his people, and his undertaking for them, were quite free and voluntary; he came of himself, and surrendered himself into the hands of justice at the time of his sufferings and death; and his intercession in heaven flows from his hearty love to his people; his heart has been, and is, engaged in every branch of his mediatorial work, which is a very singular and wonderful thing. No mere man could have engaged his heart to draw nigh to God, who is a consuming fire; no angel in heaven could have presumed to have done it on the behalf of sinful men; none but Christ himself could, and which is owing to the dignity of his person, and to his wondrous love; for this is a marvellous event. Now, though this is a prophecy of Christ's incarnation and priesthood, yet it is suitably introduced here; because, at the time of the Jews' conversion, he will be made known unto them, as being come of them, and as their Prophet, Priest, and King.

Ver. 22. *And ye shall be my people*, etc.] For many hundred years the people of the Jews have been called "Loammi" or, "ye are not my people", (^{<3000>}Hosea 1:9); but now being converted, the covenant of God's grace shall be renewed, and a fresh manifestation and application of it made unto them; and they partaking of the grace of it, shall appear to be, and shall be, called the people of God, and shall behave as such, and fear and worship the Lord:

and I will be your God; will manifest his love to them, bestow his favours upon them, and take them under his care and protection. This is a summary of the covenant of grace, which will visibly take place when those people shall turn to the Lord, (^{<6126>}Romans 11:26,27).

Ver. 23. *Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury,* etc.] That is, the wrath of God, which like a whirlwind comes suddenly, with great force and strength, and carries all before it; there is no withstanding it; such is the wrath of God against the enemies of his church and people:

a continuing whirlwind; whirlwinds, as they come suddenly, are generally soon over; but this will continue very boisterous and terrible, until it has done all the execution designed by it:

it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked; according to some, the wicked Jews, that do not repent and turn to the Lord; but rather the wicked of the nations, as Jarchi; not the Gentiles in general, as distinguished from the Jews, which is his sense, but the antichristian states; for the ruin of antichrist, and the conversion of the Jews, will be much about the same time; and the vials of God's wrath, which will be poured upon them, and fall upon their heads, will give them much pain, both in body and mind; (see ⁶⁶⁰Revelation 16:10,11); and which wrath and ruin are expressed by a tempest of thunder, lightning, and hail, and by an earthquake, (²⁸⁰⁸Jeremiah 30:18-21).

Ver. 24. *The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return,* etc.] This explains what is meant by the continuing whirlwind in (²⁸¹³Jeremiah 30:23);

until he hath done [it]; his whole will and pleasure; brought Babylon to ruin, and destroyed all the antichristian powers:

and until he hath performed the intents of his heart; in a way of grace and mercy to his people, and in a way of wrath and vengeance on their enemies:

in the latter day ye shall consider it; this prophecy, and understand it; and see it wholly and fully accomplished.

CHAPTER 31

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 31

This chapter is connected with the former, respects the same times, and is full of prophecies and promises of spiritual blessings; of the coming of Christ; of the multiplication of his people, and the increase of their joy; of the conversion of the Gentiles; of the covenant of grace; and of the stability of the saints. It begins with the principal promise of the covenant, confirmed by past experience, of divine goodness, and with a fresh declaration of God's everlasting love, (²³¹⁰Jeremiah 31:1-3); an instance of which would appear, in planting vines or churches in Samaria, the metropolis of Ephraim or the ten tribes, under the ministry of the apostles, the watchmen, on Mount Ephraim; whereby the Israel of God would be built, beautified, and made to rejoice, (²³¹⁰Jeremiah 31:4-6); yea, it would be matter of joy to all that heard of it; since, notwithstanding distance and other difficulties, a great number should come to Christ, and to his church, drawn by the Father's love to them, and as owing to the relation he stands in to them, (²³¹⁰Jeremiah 31:7-9); redemption out of the hands of Satan, and every spiritual enemy, must be published among the Gentiles; which would cause great joy, and give great satisfaction to the priests and people of the Lord, expressed by various metaphors, (²³¹⁰Jeremiah 31:10-14); and though, upon the birth of the Redeemer, there would be an event, which might tend to damp the joy of saints on account of it, the murder of the infants at Bethlehem; yet some things are said to encourage faith, hope, and joy, and to abate sorrow and weeping, (²³¹⁵Jeremiah 31:15-17); Ephraim's affliction, and behaviour under it, his repentance and reception, are recorded, (²³¹⁸Jeremiah 31:18-20); backsliding Israel are called upon to return, in consideration of the birth of the Messiah, (²³²¹Jeremiah 31:21,22); the happy and flourishing estate of the people of God is promised; all which were made known to the prophet by a dream in the night, (²³²³Jeremiah 31:23-26); and fresh promises are made, that the Lord would do them good, and not punish the children for their fathers' sins, but everyone for their own, (²³²⁸Jeremiah 31:28-30); and then an account is given of the new covenant of grace, as distinct from the old, and of the articles of it; the inscription of the law in the heart, spiritual knowledge of

the Lord, and remission of sin, (²⁶³³Jeremiah 31:31-34); then follow assurances of the everlasting continuance of the true Israel and church of God, (²⁶³⁵Jeremiah 31:35-37); and the chapter is concluded with a promise of rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, and of the holiness of it, and of its abiding for ever, (²⁶³⁸Jeremiah 31:38-40).

Ver. 1. *At the same time, saith the Lord,* etc.] The time of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, the latter days; when the Jews shall consider the prophecies of the Old Testament, and observe how they have been fulfilled in Jesus; and shall reflect upon their disbelief and rejection of him; and shall turn unto him, and serve the Lord their God, and David their king; (see ²⁶¹⁰Jeremiah 30:9,21,22,24);

will I be the God of all the families of Israel; not of some few persons only, or of one of a city, and two of a family, but of every family; and this will be when “all Israel” shall be converted and saved, and a nation shall be born at once; then will God show himself to them as their covenant God, manifest his love to them, and bestow the blessings of his grace upon them:

and they shall be my people; behave as such to him; own him to be their God, and serve and worship him.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, the people [which were] left of the sword,* etc.] Which were not consumed by the sword of Pharaoh, who perished not through his cruel edicts, and by his sword, when drawn at the Red sea; nor by the sword of the Amalekites and Amorites; or of their own brethren, who sometimes, for their sins, were ordered to slay many, as on account of the molten calf, and joining to Baalpeor: but there was a remnant that escaped, who

found grace in the wilderness; in the sight of God, who went before them, protected and defended them from their enemies; gave them his holy law, his statutes, and his judgments; fed them with manna and quails; clave the rocks, and gave them water to drink; and supplied them with everything necessary for them, (²⁹⁸⁶Psalms 78:5,15-28);

[even] Israel, when I went to cause him to rest; went before him in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; and in the ark, the symbol of his presence; and not only to search out a resting place for them for a few days, but to bring them to Canaan, the land of rest, which he had promised them, (¹⁰²¹Exodus 13:21 ⁴⁰⁰⁸Numbers 10:33 ⁶⁵¹⁹Deuteronomy 12:9,10); now this past instance of divine goodness is mentioned, to

encourage faith in the fulfilment of the above promise. The whole is paraphrased by the Targum thus,

“these things saith the Lord, who gave mercies to the people that came out of Egypt; he supplied their necessities in the wilderness, when they fled from before those who slay with the sword; he led them by his word, to cause Israel to dwell in a place of rest.”

Some render the words in the future, “shall find grace”, etc. “shall go to his rest”, etc. and so apply it to the Jews that escaped the sword of the Chaldeans, and found favour in the wilderness of the people into which they were brought, and as they returned into their own land from the captivity. And it, may be also applied to the Jews that were left of the sword of the Romans in their last destruction, who have found much favour among the nations; as they do in ours, and others, now; and who in time will return to their own land, and be in rest, (⁽²⁸¹⁰⁾Jeremiah 30:10). Yea, it is applicable enough to the church and people of God in their present state; who are left of the sword of the Papists, and are now in the wilderness, where they are nourished for a time, and times, and half a time; and before long will be brought into a state of settled rest and tranquillity.

Ver. 3. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, [saying]*, etc.] Either to the prophet, bidding him say to the church what follows, so Jarchi: or to Christ, who was from eternity with the Father; lay in his bosom; between whom the council of peace was; with whom the covenant was made; and whom God loved before the foundation of the world; and which is observed by him, for the comfort of his people, (⁽⁴⁸⁷²⁾John 17:24 15:9); so Cocceius; but rather they are the words of Israel, or the church, owning the above instances of God’s grace and goodness; and that he had greatly appeared to them, and for them, in former times; but then this was a great while ago; and besides, now he hid his face from them, and they were under the tokens of his displeasure, and not of his love; to which the Lord replies, for the word “saying” is not in the text, which makes the following a continuation of the church’s speech, though wrongly; since they are the words of the Lord, taking up the church for speaking too slightly and improperly of his love, and in a complaining way:

yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love; not only of old, or a good while ago, but from all eternity, and with a love which will always last, and does, notwithstanding dark and afflictive providences; for this love is like himself, sovereign, unchangeable, and everlasting: “I have loved thee”: I,

who am the great God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; a God of infinite purity and holiness; do whatever I please in heaven and in earth; and am the Lord that changes not: “have loved”; not love only now, and shall hereafter; but have loved, not for some time past only, but from all eternity, with the same love I now do: “thee” personally, “Jacob, have I loved”, (Romans 9:13); thee nakedly, and not thine, or for anything done by thee; thee separately and distinctly, and not others; thee a creature, vile and sinful, a transgressor from the womb, and known to be so beforehand; “thee” now openly, and in an applicatory way, through the evidence of the spirit: “with an everlasting love”: a love from everlasting, which does not commence in time with faith, repentance, and new obedience; these being the fruits and effects of it; but was from all eternity, as appears from the eternal choice of the persons loved in Christ; from the everlasting covenant made with them in him; from the constitution and setting up of Christ as their Mediator from everlasting; and from the security of their persons and grace in him, before the world began: and this love will endure to everlasting, without any variation or change; nothing can separate from it. The evidence of it follows:

therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee; out of a state of nature; out of Satan’s hands; out of the pit wherein is no water, the horrible pit, the mire and clay; unto Christ, his person, blood, righteousness, and fulness, by faith to lay hold upon them; unto his church, and to a participation of the ordinances and privileges of it; to nearer communion with God, and at last will draw to eternal glory. This is the Father’s act, and to him it is usually ascribed: it chiefly regards the work of conversion, and the influence of divine grace on that; though it also includes after acts of drawing: it supposes weakness in men; is the effect of powerful and efficacious grace; and is done without offering any violence or force to the will of man, who is drawn with, and not against, his will. This is an instance of the love of God; a fruit and effect of it: it is love that draws a soul to Christ, and is the cause of its coming to him; it is love that reveals him to it, and causes it to come to him; love is then manifested and shed abroad in the heart; a cord of it is let down into it, and with it the Lord draws; it is not by the threats of the law, but by the declarations of grace in the Gospel; the cause of drawing is love, and the manner of it is with it. The Targum of the whole verse is,

“Jerusalem said, of old the Lord appeared to our fathers; prophet, say unto them, lo, I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore have led you with goodness.”

It may be rendered, “I have drawn out”, or “extended, lovingkindness to thee”^{f588}; (see ^{<6960>}Psalm 36:10).

Ver. 4. *Again, I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel,* etc.] The same with “all the families of Israel”, (^{<2900>}Jeremiah 31:1); who, when converted, will be espoused to Christ as a chaste virgin; have a sincere affection for him; unfeigned faith in him, and purely worship him; receiving the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and submitting to the ordinances of it; and then will the church, comparable to a building, consisting of lively stones, laid upon the foundation Christ, which is fallen down, and lies in ruins, be rebuilt, and none shall hinder it; and a glorious building it will be, and will continue so, when its stones are laid with fair colours; its foundations with sapphires; its windows made of agates; its gates of carbuncles; and all its borders of pleasant stones, (^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:11,12 ^{<41516>}Acts 15:16);

thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets; or timbrels, instruments of music, such as women used at times of public joy and mirth, (^{<0150>}Exodus 15:20 ^{<0713>}Judges 11:34 ^{<0806>}1 Samuel 18:6); which became them, and were very ornamental to them; and their playing on these was usually attended with dancing; hence it follows:

and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry; phrases expressive of spiritual joy, which will be in the hearts of the saints, and expressed by the behaviour of them at the time of the conversion of the Jews, which will be the marriage of the Lamb; and when the bride will be ready, being adorned with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, and with the graces of his Spirit, and be brought into his presence, accompanied with a chorus of virgins her companions, undefiled ones, having harps in their hands, singing the Lamb’s new song; (see ^{<6642>}Revelation 14:2-4 19:7-9 ^{<0953>}Psalm 45:13-15).

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria,* etc.] Mountains are proper places for vines, and which generally produce the best wine; but vines are not to be understood merely literally, or as only expressive of the outward peace, plenty, and prosperity of Samaria, with other places given to the Jews, as Josephus^{f589} observes they were by the

Demetrii; which they might improve by planting vines, etc. but figuratively of the planting of Gospel churches there, comparable to vines, (^{<2193>}Song of Solomon 2:13 7:12); which was done in the first times of the Gospel; (see ^{<302>}John 4:29,30,42 ^{<4185>}Acts 8:5,6,12 9:31); and which was a pledge of what will be done in those parts hereafter in the latter day:

the planters shall plant, and shall eat [them] as common things; the fruit of the vines planted by them. The allusion is to the law of eating the fruit of trees planted on the fifth year of their plantation, when, and not till then, it was lawful to eat of it; but here the planters might eat of it as soon as it was produced, even as the fruit of the fifth year, which was common and lawful, (^{<18923>}Leviticus 19:23,25). The “planters” are the ministers of the Gospel; such an one the Apostle Paul was; who are instruments in founding and raising churches, and of planting members in them, as well as of watering, and making them fruitful; and who receive themselves benefit from hence; not only in things temporal, but spiritual; it giving them a real pleasure and satisfaction to see the plants grow and thrive, which they have planted, (^{<4186>}1 Corinthians 3:6-8 9:7) (^{<39214>}Psalms 92:14).

Ver. 6. *For there shall be a day*, etc.] The whole Gospel dispensation is “a day”, made so by the bright rising of the sun of righteousness; here it seems to design some certain fixed period of time in that dispensation, when the light of the Gospel will break out most gloriously, and it will be a clear day; as it will be when the Jews will be converted:

[that] the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim; the same with the mountains of Samaria; for Samaria was the head or metropolis of Ephraim, (^{<2709>}Isaiah 7:9); and these are the watchmen that kept the vines there, (^{<2435>}Jeremiah 31:5); for the allusion is not to watchmen of states and cities, but to watchers of vineyards, and to such the ministers of the Gospel are compared, (^{<2706>}Song of Solomon 1:6 8:11,12). Grotius thinks there is an allusion in the word “Notzerim” to the title of Nazarenes, given to Christ and his followers; and Abarbanel the Jew on the place observes, that the prophet, by the Holy Ghost, foresaw that the Romans would believe in Jesus of Nazareth, and therefore would be called Nazarenes from him; (see ^{<4415>}Acts 24:5); so that Christian ministers may be well thought to be here intended: who

shall cry, arise ye; lift up their voice like a trumpet, and cry aloud to persons as asleep, or in dead and lifeless frames, to awake, arouse, and rise up, and shake off their sloth and indolence, saying:

and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God; to the church of God, to attend the word of God, his worship and ordinances; to which sometimes there is a backwardness, arising from sloth, from a lukewarm frame of spirit, from a love of the world, and a vain conceit of their own sufficiency and knowledge; and it is the business of Gospel ministers to stir up persons to frequent the house of God, and attend public worship in it; since it is not only their duty, but their interest and privilege; here they have true pleasure, and real profit; and it is to their honour to continue here, and not forsake the assembling of themselves together: but they should not rest here, trusting to, and depending on, these things; but should go “to the Lord [their] God”; not only seek and pray unto him, but should be desirous of hearing of him, and from him; of seeing him, his power and his glory, and him in his beauty; and of having communion with him; and should exercise faith upon him as their own God. Christ seems to be intended; going to him is exercising faith upon him, for righteousness and strength, peace, pardon, life, and salvation; and saying, as Thomas did, “my Lord, and my God”, (~~408~~John 20:28).

Ver. 7. *For thus saith the Lord, sing with gladness for Jacob*, etc.] For the restoration of Jacob, or the conversion of the Jews; which will be matter of joy to the Christians among the Gentiles; who seem to be here called upon to express their joy on that occasion, as they will; for it will be to them as life from the dead, (~~5115~~Romans 11:15 15:10 ~~6607~~Revelation 19:7). Kimchi thinks there is a trajection in the words; and that they may be rendered, “thus saith the Lord to Jacob, sing with gladness”; as if the exhortation was to him to rejoice, and not to others on his account; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it; and to the same sense the Syriac version, “thus saith the Lord, sing, O ye of the house of Jacob, with gladness”; and so the Targum; it will no doubt be a joyful time with them:

and shout among the chief of the nations; where they shall be when converted, as in Great Britain, and other places: or, “on the top of the nations”^{f590}; on some high place among them. It seems to denote the publicness of the shout; it will be open and manifest to all; so the Targum,

“and exult with head uncovered, in the sight of all people;”

Turks, Papists, and Pagans:

publish ye; or “cause to hear”, or “to be heard”^{f591}; cause their voice to be heard, both in prayer and praise to God; or cause men to hear their faith in

Christ, and profession of it; and publish that Gospel, and spread it among others, which before they rejected and despised:

praise ye; the Lord for his wonderful grace in the conversion of them:

and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel; his covenant people; the remnant according to the election of grace. This is a direction to the Jews that are converted, to pray for the rest that are not; or to the Gentiles to pray for them; who are before called upon to rejoice at the first appearance of this wonderful work, and to spread it abroad, and to go on publishing the Gospel for the more forwarding of it; and to praise the Lord for what he had done; and to pray unto him to go on with the work of saving his people, the residue of them.

Ver. 8. *Behold, I will bring them from the north country*, etc.] As from Babylon, at the end of the seventy years' captivity, which lay north of Judea; so, in the latter day, from those northern countries, as ours, where they now are in great numbers:

and gather them from the coasts of the earth; or "sides" of it; from all the parts of the world where they are:

[and] with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; signifying that no difficulties whatsoever should hinder them in their return to their own land; provision should be made for persons under these circumstances, so unfit to travel. All this may be understood, in a figurative sense, of those who are spiritually "blind"; who are made to see their lost estate, and need of Christ; and are brought to him, and to his church, in a way they had not known, and in paths they knew not before: and of the lame and impotent, unable to do any good thing in a spiritual sense, and will not come to Christ, unless drawn; these are made to leap as a hart, and to flee to Christ for refuge, and run the ways of his commandments: and of such who are laden and burdened, as "women with child"; and who are encouraged and enabled as such to come to Christ, and cast their burdens on him, and find rest for their souls: and of such who are in pain and distress, as one "that travaileth with child": in the pangs of the new birth, under a sense of wrath, and as ready to perish; who also are enabled to come and venture their souls on Christ, receive his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances, where they find peace and comfort:

a great company shall return thither; three thousand were converted under one sermon, in the first times of the Gospel; and, in the latter day, the

nation of the Jews shall be born again at once; the number of the children of Israel shall then be as the sand of the sea, and great shall be the day of Jezreel, (^{<2608>}Isaiah 66:8 ^{<3010>}Hosea 1:10,11).

Ver. 9. *They shall come with weeping*, etc.] For joy, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; of which there are instances, (^{<0291>}Genesis 29:11 43:30 45:2,14); so the Jews will come to Christ, and to the Gospel church, as well as into their own land, with joy that they have found the Messiah, and are brought under his government, and into the enjoyment of the privileges of the Gospel, and the possession of their own land; or with tears of repentance for all their sins, original and actual, especially for their sin of unbelief, and rejection of the Messiah; they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn, when a spirit of grace and supplication is poured out upon them, (^{<3820>}Zechariah 12:10); with which agrees what follows:

and with supplications will I lead them; to Christ, and his church; and being drawn by the Father, and led by the Spirit, they will come to him with supplications and entreaties for mercy to be showed unto them; particularly for pardoning grace and mercy, and for salvation by him, which they will now see they stand in need of. Some render it, “with favours”^{f592}, or mercies; blessings of grace bestowed on them; as a justifying righteousness; remission of sins; adoption; sanctifying grace; a right and title and meetness for eternal life; which are all owing to the free favour and grace of God:

I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters; or, “to rivers of waters”^{f593}; to God himself, the fountain of living waters; and his everlasting love, that river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God; and to Christ, the fountain of gardens, and well of living waters; and to those wells of salvation, and fulness of grace, that are in him; and to the Gospel, its doctrines and ordinances, which are the still waters to it, by which the great Shepherd leads his flock. These rivers of waters may denote the blessings of grace which spring from the love of God, and flow through Christ in his word and ordinances, in great abundance; and it is very pleasant and profitable walking by these:

in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; in a direct way to Christ, without going round about, by works of righteousness done by them, to render them acceptable to him; but they shall go directly to him as they are; or in a plain way, as it is to them that understand it, and in which men, though fools, shall not err: or in a righteous way, a way of righteousness;

in a way that leads to Christ for righteousness; and in which men are taught to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and in which, though they may stumble and fall into sin, for “in many things we all offend”, (^{<30R2>}James 3:2); yet not stumble at the word, as some do; or at the stumbling stone, Christ, as the Jews’ forefathers did; or so as to fall, be broken, and perish, (^{<20R4>}Isaiah 8:14,15);

for am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn; and so very dear to him, as in (^{<26R2>}Jeremiah 31:20). So the Targum,

“and Ephraim is beloved before me;”

all the blessings of grace which God bestows upon men, whether Jews or Gentiles, all flow from a prior relation he stands in to them; he first takes them into the relation of children, is a father to them in covenant; and then bestows children’s blessings and covenant mercies on them. The allusion, perhaps, is to Joseph’s having the birthright, and whose younger son, Ephraim, was preferred to Manasseh the elder, (^{<13R2>}1 Chronicles 5:2 ^{<14R4>}Genesis 48:14,20). Ephraim intends the same as Israel, the ten tribes, and includes the whole body of the Jewish nation.

Ver. 10. *Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations*, etc.] The Gentiles: who are called upon to hear the word of the Gospel; the word of peace, reconciliation, and salvation by Christ, sent among them by him, for the calling and conversion of them, that they might believe in him, and profess his name:

and declare [it] in the isles afar off; having heard, received, and embraced the Gospel themselves, it became them to make it known to others; not only to those upon the continent and the isles adjacent, but to those afar off from it; such as these isles of ours, of Great Britain and Ireland; where, blessed be the Lord, this Gospel has been declared to the conversion and comfort of many, and to the glory of Christ:

and say, he that scattered Israel will gather him: that is, the Lord that hath scattered the Jews throughout the nations of the world, and even in the isles afar off, will before long gather them together, and bring them into their own land. This may be understood of the spiritual Israel, be they Jews or Gentiles, the children of God scattered up and down in the world; and who, by reason of sin, and while in an unregenerate estate, are alienated from God, and at a distance from him; but are gathered together in one head, Christ, when he died for them, and redeemed them; and in the

effectual calling, when they are gathered to God and Christ, one by one; and afterwards to more near communion with them; and, at last, to glory, and which is the sum and substance of the Gospel to be heard and declared:

and keep him as a shepherd [doth] his flock; so that they shall be scattered no more, as the Jews have been; nor any of them lost, as God's elect were in their first head Adam: they are Christ's flock, given him by the Father, and purchased with his blood; and having gathered them as above, he will keep them in his hands, from whence none can pluck them, and preserve them by his almighty power unto salvation; which doctrine of the saints' perseverance is a most comfortable doctrine of the Gospel to be published and declared.

Ver. 11. *For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob,* etc.] Not the patriarch Jacob singly and personally, though he no doubt was a redeemed one; nor his carnal posterity, at least not all of them, only a remnant among them, and especially not them only; but the Gentiles also, even all the elect of God, his church and people, of whatsoever nation, which frequently go by this name in the prophetic writings: and this redemption of them by Christ, which, though future, is spoken of as past, because of the certainty of it; and is the ground and foundation of their being gathered in effectual calling, and of their final perseverance; for redemption has its certain effect, and Christ will never lose the purchase of his blood; (see ³¹⁰⁸Zechariah 10:8);

and ransomed him from the hand of [him that was] stronger than he; meaning Satan, the strong man armed; who is stronger than man, as appears by his possession of the bodies of men, inflicting diseases on them, and death itself, of which he had the power when permitted; and by his influence over the minds of men; by his temptations to sin, in which he so much succeeds; and even by the prevalence of his temptations over the saints themselves; and by the power which he had over our first parents in innocence, whom he prevailed upon to eat the forbidden fruit, which brought ruin on themselves, and on their posterity; by which means he got them into his hands, and God's elect among the rest, whom he leads captive at his will; and being enfeebled by sin, are so weak as not to be able to rescue themselves out of his hands; for he is stronger than they; but Christ is stronger than the strong man armed; he is the Redeemer that is mighty, and has taken the prey out of his hands, and has led captivity

captive: and this he has done, not only by power and conquest, spoiling Satan and his principalities and powers; but by paying a “ransom” price for these captives into the hands of God; and which is no other than his precious blood, his life, himself; and so must be a sufficient ransom for them. This redemption was typified by the deliverance of the Jews out of the hands of the Chaldeans, a mighty nation, and stronger than they; and is the ground, reason, and foundation, of the restoration of that people in the latter day.

Ver. 12. *Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion,* etc.]

The Targum is,

“in the mountain of the house of the sanctuary, which is built on Zion;”

but though there be an allusion to the temple built on it, and which may be called the height of it; yet the church of Christ in Gospel times is meant; the city built on a hill, where the saints, enjoying Gospel ordinances, dwell on high, and have all suitable provisions made for them; and here being come freely and willingly, though brought by the Lord, and drawn by his grace, they “sing” the songs of electing, redeeming, calling, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace; and which they will still do in a better manner, when they get to the height of Zion above:

and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord; to the perfection of his goodness, which is essential to him, infinite and eternal; and is diffusive and communicative, not only in a providential way, but in a way of grace and mercy; and especially in pardoning grace and mercy, which sensible sinners take notice of, and flee unto, and not their own merits; and who would faint under a sense of sin, without a sight of it; but this, viewed in such a light, makes all the perfections of God look amiable and lovely, which otherwise would be terrible; and encourages faith, hope, fear, and thankfulness: likewise to Christ, who is the goodness of the Lord; in whom his goodness is laid up; in whom it is proclaimed; through whom it is displayed; by whom it is communicated; who himself is the great gift of it, as well as he himself is good; and his goodness extends to his people, and to him sensible sinners apply for it: also to the goodness and fatness of the house and church of God; those rich provisions which are made in it for the comfort and refreshment of his people; hence it follows:

for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd; not for temporal blessings, which are for the good of the body only; but for spiritual blessings, signified by these, which are for the good of the soul, as the next clause shows: “for wheat”; for the Gospel and the doctrines of it, which are the finest of the wheat; and are as preferable to false doctrines as chaff is to wheat, and are soul nourishing and strengthening; (see ^{<2438>}Jeremiah 23:28). Moreover, Christ himself is compared to wheat, and was typified by the manna, the corn of heaven, and angels’ food; and is the bread of God, and the bread of life; and to be had in the church and ordinances of it; (see ^{<4924>}John 12:24); “and for wine”; the precious truths of the word, which, like the best wine, go down sweetly; the discoveries of the love of God and Christ, which are better than spiced wine; and the blood of Christ, signified by the wine in the Lord’s supper, which is drink indeed, (^{<2109>}Song of Solomon 7:9 2:2,4 ^{<4165>}John 6:55); “and for oil”; the grace of the Spirit, and larger measures of it; which is the golden oil, that through the golden pipes of ordinances is emptied out of the fulness of grace in Christ into the hearts of his people, (^{<3042>}Zechariah 4:12); “and for the young of the flock, and of the herd”; the best of them, which being slain in sacrifice, typified Christ the passover lamb, and fatted calf, and which makes the principal part of the Gospel feast, (^{<4124>}Matthew 22:4); now, for all these the redeemed of the Lord “flow” to Zion, and to the goodness of the Lord there; which denotes their coming in great numbers, in shoals, as the streams of a flowing river; in conjunction and harmony “together”: in the lively and flowing exercise of grace, and all moving one way, and to one centre, and with the greatest pleasure, delight, and cheerfulness; thus the Targum,

“and they shall delight in the good which the Lord giveth unto them;”

and so the Syriac version:

and their soul shall be as a watered garden; in a thriving and prosperous condition: the soul of a believer is as a “garden”, in which are planted the graces of the Spirit; and which does not lie open to everyone, but to Christ, who is the object of every grace; has the sole property of this garden, where he walks and dwells: and this is “watered” by the Lord himself, with the dews of his grace, and by the ministry of his word; which drops and distils as the rain upon the mown grass; when every plant lifts up its head, and looks pleasant, shoots up and grows, and brings forth fruit:

and they shall not sorrow any more at all: have no occasion for it, being loved with an everlasting love, (^{2610B}Jeremiah 31:3); redeemed by Christ out of the hand of their mighty enemies, (^{2611B}Jeremiah 31:11); and enjoying all the goodness of the Lord, and of his house, as in this verse; and being partakers of Christ, and the blessings of grace in him, in whom there is always cause of rejoicing; though this will not have its full accomplishment as long as the saints are in the present state; having a body of sin and death, being liable to the temptations of Satan, and divine desertions; and until they come into the Jerusalem state, when there will be no more sinning, and so no more sorrowing, (⁶²⁰⁴Revelation 21:4).

Ver. 13. *Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together*, etc.] Not any particular virgin, but all virgins, as Kimchi interprets it. The Targum is,

“then shall the congregation of Israel rejoice as in dances;”

it may very well be understood of the church of Christ, espoused to him as a chaste virgin, and of her spiritual joy in him, in allusion to the joy expressed by such persons in dancing, both upon civil and religious accounts; and it denotes that the joy should be very general and extensive, that persons of every age and sex should partake of it; (see ³³⁰⁷Zechariah 9:17);

for I will turn their mourning into joy: their mourning for sin, and for want of the divine presence, into joy, on account of the goodness of the Lord to them, and the large provisions made for them; though they come weeping to Zion, yet, when come thither, sing in the height of it, (²⁶¹⁰Jeremiah 31:9,12); their fasts, as elsewhere, are turned into festivals; sometimes the joy of the saints is suddenly turned into grief, and again their sorrow turned into joy; (see ⁴³⁰⁵Psalms 30:5-7,11,12);

and will comfort them; with the discoveries of love, with the divine Presence, and views of pardoning grace:

and make them rejoice from their sorrow; cause their sorrow to break off through joy: or, “after their sorrow”¹⁵⁹⁴; that being ended, joy shall succeed.

Ver. 14. *And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness*, etc.] Meaning either the ministers of the Gospel, who should not only be liberally provided for as to their maintenance, which is too low a sense; but

filled with spiritual good things, with the doctrines of the Gospel, and a comfortable experience of them, that they may be able to feed others with knowledge and understanding; or since, under the Gospel dispensation, there is no such distinct order of men under the name of priests, but all the saints are made kings and priests to God, they may be here meant, as follows:

and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord; to which they are said to flow, (see Gill on “^{<28112>}Jeremiah 31:12”). But, lest it should be thought that there would be no manner of trouble and affliction in those times, two instances, as follow, are given; the one at the beginning, and the other towards the close of them, expressive of distress; one on temporal, the other on spiritual accounts.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah,* etc.] Which signifies a high place; hence the Targum paraphrases it,

“in the high place of the world;”

and so the Vulgate Latin version,

“in a high place;”

but it is here the proper name of a place, of a city in the tribe of Benjamin, (^{<46825>}Joshua 18:25); and this voice heard was not a voice of joy and gladness as before, but of

lamentation [and] bitter weeping; signifying great sorrow and distress upon some very extraordinary occasion; and is as follows:

Rachel weeping for her children; not really and in person, but by a figurative way of speaking. Rachel is introduced as representing the Jewish women in those parts mourning for their slaughtered infants, even those that were slaughtered some time after the birth of Christ; for to this barbarous fact are the words applied by the Evangelist Matthew, as a fulfilment of them, (^{<41216>}Matthew 2:16-18); and with great propriety and pertinence is Rachel brought in as the chief, yea, sole mourner, representing all the sorrowful mothers; since Ramah was in the tribe of Benjamin, a child of hers, as far as which, it seems, the bloody massacre referred to reached, from Bethlehem, where it began; and since Rachel’s grave was between these two places, (^{<01518>}Genesis 35:18,19); she is represented as rising out of her grave to act this part; or it signifies, that

could she have been sensible of this inhuman affair, and could have come out of her grave, she would have done what she is here represented to do; and the rather is she mentioned, since she was so affectionately fond and desirous of children, (⁽⁻⁰³⁰⁾Genesis 30:1);

refused to be comforted for her children; by any of her friends, the loss was so great, the affliction so heavy:

because they [were] not; or, “because he was not”^{f595}; the Messiah was not, but was slain among the rest of the children, as the Jewish mothers, whom Rachel represented, imagined; and this heightened their distress, and filled them with more grief and trouble than the loss of their own children: but as Matthew has the plural number, the Targum, and all the Oriental versions, it is best to understand it of the children who “were not”; that is, they were dead; they were not in the land of the living, as this phrase is used in (⁽⁻⁰³⁷⁾Genesis 37:30 42:13,36); which shows that this is not to be understood of the Babylonish captivity, and of the mourning of the Jewish women on that account; since the cause of this was death, and not captivity; besides, mourning for so general a calamity as captivity would not have been confined to mothers, and to some only, and to one particular place; though so the Jewish writers interpret it; and the Targum, which is,

“a voice was heard in the high place of the world, the house of Israel weeping and mourning after Jeremiah the prophet, whom Nabuzaradan the chief of those that slew, sent from Ramah; lamentation and weeping with bitterness, Jerusalem weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were gone into captivity.”

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears*, etc.] Though sorrow on such an occasion may be lawfully indulged, yet it ought to be moderated; and attention should be given to those things which may serve to relieve under it, and especially when they come from the Lord himself; then a stop is to be put to the mournful voice, and wet eyes are to be dried up:

for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; in bearing these children, and bringing them into the world, and expressing such an affectionate and tender concern for them; signifying, that the trouble of bearing and bringing them into the world, and nursing them the time they did live, should not, as it might seem, be fruitless, and to answer no end; but it should be seen

hereafter, that all this was not in vain; nor should they think it so; but that they have an ample recompense of all their sorrow and trouble:

and they shall come again from the land of the enemy; meaning either Joseph, and Mary, and Jesus; who, by the warning of an angel, went into Egypt, the land of the enemy, where the Jewish fathers were once evilly entreated, just before this barbarity was committed; where they stayed till all danger was over, and then returned; (see ^{<4023>}Matthew 2:13-21); compared with (^{<3810>}Hosea 11:1); or rather the murdered children, who, in the resurrection morn, shall return from the grave, the land of that “last enemy”, death, which shall be destroyed, (^{<4653>}1 Corinthians 15:26); and so Rachel, and the Jewish mothers she represents, are comforted with the hopes of a better resurrection; (see ^{<3815>}Hebrews 11:35 ^{<3943>}1 Thessalonians 4:13,14).

Ver. 17. *And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “hope for thy posterity”^{f596}; for their children that had been massacred, that these should rise again, and enjoy a blessed immortality, as the next clause seems to explain and confirm it:

that thy children shall come again to their own border: either to the border of the land of Israel, as Joseph, Mary, and Jesus did, (^{<4021>}Matthew 2:21,22); or rather to the borders of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, where this cruel murder was committed; and so the intimation is, that they shall rise again, and stand upon that very spot of ground where their blood was split; and not only so, but enter into and dwell upon the new earth in the Jerusalem state; and also enter into the heavenly Canaan, and dwell with Christ for evermore, on whose account their lives were taken away.

Ver. 18. *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself [thus]*, etc.] Not Ephraim in person; though, as he was a very affectionate and tenderhearted man, as appears from (^{<3372>}1 Chronicles 7:22); he is with like propriety introduced, as Rachel before; but Ephraim intends Israel, or the ten tribes, and even all the people of the Jews; and the prophecy seems to respect the conversion of them in the latter day, when they shall be in soul trouble, and bemoan their sins, and their sinful and wretched estate, and especially their rejection of the Messiah; when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and be in bitterness, as one that mourns for his firstborn, and which the Lord will take notice of and observe, (^{<3420>}Zechariah 12:10,11 ^{<3448>}Hosea 14:8); and it may be applied to the case of every sensible sinner bemoaning their sinful nature; want of

righteousness; impotence to all that is spiritually good; their violations of the righteous law of God; and the curse they are liable to on account of it; their many sins against a God of love, grace, and mercy; and their ruined and undone state and condition by sin; all which the Lord takes notice of: “hearing I have heard”^{f597}; which denotes the certainty of it, and with what attention he hears, yea, with what pleasure; it is the moan of his doves, of those who are like doves of the valley, everyone mourning for his iniquity; he hears, so as he answers; and sympathizing with them, he sends comfort to them, and delivers them out of their troubles:

thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised; this is the case bemoaned; not so much the chastising hand of God, as unaffectedness with it, and not being the better for it; the Lord has indeed, as if Ephraim should say, chastised me, and I have been chastised by him, and that is all; it has made no manner of impression upon me; I have not received correction, nor has it been of any use to me; and this he bemoaned: and this will be the case of the Jews when they are converted; they will then reflect upon all the corrections and chastisements of God under which they have been ever since the rejection of the Messiah, and still are; and yet are now stupid under them, and take no notice of them, and are never the better for them; and this they will lament when their eyes are opened: and so it is with particular persons at conversion; in their state of unregeneracy they have been chastened and corrected by the Lord, by one providence or another, by one disease and disorder or another, and they have not observed it; it has not wrought upon them, nor awakened them to a sense of danger; God has spoken once, and twice, in this rough way, and they have not perceived; he has stricken them, and they have not grieved; beaten them, and they felt it not; but now being made sensible, they bemoan their former stupidity and inattention, and wonder at the forbearance and goodness of God:

as a bullock unaccustomed [to the yoke]; or to draw the plough; as senseless and as stupid, yea, as thoughtless of danger, as that creature is when led to the slaughter; as “untaught”, as the word^{f598} signifies; as ignorant of divine and spiritual things; knowing nothing of Christ, or God in Christ, or of the way of salvation by him, and of the operations of his Spirit and grace; as unruly as that to bear the yoke of the law, or the yoke of Christ; and as impatient under the yoke of affliction, kicking, tossing, and flinging, like a wild bull in a net; all which give concern to an

awakened mind, that now sees its need of conversion, and prays for it, as follows:

turn thou me, and I shall be turned; which designs not a mere reformation of manners, or conversion to a doctrine or doctrines; nor a restoration after backslidings; nor a carrying on of the work of grace on the soul, and a daily renewing it; but the first work of conversion; which lies in a man's being turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God; is a turn of the heart, and not of the head and action only; of the will, affections, and bias of the mind; it is a turning of persons to the Lord Jesus Christ, to look to him for righteousness, life, and salvation; and in such sense will the Jews be turned in the latter day, (^{<4016>}2 Corinthians 3:16); and this being prayed for, not only shows a sense of need of it, but of inability to work it; that it is not in the power of man to do it; that he is not active, but passive in it; that it is the Lord's work, and his only; and that when he does it, it is done effectually:

for thou [art] the Lord my God: the "Lord", the mighty Jehovah, and therefore able to do it; "my God", covenant God, who has promised to do it; and by virtue of covenant grace will be the conversion of the Jews; and to which the conversion of everyone is owing, (^{<4115>}Romans 11:25,26); or, "for thou [shalt be] the Lord my God"; I will own, acknowledge, fear, serve, and glorify thee as such, being converted to thee; (see ^{<1231>}Genesis 28:20,21).

Ver. 19. *Surely after that I was turned I repented*, etc.] Ephraim's prayer was answered; as he prayed he might be turned, he was; and when he was turned, then he repented, not only of sin in general, but of such sins as he had been particularly guilty of; not only of the grosser actions of life, but of inward sins, secret lusts and corruptions; even of sins of holy things, having now different sentiments, affections, and conduct: and this is what is called evangelical repentance, and is from the grace of God; springs from love; flows from a sight of God and a view of Christ; is increased by the discoveries of God's love, and is unto life and salvation; and this sort of repentance follows upon conversion; there must be first a true and real conversion before this evangelical repentance can take place:

and after that I was instructed I smote upon [my] thigh: as expressive of sorrow for sin after a godly sort; of indignation at it; and shame and confusion for it; and also of astonishment, at the mercy, forbearance, and long suffering of God, (^{<3212>}Ezekiel 21:12 ^{<4183>}Luke 18:13); and this

humiliation follows upon spiritual instruction, which is previously necessary to it; “after it was made known to me”^{f599}; as the words may be rendered; what a sinful, guilty, impure, and impotent, and unrighteous creature he was; after that he became acquainted with himself, and his wretched state and condition; when instructed either by the rod, or by the word, and by the Spirit of God, in the use of both, or either; when led into the knowledge of divine things; of the love and grace of God through Christ; of the person, offices, and glory of Christ; of the way of life and salvation by him; and of the doctrines of pardon, and righteousness, and acceptance through him:

I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth; in his conscience; the sins and follies of his youth being presented and set before him, and he convinced of them, was filled with shame and confusion at the remembrance of them; which is a common thing when a man is thoroughly awakened and converted, and is brought to true repentance and humiliation. So the Targum,

“because we have received the reproach of our sins, which were of old?”

Ver. 20. [*Is Ephraim my dear son?* etc.] Questions put in this form, in the Hebrew language, usually more vehemently deny; and then the sense must be, Ephraim is not my dear son: and agreeably to this all the following clauses must be interpreted; which seems quite contrary to the scope and design of the context: wherefore it seems better to render the words thus, “[Is not] Ephraim my dear son?”^{f600} yes, he is; and so is everyone that stands in the relation of children to the Lord, they are all of them his dear children, (~~481~~ Ephesians 5:1); his beloved ones, loved by him with an everlasting love; they are “precious” to him, as the word used signifies; they are dear to him as the apple of his eye; they are highly esteemed of by him; they are his jewels and peculiar treasure: how precious they are to him appears by his parting with his own most precious Son for their sakes; by sympathizing with them under all their afflictions; by providing so largely and liberally for them; by feeding them with the most delicious food; by clothing them with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation; by protecting them with a guard of angels, and preparing an incorruptible inheritance for them;

[is he] a pleasant child? or, “is he [not] a child of delights”^{f601}? verily he is: and so are all the children of God by adopting grace; they are pleasant to

him for delights; they are little images of himself, in whom he is well pleased; they are lovely and comely in his sight, through the perfect comeliness of Christ, that is put upon them; their speech is comely and pleasant to him; their prayer is his delight; and especially he loves to hear them cry “Abba”, Father, though they do but lisp it out; just as parents take pleasure in their children, which are images of themselves, and comely in their view; particularly when they begin to talk, and can just lisp out their names. Moreover, as the little actions of children, though there may be a great deal of childishness in them, are pleasing to their parents, so are the acts of grace and duty well pleasing to God; those of faith, hope, fear, and love, and the several duties of religion, though but imperfectly performed: and their nearness to him, and communion with him, which he indulges them with, show his delight in them; he kisses them with the kisses of his mouth; he dandles them on his knee, and comforts them, as one whom his mother comforts; he carries them in his bosom; he takes them by the hand, and teaches them to go, and lays meat before them;

for since I spake against him; in his word, and by his providences; by way of complaint, as a peevish, perverse, backsliding, and rebellious child; by way of threatening with the rod, in case of impenitence and obstinacy; by way of rebuke, though in love, for many misdemeanors and offences; and in a providential, though not in a judicial way: God has nothing against his children in a judicial way, all their sins being stoned for by Christ; but in a providential way he has many things against them for their correction and chastisement; at least which seem to be against them, though they all work together for their good. However, as he here says,

I do earnestly remember him still; or, “in remembering I will” or “do remember him still”^{f602}; constantly as well as earnestly; God never forgets his children, though they and others may think he does; (see ~~2394~~ Isaiah 49:14-16); he forgets their sins, but not their persons; he is ever mindful of his covenant with them, and remembers his promises to them; he remembers both his love to them, and their love to him; yea, he remembers their thoughts of him, their words concerning him, and their works done in his name, and to his glory; his dear children are had in everlasting remembrance, and are never forgotten by him;

therefore my bowels are troubled for him; sound for him, or yearn toward him; so that he did not do what he threatened, or was seemingly about to do. The phrase is expressive of great relentings, strong and melting pity in

his heart, towards his his dear and delightful children; (see ^{<3108>}Hosea 11:8,9);

I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord; or show mercy to him; as the Lord does to his children, by receiving them graciously upon, their return; by manifesting and applying pardoning grace; by bestowing fresh mercies and favours on them; and by bringing them safe to eternal glory and happiness.

Ver. 21. *Set thee up way marks, make thee high heaps,* etc.] Of stones, raised up as pillars, or like pyramids; or upright, as palm trees, which signification the word ^{f603} has; to be marks and signs, to know the way again upon a return. The Targum is,

“O congregation of Israel, remember the right works of thy fathers; pour out supplications; in bitterness set thy heart.”

And so the Vulgate Latin version interprets the last clause, “put on bitteresses”, without any sense; so Cocceius. The design of the words is to put the Jews upon thoughts of returning to their own land, and to prepare for it;

set thine heart towards the highway, [even] the way [which] thou wentest; from Judea to Babylon, or into other countries; think of going the same way back again; for, as there was a highway from Judea, there is one to it; let thine heart be upon returning that way. Jarchi reads, “the way which I went”; that is, the way in which the Lord went with the people; the right way in which he guided and directed them; and in which following him, they could not err; (see ^{<338>}Isaiah 35:8). The Targum is,

“consider the works which thou hast done, whether they are fight, when thou goest in a way afar off;”

turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities; an invitation and encouragement to the Jews to turn again to their own land; as from the Babylonish captivity, so from all lands in the latter day; which is yet to be fulfilled, and to which the prophecy more properly belongs.

Ver. 22. *How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter?* etc.] From place to, place, from country to country, from one kingdom to another, as the Jews do to this day; and not return unto the Lord, and David their king, and to their own country? Or, “how long wilt thou be

foolish”^{f604}? in backsliding from the Lord; in slighting the written word; neglecting the promises and prophecies, the exhortations, cautions, and instructions therein given; in adhering to and extolling the traditions of the elders, even above the Scriptures; in pertinaciously rejecting the Messiah, next prophesied of; all which folly the Jews are still guilty of, and continue in. So the word signifies in the Arabic language^{f605};

for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man; a mighty one, a mighty man, the man Jehovah’s fellow; conceived, contained, and encompassed, in the womb of the virgin, the woman, whose seed he was to be of, and of whom he was: this was a “new”, unheard of, extraordinary thing, a “creation”, a work of almighty power! the human nature of Christ was formed and prepared by the power of the Holy Ghost, without the help of man; and this now is mentioned as an argument and an encouragement to the Jews to return to their own land, since the Messiah is born there of a virgin, as it was foretold he should. This seems to be the true and genuine sense of the words, and other senses weak and impertinent; as when they are made to refer to the heroic spirit in some women superior to men; to the unusual practice of women suing to men for marriage; and to the people of Israel returning to the Lord from their apostasy. So the Targum,

“for, behold, the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth and the people of the house of Israel have given themselves up to the law.”

And very foreign are the senses which some Christian interpreters give of this passage; as when they interpret it of the Jews conquering and oppressing their enemies; or of the Jewish church seeking after God, her husband, when separated from him; or of the Christian church, though weak, resisting her mighty persecutors by her confession of faith, and overcoming them; or of the church under the New Testament embracing Christ; which indeed is preferable to the other, and especially to that Popish one of the eucharist containing the body of Christ^{f606}; but the true sense is what is before given: and even some of the Jewish doctors themselves have acknowledged, that the Messiah is here intended. In an ancient^{f607} book of theirs, on mention of these words, it is added,

“this shall be in the time of the Messiah, which will be on the sixth day;”

that is, the sixth millennium And elsewhere^{f608} “a woman shall compass a man”; says R. Hona, in the name of R. Ame, this is the King Messiah. So says R. Joshua ben Levi^{f609},

“he, that is, God, heals with the same he wounds; so will you find in Israel, they sinned by a virgin, and were punished in virgins, (~~3231~~ Ezekiel 23:1-49 ~~2511~~ Lamentations 5:1-22); so he comforts them by a virgin, according to (~~2412~~ Jeremiah 31:21,22); “turn again, O virgin of Israel”, etc. “a woman shall compass a man”. R Huna, in the name of R. Idi and R. Joshua, said, that this man is the King Messiah, of whom it is said, (~~3017~~ Psalm 2:7), “this day have I begotten thee”^{f610}.”

Ver. 23. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] The Governor of the whole world, the Lord of armies above and below; and yet has a peculiar regard to Israel, his spiritual Israel, whose covenant God and Father he is; and is to be believed in what he after says, the fulfilment of which may be depended on:

as yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; not the Babylonish captivity, but their present one; for, upon their return from Babylon, though there was a reformation among them, by means of Ezra, and Nehemiah, and others, yet not so great an one as is here suggested; when, by way of salutation and prayer, the following words will be said by all that know them, and wish well to them, as had been heretofore:

the Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, [and] mountain of holiness; for now Jerusalem will be the habitation of righteous men, and every pot or person in it, and in “Judah, shall be holiness to the Lord”, (~~3812~~ Zechariah 14:21); and so shall be blessed of God, and pronounced blessed by men, by all good men, among the Gentiles, who will rejoice at their conversion, restoration, and reformation.

Ver. 24. *And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together*, etc.] In peace and unity, in great concord and harmony:

husbandmen, and those [that] go forth with flocks; husbandmen and shepherds; meaning such not merely in a temporal sense, but in a spiritual one; ministers of the Gospel, labourers with God, and under him, in the husbandry of his church; pastors after his own heart, to feed his people, his flocks, his sheep and lambs, with knowledge and understanding; who shall

agree in their ministry, teaching the same doctrines, and administering the same ordinances, according to the rule of the word.

Ver. 25. *For I have satiated the weary soul*, etc.] As sinners are at first awakenings and convictions; when sin is made exceeding sinful and loathsome to them, and becomes an uneasiness, and they a burden to themselves on account of it; when they labour, till they are weary, to get food for their famishing souls; weary in seeking for righteousness to cover them, in working for life to save them, and inquiring after rest; but cannot find neither food, nor righteousness, nor life, nor rest, till they come to Christ; and as all the saints are weary of a body of sin and death, with mourning over it, and groaning under it; weary of Satan's temptations and buffetings; weary of the world, and the men of it, and with afflictive dispensations of Providence in it; and are as weary travellers passing through a waste howling wilderness; these the Lord "satiates", refreshes, and even "inebrates"^{f611}, as the word used signifies, with his love; which is very reviving and refreshing, and is a feast of itself; and is very satisfying when it is shed abroad in the heart; when souls have a delightful sense of it, and see their interest in it; particularly satiates with his pardoning grace and mercy, and with food, and fulness of it, in Christ; with righteousness, life, and salvation by him; and with rest, peace, joy, and comfort in him: and this, though a promise and prophecy of what would be, yet, because of the certainty of it, is represented as if it had been done already; as also what follows:

and I have replenished every sorrowful soul; that is sorry for sin after a godly sort, and mourns for it after an evangelical manner; is troubled for want of the divine presence, and is pressed with afflictions inward and outward: these the Lord "replenishes" or "fills"^{f612}; that is, with all good, as the Targum adds, and fills them to satisfaction; with Christ, and all good things by him; with peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation; with the Spirit, his gifts and graces; with Gospel provisions, the goodness and fatness of his house; with all spiritual blessings now, and with glory and happiness hereafter. The Septuagint, and all the Oriental versions, instead of "weary" and "sorrowful", render the words "thirsty and hungry"; and such as hunger and thirst after righteousness; after the discoveries of pardoning grace; after Christ, and salvation by him; after more knowledge of him, and communion with him; are, sooner or later, filled with those things they are hungering and thirsting after; (see ⁴¹⁸⁶Matthew 5:6).

Ver. 26. *Upon this I awakened, and beheld,* etc.] When or after he beheld or had seen the vision and prophecy concerning the incarnation of Christ, and the glory and happiness of his church and people in the latter day, he awoke; for it seems the prophecy contained in this and the preceding chapter was delivered to Jeremiah in a dream; who, when he had seen the vision, and upon the last words being spoken to him, awoke out of it:

and my sleep was sweet unto me; as it must needs be, to have so many gracious promises, and glorious prophecies, delivered to him in it. Some understand the words, that when he awoke out of sleep, he saw and considered with pleasure what had been made known to him; and then fell into a sweet sleep again, which was not usual with him. To which the Targum inclines,

“the prophet said, because of this good news of the days of consolation (that is, the days of the Messiah) that should come, I was raised up, and saw; again I slept, and my sleep was profitable to me.”

So Kimchi. Some interpret the words of Christ, and of his sleep in the grave.

Ver. 27. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,* etc.] Or, “are coming”^{f613}; and will be here shortly:

that I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast; that is, will multiply both man and beast, so that there shall be a great increase; whereas, through war, famine, pestilence, and captivity, their number was greatly reduced. The allusion is to the sowing of a field with seed, which in due time springs up, and produces a large increase. Some understand this of the spiritual blessing of regeneration; but that is not of corruptible seed, such as is here mentioned, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God: though this may be a type of the fruitfulness of the church in Gospel times; since afterwards an account is given of the new covenant, which should take place in those times.

Ver. 28. *And it shall come to pass, [that] like as I have watched over them,* etc.] In providence; looked upon them with an eye of vindictive justice; observed all their actions and motions; diligently attended to everything that passed, and took the first and most fitting opportunity:

to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; which words, as they have an elegance and an agreeableness in their sound, in the original; so they are expressive of the utter overthrow of the city, temple, and nation of the Jews, and of the several troubles and calamities they should be afflicted with:

so will I watch over them; be as careful and diligent, as intent, earnest, and early:

to build, and to plant, saith the Lord; to build their city and temple, and to plant them in their own land. So the church of God is his building, whose foundation he lays, the superstructure of which he rears up, and will complete it in his own time; and it is his plantation, into which he puts his pleasant plants, his plants of renown; which he waters with his Spirit and grace, by the ministry of the word, that they may grow, and become fruitful.

Ver. 29. *In those days they shall say no more*, etc.] The following proverb or byword; they should have no occasion to use it, nor should they choose to use it; since they would understand themselves, and the dispensations of Providence towards them, better than to use it:

the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge; that is, the fathers have sinned, and the children are punished for their sins. So the Targum,

“the fathers have sinned, and the children are smitten.”

This was in some sense true; they were punished for their fathers' sins in the captivity, particularly for Manasseh's; nor was it unusual with God to visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; nor at all unjust, since they were a part of their parents, and especially since they were guilty of the same sins; nor is it thought unjust among men to punish children for the treason of their parents, as every sin is treason against God. But this was not all that was meant by this proverb; the sense of those that used it was, that they themselves were quite clear and innocent, and that they only suffered for their fathers' faults; which was false, of which they should be convinced, and use the proverb no more, as charging God with injustice.

Ver. 30. *But everyone shall die for his own iniquity*, etc.] His own personal iniquity; and not a corporeal death only, but an eternal one, which is the just wages of sin. It seems to intimate, that, after the Babylonish

captivity, no public calamity should come upon them for the sins of their fathers and their own jointly, but for their own iniquities singly; so their last destruction by the Romans was for their personal disbelief and rejection of the Messiah; (see ~~RB3~~ John 8:24); and the calamities upon them ever since have been for the same reason. Indeed, they imprecated his blood upon them, and upon their children, and so it is; but then, their children are under the power of the same sin of unbelief, and will remain so, until the veil is taken away, and they turn to the Lord; after which it will still be a more clear case that everyone shall die for his own iniquity;

every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge; sin, though it may be esteemed a sweet morsel, is a sour grape, and will prove so in the issue; and will give a man as much trouble and disquietude, when he is convinced of the evil of it, or suffers the punishment of it, as when a man's "teeth are set on edge"; and indeed the consequence of it will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Ver. 31. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,* etc.] This refers to Gospel times, as is clear from the quotation and application by the apostle, (~~SB3~~ Hebrews 8:8-12); and it is owned by a modern Jew^{f614} to belong to the times of the Messiah. It is introduced with a "behold", as a note of attention, pointing to something of moment, and very agreeable and desirable, as the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises, are; and as a note of admiration, it being justly to be wondered at that God should make a covenant with such sinful and unworthy creatures as he has;

that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house Judah; by this "covenant" is meant the covenant of called new, not because newly made, for it was with the elect in Christ from everlasting; so early was Christ set up as the Mediator of it; and so early were promises made, and blessings given, to them in him: nor because newly revealed; for it was made known to all the saints, more or less, under the former dispensation, particularly to David, to Abraham, yea, to our first parents immediately after the fall, though more clearly manifested under the Gospel dispensation; but because of its new mode of exhibition; not by types, and shadows, and sacrifices, as formerly; but by the ministry of the word, and the administration of Gospel ordinances; and in distinction from the former covenant, which is done away, as to the mode of it; and because it is a famous covenant, an excellent one, a better covenant, best of all; better than the covenant of works, and even better than the covenant of grace,

under the former administration; in the clear manifestation and extensive application of it; and in the ratification of it by the blood of Christ; besides, it provides and promises new things, as a new heart, and a new spirit; to which may be added, that it may be called new, because it is always new; it continues, it stands firm, as Kimchi observes, and shall not be made void; it will never be succeeded nor antiquated by any other covenant, or any other mode of administration of it. The persons with whom this covenant is said to be made are “the house of Israel and of Judah”; which was literally true of them in the first times of the Gospel, to whom the Gospel was first preached, and many of them were called by grace, and had an application of covenant blessings made to them; and is mystically to be understood of God’s elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; the Israel after the spirit; Israelites indeed, Jews inwardly, even all that are fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God, the middle wall of partition being broken down: and this “making” of a covenant with them intends no other than a making it known unto them; showing it to them, and their interest in it; in God, as their covenant God; and in Christ, as the Mediator of it; and an application of the blessings and promises of it to them.

Ver. 32. *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers,* etc.] Meaning not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but the ancestors of the Jews that came out of Egypt, as appears by what follows. This was the covenant made at Sinai, which is here referred to; but the above covenant was not according to that; for, though it was not properly a covenant of works, but a typical one; yet it was in some sense faulty and deficient; or, however, the persons under it were faulty, and did not keep it; and besides, it was made with the Israelites; whereas this new covenant belongs both to Jews and Gentiles. That the Sinai covenant is intended is clear by the following circumstances:

in the day [that] I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; that is, immediately after their being brought out of Egypt, the covenant was made with them; (see ⁽¹²⁹⁰⁾Exodus 19:1-8 24:7,8); at which time of their bringing out, the Lord took them by the hand, as being unable to deliver themselves, and to go out of themselves; which is expressive, as of their weakness, so of his power and goodness, kindness and tenderness to them; and is an aggravation of their ingratitude to him in breaking the covenant, made with them at such a time by the Lord, who was so kind and indulgent to them; and which is still more fully expressed in the following clause:

which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; they promised fair, but did not perform; their hearts were not right with God, nor were they steadfast in his covenant; though it was such a solemn transaction, and had the nature of a matrimonial contract; it was the day of their espousal; they were betrothed to the Lord, and he acted the part of a husband to them in nourishing and cherishing them in providing food and raiment for them; manna that continued with them, and clothes that waxed not old; and in protecting them from their enemies, and bringing them to a good settlement in the land of Canaan. The Septuagint version renders it, “and I regarded them not”; and so the apostle, (^{<3889>}Hebrews 8:9); for the reconciliation of which to the Hebrew text.

Ver. 33. *But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, etc.*] The several articles or branches of the covenant next follow, which show it to be different from the former:

I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; not the ceremonial law, which was abolished when this covenant was made; but rather the moral law still in force, which is a transcript of the nature and will of God; was inscribed on Adam’s heart in innocence; is greatly obliterated by sin; a contrary disposition to it is in man; this is reinscribed in regeneration; and hence a regard is had to it by regenerate persons, in which lies part of their conformity to Christ: or else, since the word here used signifies doctrine or instruction, the Gospel and the truths of it may be meant; (see ^{<3889>}Isaiah 2:2 42:4) (^{<3887>}Romans 3:27); which have a place and dwell in the hearts of renewed ones. The Septuagint version reads it in the plural number, “laws”; and so does the apostle, (^{<3880>}Hebrews 8:10); and may design the ordinances of the Gospel, and the commandments of Christ; which such, who are called by grace, have at heart to keep, and are made willing to be subject to; besides, the principle of grace in the soul is called “the law of the mind”; (^{<3873>}Romans 7:23); it has the force of a law; is a reigning, governing, principle; and which is implanted in the genre by the spirit and power of God; the tables on which this law or laws are written are not tables of stone, but the fleshly tables of the heart; the heart is the proper seat, both of the law of God and Gospel of Christ, as well as of the grace of God in all regenerate persons: and the “putting” of those things there denotes knowledge of them, as of the spirituality of the law, and its perfection; that there is no righteousness by it, and is only fulfilled by Christ; and that it is a rule of walk and conversation; and also of the

doctrines of the Gospel, in the power and savour of them, and of the ordinances of it, so as to practise them, and walk in them; and an experience of the truth and reality of internal grace: and “writing” them here may denote affection for, and subjection to, the above things; and a clear work of grace upon the soul, so as to be legible, and appear to be the epistle of Christ, written not with the ink of nature’s power, but by the Spirit of the living God; (see ~~HRB~~ 2 Corinthians 3:3). This passage is applied to future times, the times of the Messiah, by the Jews^{f615}:

and will be their God, and they shall be my people; God is the God of his covenant ones; not as the God of nature and providence only, but as the God of grace, and as their God and Father in Christ; which is preferable to everything else; all things are theirs; nor can they want any good thing; they need fear no enemy; they may depend upon the love of God, and be secure of his power; they may expect all blessings here and hereafter; for this covenant interest will always continue: and they are his people in such sense as others are not; a distinct, special, and peculiar people; a people near unto the Lord; high in his favour, and greatly blessed by him; all which is made to appear in their effectual calling; (see ~~HRB~~ 1 Peter 2:9,10).

Ver. 34. *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother*, etc.] Which is not to be understood of the outward ministry of the word; in heaven indeed there will be no need of it, nor in the New Jerusalem state; but in every period of time before it. In the first times of the Gospel, persons were appointed and qualified by Christ to be pastors and teachers; and in the latter day men shall run to and fro, and increase knowledge; besides, the saints in the present state stand in need of teaching; since they know but in part, and there is room for a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ: nor does this contradict brotherly teaching, or the private instructions of saints in religious conversation and Christian conference, which are very useful; but is rather opposed to pretended revelations of private men; or to the magisterial dictates of persons in public office; the word of God being the only rule of instruction in righteousness: or this may be not absolutely, but comparatively said; setting forth the abundance of knowledge under the Gospel dispensation, that, in comparison of former times, there would be no need of the means of further knowledge:

saying, know the Lord: not naturally, or as by the light of nature; but spiritually; nor in a general way, as the God of nature and providence, as a

Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor; but in a special manner, as the God of grace, as the God and Father of Christ, and his people in him; not legally, but evangelically; not speculatively, but practically, and in a saving way and manner: this kind of knowledge now under the Gospel dispensation is greater than under the former; as the knowledge of God in his persons, in his perfections, in his titles and characters, and in his Son; and as to the manner of it, clearly, with open face as in a glass; and as to the persons to whom it is communicated, not to Judah only, but to men of all nations; all which is owing to a greater effusion of the spirit, as it follows:

for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: not all mankind; but all the house of Israel, all the family of God, all the children of God being taught by him; not all alike, but all with the same kind of knowledge. This is frequently applied to the times of the Messiah by the Jews^{f616}:

for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more; there was forgiveness of sin under the former covenant, but the blood of Christ was not then actually shed for it; it was held forth under types; and there was a remembrance of sin made every year; and saints had not such a clear and comfortable sight of pardon in common as now; and it was known and applied but to a few. This is the staple blessing of the covenant, and the evidence of all the rest.

Ver. 35. *Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day,* etc.] As he did at first, and still continues it; and which is a wonderful gift of nature he bestows on men, unworthy of such a favour, (^{<4056}Matthew 5:45);

[and] the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night; which have a settled regular order and course, in which they move; and whereby they impart the light they borrow from the sun, to enlighten the world by night; which is another favour to the inhabitants of it; (see ^{<0016}Genesis 1:16);

which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; some refer this, as Kimchi, to the dividing of the Red sea for the Israelites to pass over; but it rather respects an action more frequently done; and should be rendered, which “stilleth”, or “maketh the sea quiet”,^{f617}; which best agrees with what follows; when it is tumultuous, and threatens the loss of ships and men’s lives, and attempts to pass its bounds, he “rebukes it”; so the Targum; and

makes it a calm; he stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, (^{<13817>}Psalm 65:7);

the Lord of hosts [is] his name; that has all the armies of heaven and earth at his command, and can do whatever he pleases; he, and he only, can do the above things, and does them; and he that can do them, is able to make good the covenant he has made with the house of Israel, and fulfil the promises of it, of which there is an assurance; as well as he is able to secure an interest and a church for himself unto the end of the world, as the following words show.

Ver. 36. *If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord*, etc.] Of the sun, moon, and stars; should these leave their proper course, and not perform their several functions, or do the service appointed for them; should they desert their master, or disobey his orders, turn away from him, and pay no regard to the laws and rules he has set them:

[then] the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before me for ever; but, as the former is impossible, so is the latter, The Jews ceased not from being a nation through their captivity in Babylon, nor through their destruction by the Romans; they continue a distinct nation and people to this day, though scattered throughout the nations of the world: though this rather refers to the spiritual Israel, the holy nation and peculiar people; Christ will have a seed to serve him as long as the sun and moon endure; his church shall continue to the end of the world; it is built on a rock; and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

Ver. 37. *Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be measured*, etc.] Either the space between the highest heavens and the earth; or the extent of the heavens, from one end of them to the other, which cannot be done by man; so the Targum,

“as it is impossible that man should know the measure of the heavens above;”

otherwise it is measured by the Lord, for he hath “meted out heaven with a span”, (^{<2412>}Isaiah 40:12);

and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath: so as to be known what they are, or on what they are fastened, since the earth is hung upon nothing, (^{<13816>}Job 38:6 26:7);

I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord; as the former cannot be, so neither the latter; when there was a very great rejection of the Jews for their disbelief of the Messiah, they were not all cast off; the Apostle Paul was an instance to the contrary, and so were others: “the remnant according to the election of grace”; and there is a time coming when all Israel shall be saved, (⁶¹⁰Romans 11:5,25,26); nor shall any of the spiritual Israel be cast off by him, or cast away from him, so as to perish; the Israel, whom God foreknew, is chosen, redeemed, and whom he calls by his grace; no, not for all the sins and transgressions they have been guilty of, however they may deserve it. The reasons are, because of his unchangeable love to them; his unalterable covenant with them; the satisfaction his son has made for them; and the free and full pardon of their sins, which he has granted to them.

Ver. 38. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] The word come is not in the text; it is read, but not written. The vowel points are in the text, but not the letters; which those, who are against the antiquity of the points, would do well to consider; since the Jews never suffered any additions to the Bible. Jarchi says this prophecy refers to future times in the latter redemption, and never was fulfilled in the second temple; and indeed, under the figure of rebuilding Jerusalem, seems to be intended the building of the Gospel church, which was to continue to the end of time; for both holiness and perpetuity are ascribed to it:

that the city shall be built to the Lord; the city of Jerusalem; which was to be rebuilt upon the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, as by the order, and under the direction and protection of the Lord, so for his service and worship; the temple in it should be built up again, and divine worship restored; and both that and the city, with the inhabitants of it, be devoted to his service; a type of the Gospel church, built up an habitation for God, where he is worshipped, feared, and glorified:

from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner; of the tower of Hananeel mention is made in (⁴⁰⁰Nehemiah 3:1 12:39 ³⁴⁰Zechariah 14:10). The Targum calls it the tower of Pikkus. Lightfoot places it on the south side of the city, bending to the east; but most place it on the east side of it: here probably the building of the city began in Nehemiah’s time, and proceeded to the gate of the corner, which lay northeast; of which (see ²⁴³2 Kings 14:13 ⁴⁰⁰2 Chronicles 26:9); Jerom interprets the tower of Hananeel the tower of obedience, or of the grace and gifts of God, which

latter is not much amiss; since the word “Hansheel” may be interpreted “God gives grace”; and the spiritual building of the church proceeds from the grace of God, upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ being the chief corner stone, (⁴¹²¹Ephesians 2:20).

Ver. 39. *And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it*, etc.] Or, “before it”^{f618}; the gate proceeding right on from it; of the length of the measuring line, or reed; (see ²³⁰⁵Ezekiel 40:5); though some render it, “before him”^{f619}; before the Lord, under whose direction and powerful providence the work went on; so the city gates and walls of the New Jerusalem are said to be measured with a reed, (⁴⁶¹⁵Revelation 21:15);

upon the hill Gareb; which signifies a “scab”, so called, as is supposed, from scabby and leprous persons sent here to dwell, which was a “lazaretto” for them. Lightfoot, following Lyra, takes it to be the same with Mount Calvary: it was on the north side of the city, bending to the west; and, if the same with Calvary, it was on the west side. The Targum renders it,

“the hill which was near to Gareb:”

and shall compass about to Goath; so called perhaps from the difficulty of its ascent, it being a laborious work to go up to it, enough to make a man breathe. Lyra takes it to be Golgotha, which is not very likely; it seems to be at some distance from the former; since from that there was a round about, a compass fetched to this: it is supposed to lie on the west side of the city, towards the south. The Targum renders it the calves’ pool, or the round pool; it is thought by some more likely to be the hill Josephus^{f620} speaks of, that hung over the valley of Siloam.

Ver. 40. *And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes*, etc.] The Targum paraphrases it,

“where the carcasses of the Assyrian army fell;”

Sennacherib’s army, destroyed by an angel; and so Jarchi and Kimchi; which latter observes, that the word for “ashes” signifies “fat”; and so may describe the persons then destroyed, who were fat and lusty men: others think, more probably, that the valley of Tophet or Hinnom is here meant; so called, either from the persons that were burnt and sacrificed to Moloch; or from the carcasses of malefactors interred here; and from the ashes of the sacrifices which were brought from the temple, and laid here. This

valley lay southwest of the city; it was a ditch at the foot of the mount of Calvary; where, as Monsieur Thevenot^{f621} says, now stands the chapel of the invention of the cross:

and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron; such as the potters and fullers' fields, which lay to the south of the city, or more to the east, where Kidron was situated:

unto the corner of the horse gate towards the east; and so the compass is fetched round the city to the eastern part of it, from whence it began, even to the tower of Hananeel, which was on the east of this horse gate; (see <2116>2 Kings 11:16 <1638>Nehemiah 3:28). The Targum renders it,

“to the corner of the gate of the house of the king’s course;”

supposed to be the gate at which the king’s horses went in and out, when led to be watered or exercised:

[shall be] holy unto the Lord; that is, the whole city in its utmost compass thus rebuilt, yea, even the out parts of it, and those that were defiled with the carcasses of men, and ashes of the burnt offerings. It seems to respect the extensive holiness of the church of God in the latter day; compare with it (<3840>Zechariah 14:10,20,21);

it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever; which, if understood literally of the city of Jerusalem, can only signify, that it should not be destroyed soon, but should continue a long time; for certain it is, that after it was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, it was plucked up, and thrown down by the Romans, and particularly by Hadrian, who ploughed it up, and built another city, and called it by his own name; but this figuratively rather intends the church of Christ, which is built on him the Rock, and so is immovable; and, like Mount Zion, shall abide for ever.

CHAPTER 32

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 32

This chapter contains an account of Jeremiah's imprisonment, and the cause of it; of his buying a field of his uncle's son, and the design of it; of his prayer to God, and of the answer returned to him. The time of his imprisonment, the place where, and the reasons of it, are observed in (²⁴³¹Jeremiah 32:1-5); that his uncle's son would come and offer the sale of a field to him was told him by the Lord, which he did accordingly, (²⁴³⁵Jeremiah 32:6,7); of whom he bought the field, paid the money, had the purchase confirmed in a legal way, before witnesses, (²⁴³⁸Jeremiah 32:8-12); and the writings of it he committed to Baruch, to put in an earthen vessel, where they were to continue some time as a pledge of houses, fields, and vineyards, being possessed again after the captivity, (²⁴³³Jeremiah 32:13-15); then follows a prayer of his to the Lord, in which he addresses him as the Maker of all things; as the Lord God omnipotent; as a God of great grace and mercy, as well as strict justice; as a God of wisdom, counsel, and might, and an omniscient and righteous Being, (²⁴³⁶Jeremiah 32:16-19); and recounts the wonderful things he had done for the people of Israel, (²⁴³⁷Jeremiah 32:20-22); and observes the ingratitude and disobedience of that people, which were the cause of the present siege of the city, which should surely be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans, (²⁴²³Jeremiah 32:23-25); to which prayer an answer is returned, (²⁴²⁶Jeremiah 32:26); in which the Lord describes himself as the God of all flesh, and as able to do what he pleases, (²⁴²⁷Jeremiah 32:27); and confirms the delivery of the city of Jerusalem unto the Chaldeans, (²⁴²⁸Jeremiah 32:28,29); and assigns the causes of it, the backslidings, disobedience, and dreadful idolatry of the people, (²⁴³⁰Jeremiah 32:30-35); and, notwithstanding, promises a restoration of them to their own land again, (²⁴²⁵Jeremiah 32:36,37); when an opportunity is taken to insert the covenant of grace, and the special articles and peculiar promises of it, for the comfort of the spiritual Israel of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, (²⁴²⁸Jeremiah 32:38-40); and the chapter is concluded with a fresh assurance of the return of the captivity, and of the punctual performance of

the promise of it; when fields should be bought in every part of the land, in like manner as Jeremiah had bought his, (^{2434b}Jeremiah 32:41-44).

Ver. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord*, etc.] The word of prophecy, as the Targum, concerning Jeremiah's buying the field of his uncle's son, (^{2435b}Jeremiah 32:6); and concerning the delivery of the city of Jerusalem into the hands of the Chaldeans, (^{2435b}Jeremiah 32:26); and the return of the captivity, (^{2435b}Jeremiah 32:36);

in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which [was] the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar; the same with Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, a year before the taking of the city by him; for that was in the eleventh of Zedekiah, and the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar; (see ^{2435b}Jeremiah 52:1,5,12).

Ver. 2. *For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem*, etc.] And had done so for some time; for the siege began in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, (^{2435b}Jeremiah 52:4);

and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which [was] in the king of Judah's house; which showed great stupidity and hardness of heart in the king, and his courtiers, and in the people, to imprison a prophet of the Lord, when surrounded by an enemy's army, and that according to the prediction of the prophet; by which it appeared that he was a true prophet; and they might reasonably expect that the rest of his predictions, which related to the taking of their city, and carrying them captive, would be fulfilled. It is true, indeed, he was in a better prison than before, more honourable, being within the limits of the king's house; and, besides, was not closely confined, but allowed to walk in the court of the prison; and so had a free air to breathe in, and more company to converse with, and could exercise himself by walking about; perhaps he was placed here to keep him from prophesying to the people to their discouragement, and the more to awe him, as he was under the eye of the king and his ministry. Of this prison and its court mention is made in (^{4425b}Nehemiah 3:25); it seems to have been for state prisoners.

Ver. 3. *For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up*, etc.] In prison, at least in the court of the prison; he had given orders for his imprisonment, which were executed, and it was the same as if he had done it himself; the reason of which was, as follows:

saying, wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, thus saith the Lord, behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it? meaning the city of Jerusalem, now besieged by the king of Babylon. This prophecy stands in (²⁸⁰Jeremiah 34:1-3); the prophecies of this book not being put together in proper order of time.

Ver. 4. *And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans,* etc.] This is a continuation of the prophecy of Jeremiah, repeated by the king to him, and which concerns himself more especially; who, upon the taking of the city, would endeavour to make his escape, as he did; but should not be able, (²⁸¹Jeremiah 52:8);

but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon; not only into the hands of his army, and of his generals, but into his own hand personally; since it follows:

and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes; converse together face to face, eye to eye; but no doubt with different tones and looks; the king of Babylon upbraiding the king of Judah with perjury and ingratitude, and looking upon him with indignation and contempt; the other speaking faintly, and looking down with grief, shame, and confusion; moreover, the eyes of the king of Babylon beheld the eyes of Zedekiah, and ordered them to be put out, as they were, (¹²³¹2 Kings 25:7 ²⁸²Jeremiah 39:7 52:11).

Ver. 5. *And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon,* etc.] As he did in chains, from Riblah, where he was brought unto him after he was taken, endeavouring to make his escape, (²⁸³Jeremiah 52:8,9,11);

and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the Lord; in taking him away by death; for he continued in Babylon to the time of his death, which was not violent, but natural; and, considering his circumstances, his captivity, imprisonment, and loss of sight, might be reckoned a visitation in mercy: though some understand this of God's visiting the people at the return of them from their seventy years' captivity; if Zedekiah lived till then, he must be a very old man; but of this we have no account, nor is it probable:

though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper; though they should sally out upon them, in order to beat them out of their trenches, and drive them from the walls of the city, yet without success.

Ver. 6. *And Jeremiah said, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Not that he said this to Zedekiah; but the prophet, after the above preface, returns to declare what the word of the Lord was, which came to him at the time before mentioned.

Ver. 7. *Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee,* etc.] Hilkiah, the father of Jeremiah, and this Shallum, were own brothers; so that Jeremiah and Hanameel were brothers' sons, or own cousins: this coming of Hanameel to Jeremiah being a contingent event, with respect to second causes, and yet foretold as what would certainly be, shows that such events are foreknown by the Lord, and are sure to him:

saying, buy thee my field that [is] in Anathoth; the place from whence Jeremiah came, and was but about two or three miles from Jerusalem, and therefore must be now in the possession of the Chaldean army; wherefore it may seem very strange in Hanameel to propose it to sale, and stranger still in Jeremiah to buy it: though something of this kind was done at Rome, while Hannibal was besieging it; the field where Hannibal pitched his camp was offered to sale at Rome, and found a buyer^{f622}; but then he that bought it was in high spirits, and in a strong belief that the city would not be taken, and that the enemy would be obliged to quit the siege; but Jeremiah knew, and firmly believed, on the other hand, that the city of Jerusalem, and all the country round it, would fall into the hands of the king of Babylon. Moreover, Anathoth was a city of the priests, and the fields adjoining to it belonged to them; as some of them did to Abiathar the priest in his time, (¹⁰²⁵1 Kings 2:26); and such fields as belonged to the priests and Levites were not to be sold, according to the law in (^{1025b}Leviticus 25:34); to which it is answered, that this was not arable land, which the Levites might not possess; but some meadow, orchard, or garden, in the suburbs of the city, which though it might not be sold to strangers, yet might be sold among themselves; though it is more probable that this was a field that came from, in some of his ancestors by his mother's or grandmother's side, and so might be disposed of; as it seems certain to be lawfully done, not only as it was the will of God, who could indeed dispense with his own law, was that in the way, but since it was a matter of right, and incumbent on him, as follows:

for the right of redemption [is] thine to buy [it]; that is, had it been sold to another, it would have lain upon him to have redeemed it, as being next of kin, that so it might not pass to another tribe and family.

Ver. 8. *So Hanameel mine uncle's son came unto me*, etc.] Freely and voluntarily, of his own accord; though it was determined he should, as it was predicted he would; for God's decrees do not infringe the liberty of the will: this man came from Anathoth, very probably, to Jerusalem, to the place where the prophet was:

in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord; which had been made known before to Jeremiah:

and said unto me, buy my field, I pray thee, that [is] in Anathoth, which [is] in the country of Benjamin; it belonged to that tribe:

for the right of inheritance [is] thine; the reversion of this field; it would come to him after the death of his cousin, as being next heir:

and the redemption [is] thine; buy [it] for thyself; since, if it was sold to another, he, according to law, was obliged to redeem it; and therefore it was much better to buy it at once for himself:

then I knew that this [was] the word of the Lord; that it was the word of the Lord which came to him before, and that it was the will of the Lord that he should make this purchase; since there was such an exact agreement between the prophecy and the event.

Ver. 9. *And I bought the field of Hanameel mine uncle's son; that [was] in Anathoth*, etc.] The prophet agreed with his cousin to take his field of him, at a certain price hereafter mentioned; which may seem strange in one that was a poor prophet, now a prisoner, and the land just going to be subject to the Chaldeans: but the design of this was to show that there would be a return from captivity, when houses and fields should be bought and sold again, of which this was a pledge:

and weighed him the money; agreed upon, which was reckoned not by tale, but by weight:

[even] seventeen shekels of silver; which, reckoning a shekel at half a crown, were no more than two pounds, two shillings, and sixpence; a small sum of money to make a purchase of a field with; though this may be accounted for by the scarcity of money, the field in the hand of the enemy, there being only his kinsman's life in it, the prophet bought the reversion, being his of right; and, besides, it might be only an orchard or garden that is so called. In the Hebrew text it is, "seven shekels and ten [pieces of]

silver”: and Kimchi and Ben Melech say, that by “shekels” are meant minas or pounds; and by “pieces of silver”, selahs or shekels: and so the Targum renders it,

“seven minas, and ten shekels of silver.”

Now a minah or maneh, according to (^{365D}Ezekiel 45:12); was equal to sixty shekels, and so of the value of seven pounds, ten shillings; seven of these made fifty two pounds, ten shillings; and the other ten shekels being one pound, five shillings, the whole amounted to fifty three pounds, fifteen shillings, which would purchase a considerable field.

Ver. 10. *And I subscribed the evidence*, etc.] Or, “wrote in a book”^{f623}; the instrument or bill of sale, the deed of purchase; which described the field sold, and expressed the condition on which the purchase was made; and by subscribing it he agreed to it, and laid himself under obligation to perform it:

and sealed [it]; for the further confirmation of it:

and took witnesses; to be present at the payment of the money, and to sign the deed likewise:

and weighed [him] the money in the balances; this he did a second time; he weighed it first before Hanameel himself, and then before the witnesses; everything was done fairly, and with great exactness.

Ver. 11. *So I took the evidence of the purchase*, etc.] The deed of purchase, the book or bill of sale, the instrument of the bargain, as before mentioned:

[both] that which is sealed, [according] to the law and custom; which was both sealed by the buyer and seller, and was sealed up, and not to be looked into by everyone, only when there might be a necessity; this was the original copy:

and that which was open; the counter part or copy of the former, which though signed and sealed as the other, yet not sealed up, but was open and exposed to view; either for the relations to see what was done, as some; or for the judges, as others, to ratify and make authentic: or, as is most probable, this copy was laid up in some public register, to have recourse unto upon any occasion; however it was, it was according to the laws and customs of those times, which Jeremiah carefully attended to: or, as others,

it lay open for the witnesses to sign; so there are three distinct things; first the written contract; then that as signed and sealed by buyer and seller, according to law; and then as signed, but not sealed, by the witnesses.

Ver. 12. *And I gave the evidence of the purchase*, etc.] Both that which was sealed and that which was open; both the original and the copy; or the whole, as signed, sealed, and witnessed:

unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah; this Baruch, as appears from other places in this book, was one that attended on Jeremiah, was his scribe or amanuensis, and did business for him of one kind or another, and is described here by his pedigree; and it was the more necessary now to make use of him in this affair, because the prophet was confined, and could not go out of the court of the prison; to him he gave the above deed:

in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's [son]; of whom the purchase was made: the word "son" is not in the text, which has led some to think that both were present at this bargain, both the uncle and the uncle's son; or that Hanameel was both uncle and uncle's son to Jeremiah, as Jarchi; but there is no need to suppose that; the word "son" may easily be supplied from what is before said:

and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase; the same that the prophet subscribed; so that the book the witnesses subscribed was not a separate book, as some have thought; for there was but one book or deed in all, besides the copy that was taken of it:

before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison; where Jeremiah was; and who probably came to visit him, and to hear the word of the Lord from his mouth; unless we can suppose that these were fellow prisoners, or were set as spies upon him, to watch him what he said and did.

Ver. 13. *And I charged Baruch before them*, etc.] Before his kinsman, the witnesses of the deed, and the Jews that were in the court:

saying, as follows:

Ver. 14. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel*, etc.] The order to do the following is ushered in in this solemn manner, partly that Baruch might more strictly observe it, and act according to it; and partly that the persons

before whom it was given might take the greater notice of it, and believe that there was something intended by it of moment and importance:

take these evidences; or “books”^{f624}; the deeds of purchase:

this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; both the original and the copy:

and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days; it seems, though it is not said, that this earthen vessel, with these deeds in it, were to be put under ground, and very probably in some part of the field that was bought: had these writings been laid up in a chest or box, they might have been stolen and destroyed; and had they been laid in the earth by themselves, they would have rotted and consumed; but being put into a dry earthen vessel, they might be preserved from the injury of the air and the moistness of the earth; and so might continue many days, even many years, to the end of the captivity, as it was designed they should; when Jeremiah’s heirs, having some of them where they were deposited, might take them up and claim the estate; though something more useful and instructive than this was designed by it, as appears by the following words:

Ver. 15. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] Who is the Lord God Almighty, and can do what he pleases; and is the covenant God of his people, and therefore will do them good by all his providences in the issue of things:

houses, and fields, and vineyards, shall be possessed in this land; or “bought”^{f625} in it; of which the prophet’s buying this field was a pledge and earnest; signifying, that though the city now besieged should be taken, and the people carried captive, yet they should return to their own land, and purchase and enjoy houses, fields, and vineyards again, as at the present time.

Ver. 16. *Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah*, etc.] When he had finished his worldly business, and which yet was by a divine order, and to answer a divine purpose, then he betook himself to prayer; and it is proper we should be quite free from worldly cares and concerns when we enter upon religious duties, particularly prayer to God; when the soul ought to be separated from the world and the things of it, and wholly devoted to God:

I prayed unto the Lord; either for further information in this matter, of the use and design of buying the field; and how this part of the prophecy, signified by it, concerning the Jews buying and possessing houses and fields, can be made to agree with the other prophecy, that the city should be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans; or, at least, that he might be able to answer the cavils and objections made by the Jews to it: that he was in some puzzle, perplexity, and distress, appears by his prayer, which begins,

saying, as follows:

Ver. 17. *Ah Lord God!* etc.] Which the Vulgate Latin version repeats three times, “Ah, ah, ah”, as being greatly distressed with the trouble that was coming upon his people; and, it may be, not without some doubts and temptations about their deliverance; or, at least, was pressed in his mind with the difficulties and objections started by the Jews that were with him in the court:

behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm; with great propriety is the making of the heaven and the earth ascribed to the mighty power of God; for nothing short of almighty power could have produced such a stupendous work as the heavens, with all the host of them, sun, moon, and stars, the terraqueous globe, the earth and sea, with all that in them are; and all this produced out of nothing, by the sole command and word of God: and with great pertinency does the prophet begin his prayer with such a description of God; both to encourage and strengthen his faith in him touching the fulfilment of the above prophecy, and to stop the mouths of the Jews, who objected the impossibility of it: wherefore it follows,

[and] there is nothing too hard for thee; or “hidden from thee”^{f626}; so the Targum; which his wisdom and knowledge did not reach, or his power could not effect: or which is “too wonderful for thee”^{f627}; there is nothing that has so much of the wonderful in it, as to be above the compass of his understanding, and out of the reach of his power, as such things be, which are beyond the power and skill of men; but there is no such thing with God, whose understanding is unsearchable, and his power irresistible; with him nothing is impossible; and who can think there is that observes that the heaven and earth are made by him?

Ver. 18. *Thou showest lovingkindness unto thousands*, etc.] Not to thousands of persons only, but to a thousand generations, even such that love, fear, and serve him; (see ^{<1216>}Exodus 20:6 ^{<1438>}Psalms 105:8); this is very properly added, for the further strengthening of faith; for though the omnipotence of God assures us that there is nothing but what he can do, yet it gives us no certain encouragement he will do this, or that, or the other, in a favourable and gracious manner; but this his loving kindness, experienced by a multitude of persons in all ages, gives reason to hope for:

and recompensest the iniquities of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them; it is added in the decalogue, from whence these words are taken, “of them that hate me”, (^{<1216>}Exodus 20:5); and here the Targum adds,

“when they go on to sin after them;”

when they imitate their fathers in their wickedness, and commit the same sins they have done, and continue in them; wherefore, having tilled up the measure of their fathers’ sins, they receive a just and full recompence of them into their bosom; which denotes both the certainty of it and the fulness of it: the prophet formed in his mind just notions and ideas of the divine Being, as being not only gracious and merciful, but holy, just, and righteous; and it may be he strikes at the Jews, who might complain of God, as they sometimes did, for being punished for their fathers’ sins, as if they themselves were innocent and guiltless:

the Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts [is] his name: “great” in all the perfections of his nature, and greatly to be praised, loved, and feared; “mighty” to do whatsoever he pleases; and who, agreeably to his name, has all the hosts and armies of heaven and earth at his command; and what is it that he cannot do?

Ver. 19. *Great in counsel, and mighty in word*, etc.] Counsel belongs to him, and he does all things after the counsel of his will, all things in nature, providence, and grace; and such a display of his wisdom is there in all, that show him to be excellent in counsel; to excel all others; not only to be great, but to be the greatest in counsel; and who regularly and perfectly performs all that he has wisely contrived; his wisdom and his power are equal to each other; he forms the scheme of all that he does with the greatest wisdom, and accomplishes by his power all that he has purposed in his eternal mind; (see ^{<2309>}Isaiah 28:29);

for thine eyes [are] open upon all the ways of the sons of men; all their thoughts, schemes, devices, and purposes; all their words and actions, every step they take, whether good or bad, they are all before him, and manifest to him; he is God omniscient as well as God omnipotent; and he does not look upon men, and their ways and works, as an idle spectator or indifferent person, as unconcerned at what they do, letting them pass without calling them to an account for them, or without passing any judgment on them, or sentence concerning them; no, he is the Judge of all the earth, and he sits in the heavens and observes what is done on earth:

to give everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: good things to good men for Christ's sake; and evil things to evil men, according to the just demerit of their sins and transgressions.

Ver. 20. *Which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, [even] unto this day,* etc.] The prophet here descends to particular instances of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God; and begins with the miracles wrought in Egypt, the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians for refusing to let Israel go; these were set among them, they were true and real things, and obvious to everyone's view; there was no deception in them, they were plain to the senses of men; and the remembrance of them continued among the Egyptians to the times of the prophet; the tradition of what was done was handed down among them to that age: for that any marks of these things remained is not to be supposed; the tracks of Pharaoh's chariot wheels to be still seen in the Red sea must be rejected as fabulous, though Orosius relates it:

and in Israel, and amongst [other] men: that is, signs and wonders were set among the Israelites, or wrought for them; such as bringing them out of Egypt; leading them through the Red sea as on dry land; feeding them in the wilderness with manna and quails; subduing their enemies, and settling them in the land of Canaan; and in other nations very wonderful things have been done in one age or another: or else the meaning is, that the miracles done in Egypt were not only remembered there to this time, but also by the Israelites, and by other men, to whom the knowledge of these things came; on account of which God was more or less everywhere glorified, as follows:

and hast made thee a name as at this day; that is, got praise, honour, and glory, in Egypt, in Israel, and in other nations.

Ver. 21. *And hast brought forth thy people Israel of the land of Egypt,* etc.] As he promised Abraham, some hundreds of years before, that they should come out from thence; and where they had been as bondsmen, though they were the Lord's peculiar people, whom he had chose for himself above all people, and therefore he brought them out of their state of bondage; and this was his own doing, they could not deliver themselves; the enemy would not let them go till he was obliged to it by the superior power of God:

with signs and with wonders; which he wrought for them at the time of their deliverance, slaying the firstborn; and at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, after he brought them out of Egypt, and before their settlement in the land of Canaan; and so these may be considered as distinct from the signs and wonders in the land of Egypt before mentioned:

and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm; with great power, and so delivered the Israelites from them that were stronger than they; with a mighty hand, that protected his people; and with a long arm, that reached their enemies, and destroyed them:

and with great terror; with great reverence in the Israelites, who saw the power and majesty of God; and with great terror to Pharaoh and his host, when they saw the waters return and overwhelm them; and to all the nations round about, when they heard of it; (see [†]Deuteronomy 4:34). The Targum is,

“with great vision;”

so a spectacle, as the Syriac version; openly, before the eyes of all.

Ver. 22. *And hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them,* etc.] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; so that God was faithful to his word, kept his covenant and oath; and the faithfulness of God is observed and acknowledged by the prophet, along with other perfections of God before taken notice of. The land of Canaan was a land of promise, confirmed by an oath, and was the pure gift of God to the Israelites, and not any merit of theirs; it was given them by him who had a right to dispose of it, and could make them a good title to it, and which they had; though before in the possession of others, who for their wickedness were driven out:

a land flowing with milk and honey: abounding with plenty of all good things, for the sustenance and comfort of human life; a very frequent description of the land of Canaan, and is expressive of the great kindness and goodness of God to this people.

Ver. 23. *And they came in and possessed it*, etc.] After forty years travel in the wilderness; they entered into it with Joshua at the head of them, and the Lord with them; giving victory over the Canaanites, who were soon subdued; and the Israelites with little trouble settled in their land, which was divided to them by lot, and possessed as their inheritance:

but they obeyed not thy voice; though they promised at Sinai they would, and though they were so much obliged by the goodness of God to them; this shows great ingratitude in them:

neither walked in thy law; moral, ceremonial, and judicial, given at Harsh as the rule of their obedience; but they walked not according to it:

they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do; they were not only deficient in some things, but in everything; they not only broke some of the laws of God, but all of them; there was not one law, one command, observed by them as it ought to have been; and yet these people were always prone to establish their own righteousness, and seek for justification by it:

therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them; the Chaldean army, now besieging them; and the famine and pestilence among them; which, the prophet serves, were but the righteous judgments of God upon them for their sins.

Ver. 24. *Behold, the mounds, they are come unto the city, to take it*, etc.] These were ramparts or batteries, that were erected against the city, the more easily to annoy it: some take them to be engines from which they cast out stones; and others suppose them to be battering rams, used to break down the walls of the city; be they what they will, they were now brought near the city to make way for the Chaldeans to enter into it, and take it:

and the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans that fight against it; not only it the purpose of God that it should be, but it was plain case that he had withdrawn his protection from it, and that the city was indefensible; and that, humanly speaking, it was impossible it should hold out long, for the reasons following:

because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: the sword of the Chaldeans, without, destroyed those that sallied out upon them, or endeavoured to make their escape; and the famine and pestilence, within, made such ravages, and so much weakened them, that they would never be able to stand it out against the enemy long, but must surrender:

and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; what was foretold by the prophets, and by himself, was now fulfilling:

and, behold, thou seest [it]; and therefore he had no need to observe it to him, or dwell any longer on this subject; only he hints what follows, as having some difficulty in it on his own account.

Ver. 25. *And thou hast said to me, O Lord God,* etc.] Or, “O Lord God, yet thou hast said to me”^{f628}; notwithstanding this is the case, the country all around is in the hand of the enemy, and the city is as good as delivered up to them, yet thou hast given me such orders, as follows:

buy thee a field for money, and take witnesses; for though these words were not expressly said to him by the Lord; yet inasmuch as he told him that his uncle’s son would come to him, and propose the selling of his field to him; and accordingly did come, agreeably to the word of the Lord; Jeremiah understood it as the will of the Lord, that he should buy it before witnesses; which he did, as before related:

for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans; or rather, “though the city is given”^{f629}, etc. yet thou hast said so: now by this the prophet suggests, that though he had obeyed the divine order, as he ought to have done, yet there was some difficulty upon his mind; or there were some objections started, by the Jews that were with him, how these things could be reconciled; that he should be ordered to buy a field at such a time as this, and thereby signify that fields and vineyards should be bought and possessed in the land, and yet the city just going to be surrendered into the hands of the Chaldeans.

Ver. 26. *Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah,* etc.] This is an answer to the prophet’s prayer, and particularly to the latter part of it; showing the consistency of the destruction of the city with his purchase of a field, and with God’s promise of fields and vineyards being purchased and possessed again; and how each of these would be brought about:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 27. *Behold, I [am] the Lord, the God of all flesh*, etc.] Jehovah, the self-existent Being, that gives being to all creatures; and is particularly the God of all men, the Maker and Preserver of them, and that provides for them; who are called “flesh”, to denote their weakness and corruption, how unworthy of the divine favour, and how unable to resist his will, or hinder the execution of his purposes: and which is introduced with a “behold”, to excite attention, to take notice of what was said; to encourage faith, and remove doubts and difficulties; for if God is Jehovah, the Being of beings; if he is the God and Governor of the world, and all men in it, what is it he cannot do? as follows:

is there anything too hard for me? suggesting, that though the city of Jerusalem should be destroyed, and the inhabitants carried captive, yet he could return them again to their own land; where they should purchase fields and vineyards, and possess them as heretofore: or, “is there anything hidden from me?”^{f630} so the Targum and Syriac version; can anything unforeseen arise to hinder the fulfilment of promises and prophecies? nothing can; since all things are in one view before the Lord continually; or, “is there anything too wonderful for me?”^{f631} that which is too wonderful for men, beyond their comprehension, and so their faith; yet it is not so with God.

Ver. 28. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans*, etc.] As he had foretold by the prophet, and was just now going to be fulfilled. Here the Lord repeats and confirms the first of the two things which seemed contradictory; the destruction of the city by the Chaldeans, who were now besieging it, and into whose hands it would certainly come:

and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; who was now before it with his army:

and he shall take it; and become master of it: or, “I will give [it to him], that he may take it”^{f632}; which he could not do, notwithstanding his powerful army, had not the Lord delivered it into his hands.

Ver. 29. *And the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come*, etc.] Or rather “shall enter”, as Aquila renders it; for they were come to it already, and were fighting against it, battering the walls, and throwing in their arrows, and putting to the sword such as came out, or were within their reach:

and set fire on this city; as they did, (²⁸⁰⁸Jeremiah 39:8);

and burn it, with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal; or “especially the houses”,^{f633} or “even the houses”; the houses particularly mentioned in the history of the destruction as burnt; and which, very probably, are here intended; besides the Lord’s house, and all the houses in Jerusalem, were the king’s house, and the houses of the great men or princes; and which, Kimchi thinks, were higher than others; on which therefore they burnt incense to Baal; wherefore it was a just retaliation, upon them that they should be burnt with fire:

and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger; to other gods besides the true God; to strange gods, and to other gods besides Baal; which was done as if they really designed to provoke the Lord; as if they had it in view to affront him; and, if they had, they could not have taken a more effectual method; though this is to be understood, not intentionally, but eventually; not what was their design, though it looked like it, but what was the effect of their idolatry.

Ver. 30. *For the children of Israel and the children of Judah*, etc.] The former are mentioned, as well as the latter, though they had been carried captive some years ago, to justify the dealings of God with them; and besides, there were some of the ten tribes that remained, and were mingled with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin: of all which it is said, that they

have only done evil before me from their youth; from their infancy, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; and so being destitute of the grace of God, did nothing else but sin all their days, as is said of the men of the old world, (⁴⁰⁰⁸Genesis 6:5 8:21). Some understand this, from the time of their becoming a people, a body politic; or from the time of their coming out of Egypt, and being in the wilderness, when their idolatry began, they brought out of Egypt; or from the time of the judges:

for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the Lord; with their idols, made by their own hands; these they worshipped instead of their Creator and Benefactor; which must be very provoking indeed!

Ver. 31. *For this city hath been tame [as] a provocation of mine anger and of my fury*, etc.] Or, “upon mine anger, and upon my fury this city was to me”,^{f634}; that is, it was upon his heart, and in his mind and purpose, being provoked to anger and wrath by their sins, to have destroyed it long ago,

though he had deferred it to this time; the inhabitants of this city had been always a provoking people to him; and he had thought to have poured out his wrath and fury upon them:

from the day they built it, even unto this day: when built and inhabited by the idolatrous Canaanites; possessed by the Jebusites; rebuilt by David; beautified with the temple and other stately buildings by Solomon, who was drawn it, to idolatry by his wives. It is a tradition of the Jews, mentioned both by Jarchi and Kimchi, that the same day that the foundation of the temple was laid, Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter; and which was the foundation of his idolatry; and which was more or less practised in every reign afterwards, to this time; and which so provoked the Lord, that he took up this resolution early, though he did not put it in execution; expressed as follows:

that I should remove it from before my face; as a man does that which is nauseous and abominable to him; meaning the removing the inhabitants of it into other lands, or causing them to go into captivity; so the Targum.

Ver. 32. *Because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah*, etc.] His anger and fury were because of their sins, and so his carrying them captive:

which they have done to provoke me to anger; which was done, as if they had done it on purpose to provoke him; and which was done, not by a few, but by them all; not by the lower people only, but by men of every rank and order; as follows:

they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets; that is, their false prophets, as the Targum; yea, all the inhabitants of the land, both in city and country:

and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: the "metropolis" of the nation; the seat of the kings of Judah; and where the temple was, the priests ministered, and the prophets taught, and the people came up to worship.

Ver. 33. *And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face*, etc.] When he reproved them for their sins; called them to repentance; instructed them in their duty; and warned them of the dangers they exposed themselves to; instead of turning the face to him, as scholars to their masters, and as subjects to their prince, to listen to what was said to them;

they turned their backs or necks, the hinder part of them; expressive of contempt, and showing great rudeness and irreverence:

though I taught them, rising up early, and teaching [them]; by his prophets, as the Targum; whom he sent to them early in the morning; or in the early time of their life; or when they first began to practise idolatry; so careful was the Lord of them; so diligent to instruct them, and prevent their ruin:

yet have not hearkened, to receive instruction; or “correction”^{f635}; so as to repent of their sins, reform and amend; (see ^{-247B}Jeremiah 7:13,25,26).

Ver. 34. *But they set their abominations,* etc.] Their idols, which were abominable to the Lord, and ought to have been so to them: these they placed

in the house (which is called by my name), to defile it; in the temple; as by Ahaz, Manasseh, and others: (see ^{-247B}Jeremiah 7:30).

Ver. 35. *And they built the high places of Baal, which [are] in the valley of the son of Hinnom,* etc.] Or “the high places of that Baal^{f636}”, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom”; to distinguish him from other Baalim; and who seems to be the same with Molech after mentioned; and the signification of their names agree; the one is lord or master; the other king:

to cause their sons and their daughters to pass [through the fire] unto Molech: the phrase, “through the fire”, is not in the text; but is well enough supplied from other places, where it is. Some think that their infants were not burnt to death with fire, but only were held over the flame by way of lustration; or were made to pass between two fires, and so were purified and dedicated to the idol:

which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind that they should do this abomination; (see Gill on “^{-247B}Jeremiah 7:31”);

to cause Judah to sin; which Abarbinel understands of the children of Israel, who first began this practice, and seduced and drew the children of Judah into it; but rather it seems to intend the kings, princes, priests, prophets, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, who, by their example, led the people of the Lord into the same practice.

Ver. 36. *And now therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city,* etc.] Here begins the confirmation of the other part of

the prophecy concerning the return of the Jews to their city and country, when they should again buy and possess fields and vineyards; which was thought impossible, supposing the destruction of the city; or however not easily reconcilable with it; but this is as strongly affirmed as the former; for though they had sinned so heinously, and had provoked the wrath of God to such a degree, that the destruction of their city was inevitable, of which they were now sensible themselves; “yet now, notwithstanding”^{f637}, for so it is ushered in; and thus the words may be rendered, “thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel”; who is Jehovah, with whom nothing is impossible; and continues the covenant God of his own people, his spiritual Israel; for whose sake he does great and wonderful things; he says, “concerning this city”, the city of Jerusalem, now besieged by the Chaldeans:

whereof ye say, it shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; for, by these things, by the consumption that was made by them, they saw their case was desperate; and that there was no avoiding falling into the hands of the Chaldeans; wherefore, for the comfort of the Lord’s own people among them, the following things are said; most of which respect the Gospel dispensation, either the beginning or latter end of it.

Ver. 37. *Behold, I will gather them out of all countries,* etc.] At the end of the seventy years’ captivity; and which will have a greater accomplishment in the latter day, when the Jews shall be converted, and gathered from their present dispersion all over the earth:

whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath: or “whither I shall drive them”, or “shall have driven them”^{f638}; for as yet they were not thus driven and dispersed. A heap of words is made use of to express the greatness of the Lord’s indignation at them for their sins, the cause of their expulsion out of the land:

and I will bring them again unto this place; the city of Jerusalem; as they were at the end of the seventy years’ captivity; and when the promise was fulfilled, that they should purchase and possess fields and vineyards; and as they will likewise at the time of their conversion in the latter day:

and I will cause them to dwell safely; which yet they did not for any continuance after their return from Babylon; being, as Jerom observes, often molested by the Persians, Macedonians, and Egyptians; and at last destroyed by the Romans: their troubles in the times of the Maccabees are

very notorious; so that this refers either to the first times of the Gospel, and to the Jews that then believed in Christ; or rather to times yet to come, and which are prophesied of at (~~2482~~Jeremiah 32:37-43).

Ver. 38. *And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*] A comprehensive summary of the covenant of grace, which shall be made known to the Jews at the time of their conversion, and the blessings of it applied to them, and bestowed on them; though now a “loammi”, (~~2489~~Hosea 1:9), is written upon them; (see ~~2482~~Jeremiah 30:21 31:1,33).

Ver. 39. *And I will give them one heart and one way,* etc.] “One” and the same heart; the same heart to one as to another; gracious souls, truly converted persons, be they Jews or Gentiles, have the same experience; they have all, more or less, a sight and sense of sin, and the evil of it; are brought off of their own righteousness; are led to Christ alone for life and salvation; are made partakers of precious promises; and all have their temptations, afflictions, and trials, and can sympathize with one another: and they have the same things put into their hearts; the laws of God are written there; the doctrines of the Gospel have a place there; Christ is formed in them; the graces of the Spirit are implanted, faith, hope, love, fear, humility, and other graces. Their heart, given them at conversion, is a sincere and upright heart, not a double one; they become Israelites indeed; their faith is unfeigned; their hope is devoid of hypocrisy; their love is without dissimulation; their repentance is genuine; and they serve God uprightly with true hearts. It is also single and alone for God; he has the whole of it; their understandings are enlightened with the knowledge of him; their affections and desires are towards him: their wills are subject to him; their eye is single to his glory; their hearts are not divided between him and another object of worship; and they are also one towards another, as the first Christians were of one heart and of one soul, (~~4482~~Acts 4:32); and such a heart is a new heart, and the gift of God: “one way” is also promised: one way of salvation, which is Christ; the one and only way of access to God; of acceptance with him; of justification before him; and of forgiveness of sin; the only true way into a Gospel church state, and to eternal glory and happiness; and which is the more excellent way; the good old way; the new and living one: one way of worship may also be intended; one Lord is to be obeyed and worshipped; one doctrine and scheme of faith to be received; one baptism to be administered, in one and the same way, to one and the same subjects, and in one and the same name; one true spiritual manner of worship, all shall come into in the latter day; and there

will be no more parties among those that are called Christians; the Jews, when converted, will have no divisions nor different denominations among them; (see ^{<400>}Ephesians 4:4) (^{<314>}Zechariah 14:9);

that they may fear me for ever; both internally and externally; the one heart will be given them to fear and reverence him inwardly; and the one way of worship to fear or serve him outwardly, and in which they shall always continue; there will be no apostasy from the true grace of God, and no defection from his worship to superstition and idolatry:

for the good of them, and of their children after them; unity of heart; sincerity and uprightness of soul; a walking in the way of the Lord; having his fear before their eyes, and on their hearts, will issue in their spiritual good here, and in their eternal happiness hereafter; and even their posterity will reap some advantage by their good instructions and example.

Ver. 40. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them*, etc.] Which is made known and manifest at conversion; when the grace of it is applied; the blessings of it bestowed; and the promises of it made good; and therefore said to be made; for otherwise the covenant of grace here spoken of was made from all eternity with Christ, and his people in him; as appears from his being set up as the Mediator so early, and from the blessings and promises of it being of such a date. It is founded on the everlasting love of God, and is according to his eternal purpose; and is no other than an eternal transaction between the Father and the Son concerning the salvation of his elect; and which will last for ever, and never be antiquated, as the covenant under the former dispensation was; and which shows that this respects Gospel times:

that I will not turn away from them to do them good; he may withdraw his gracious presence for a while; but he never turns from his love and affections to his people; nor from his gracious purposes concerning them; nor from his promises to them; nor from his gifts bestowed on them; or so as to utterly leave them and forsake them, or cease to do them good: he has laid up goodness for them; he has bestowed much on them whom he has called by his grace; he has given himself to them as their God and portion; his Son as their Saviour and Redeemer, and all good things with him; his Spirit as their Sanctifier, with his gifts and graces; and he has wrought a good work in them; and he will continue to do them good, by fresh discoveries of his love; by granting his gracious presence; by carrying

on his work of grace; by supplying their wants, and making all things work together for their good. The Targum is,

“my Word shall not turn away, etc.”

but I will put my fear in their hearts; which is not naturally in the hearts of then; and, where it is, it is put there by the grace of God, and as a blessing of the covenant; it appears in those who are brought to a true sight of sin, in their humble sense of themselves, and dependence on the Lord; and in a reverent affection for him: and in a true and spiritual worship of him; and which is a security from a final and total apostasy from him, as follows:

that they shall not depart from me; not but that they may and do sin against God; and there may be a partial departure from him in those that truly fear him; but not a wicked, final, and total one: the fear of God influences them to cleave close unto him; and the power of God keeps them from departing from him, from his doctrines, worship, and ordinances, from his people, and a profession of his name.

Ver. 41. *Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good*, etc.] His covenant people, to whom he gives one heart and one way, and who have his fear implanted in them, and shall never depart from him, but persevere to the end: these he loves with a love of complacency and delight; he rejoices over them, not as considered in themselves, but as in Christ; he rejoices over them, as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride; and which does not merely lie in expression, but appears in fact; he does them good, and with the utmost joy and pleasure; he delights in showing mercy to them, beautifies them with salvation, and takes pleasure in their prosperity; he has taken up good thoughts and resolutions concerning them in his heart; has promised good things to them in his covenant; has provided good things for them in his Son, and bestows them on them in regeneration; and constantly supplies them with his grace, and will withhold no good thing from them, till he has brought them to glory; all which he does cheerfully and with the utmost delight The Targum is,

“my Word shall rejoice over them;”

the essential Word, Christ; he was rejoicing in them, and his delights were with them from eternity; he rejoices over them, as his lost sheep found at conversion; and they shall be his joy and crown of rejoicing to all eternity; and it was for the joy of having them with him that he endured so much for them in the redemption of them:

and I will plant them in this land assuredly; or “in truth”, or “in stability and firmness”^{f639}; for it does not seem so much to relate to the truth of the promise, and the assurance that may be had of the fulfilment of that, as to the reality and constancy of the blessing itself. A Gospel church state was first planted in Judea, and from thence has been spread into other parts, and has never been rooted out of the world since; and when the Jews, upon their conversion, are settled in their own land again, they will never more be removed:

with my whole heart and with my whole soul. Grotius thinks these clauses are to be connected with the former part of the verse, that God will rejoice over them to do them good with all his heart and soul; but this the accents will not admit of; but the meaning is, that he will do this particular good for them, as well as all others, in the most cordial and respectable manner, even planting and establishing them in their own land. The Targum is,

“by my Word, and by my will.”

Ver. 42. *For thus saith the Lord, like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people,* etc.] The Chaldean army now besieging them, the famine and pestilence among them, as well as their captivity, which was just at hand and certain:

so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them; in the preceding verses; as being their God, and they his people; giving them one heart, and one way; putting his fear into them; causing them to persevere to the end: rejoicing over them to do them good; and planting them in the land. God is as faithful to his promises as to his threatenings; and those who have seen the fulfilment of the one need not doubt of the accomplishment of the other; for if he has done all the evil things he threatened to do, which are his acts of justice, his strange acts, much more will he do the good things he has promised, which are his acts of grace and mercy, in which he delights.

Ver. 43. *And fields shall be bought in this land,* etc.] After the return from the Babylonish captivity, which this respects; and of which the prophet’s purchasing a field of his uncle’s son was a pledge and token; in doing which, as a right thing, he is confirmed; as well as the cavils and objections of the Jews removed, who thought the destruction of the city, and such a practice, irreconcilable; and, moreover, this is mentioned as a pledge, earnest, and confirmation of the fulfilment of the above spiritual promises

in Gospel times; for the people being returned at the end of the seventy years' captivity, and purchasing fields and vineyards, as was predicted, it might be strongly concluded, that since those temporal blessings promised were made good, spiritual ones would certainly be fulfilled; though some understand these words, in a spiritual sense, of the field of the church; for it is in the singular number, "a field shall be bought"^{f640}; yea, "that field", emphatically, which was bought by the blood of Christ, and first planted in the land of Judea, as in (²⁹³⁴Jeremiah 32:41);

whereof ye say, [it is] desolate without man or beast; so wasted and destroyed by the enemy, that neither man nor beast are left, but both carried off by him; and therefore no hope of what is above promised:

it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they are become the possessors of it, and therefore it is all over with us as to buying and possessing fields and vineyards; but notwithstanding this diffidence and despair in the present view of things, it follows:

Ver. 44. *Men shall buy fields for money*, etc.] They shall have plenty of money, and they shall lay it out in land, and carry on husbandry, cultivate the ground, which had lain long untilled, but now should be manured for public as well as private good. This some understand of particular churches planted in Judea, and out of it, throughout the whole world; and of men's gathering and joining themselves to them by a profession of that faith which is more precious than gold or silver:

and subscribe evidences, and seal [them], and take witnesses; as Jeremiah had done before, when he bought the field of his uncle's son, (²⁸²⁰Jeremiah 32:10). This is spiritually understood by some of the word of God laid hold on by faith; of the sealing of the Spirit, and of the ordinances of the Gospel:

in the land of Benjamin; where Anathoth was, and Jeremiah's field lay; and where the same should be done by others as was done by him:

and in the places about Jerusalem; in the suburbs of it, and in the villages round about it:

and in the cities of Judah; throughout the whole country, divided into the three following parts:

and in the cities of the mountains; in the hilly country of Judea, where was Hebron, and other cities, (⁴⁰¹⁹Luke 1:39,65);

and in the cities of the valley. The Septuagint retains the Hebrew word “sephela”, or the plain, in which were Emmaus, Lydda, Sharon, places mentioned in the New Testament:

and in the cities of the south; or Nagab, the south part of Judea, which led to Gaza, (~~418b~~ Acts 8:26). This division of Judea into the mountains, valley, and south, exactly agrees with the account of it in (~~165b~~ Joshua 15:21,33,48). Some understand this of the Gospel going out of Jerusalem after the day of Pentecost, not only to the places near that city, but to Samaria, and the cities of the south towards Egypt, and so into all the world:

for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord; their temporal captivity from Babylon, and their spiritual captivity from sin, Satan, and the law.

CHAPTER 33

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 33

This chapter is a continuation of prophecies of spiritual blessings on the church of Christ in Gospel times, of which the return of the Jews from captivity, and the benefits following on that, were types. The place where Jeremiah had this prophecy communicated to him, the prison, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:1); the author of it, Jehovah, who describes himself, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:2); encourages the prophet to pray unto him, promising an answer, and a discovery of great and hidden things, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:3); not so much concerning the destruction of the city, and the rebuilding it, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:4,5); as spiritual blessings to the church, signified by it; such as a healthful state and condition through Christ, the sun of righteousness, arising with healing in his wings, and a revelation of abundance of peace and truth by him, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:6); a release of captives, and a rebuilding of the church, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:7); free and full forgiveness of all sins, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:8); the church a praise in the whole earth; much joy in it, and glory to God by it, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:9-11); spiritual pastors or shepherds feeding their flocks, and taking very diligent care of them, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:12,13); a promise of the Messiah as a righteous Branch; as the Saviour and safeguard of his people; and as the Lord their righteousness, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:14-16); an assurance of the continuance of the kingly and priestly offices in him, whereby the covenant of God with David and the Levites would be for ever secured, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:17-22); and the chapter is concluded with a promise of the perseverance of the saints and people of God; which is represented as certain as the covenant with day and night, and as the ordinances of heaven and earth, in opposition to a suggestion to the contrary, (^{2481D}Jeremiah 33:23-26).

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the second time*, etc.] Not that this was precisely the second time that the word of the Lord came to the prophet, for it had come to him many more times than those; but this was the second time on the same occasion and subject; for the subject of this chapter is the same with that of the former, concerning the Messiah, and the happiness of the church in his times:

(*while he was yet shut up in the court of the prison*): though the prophet could not go out from hence, and publish his prophecies, yet the Lord visits him again and again; and his presence made the prison a palace to him; and though his afflictions, abounded for the sake of him, his comforts abounded through him; and though he was bound, the word of the Lord was not; it had a free course, and ran, and was glorified; it found its way into the prison, and also out of it:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, the Maker thereof*, etc.] The Syriac version is, “that made thee”; the prophet. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, “the Maker of the earth”; (see ^{<4017>}Jeremiah 32:17). Kimchi interprets it of Jerusalem; rather it is to be understood of the New Jerusalem, or church of God in Gospel times. Jarchi seems to understand it of this prophecy or promise, and so others; the promise of restoring and rebuilding Jerusalem; which, if taken of the church of God, may be admitted;

the Lord that formed it, to establish it; who drew the scheme and model of this spiritual building, his church, in his eternal mind, and resolved upon its stability and glory; who forms it, and everyone in it, for himself, and for his praise, in order to establish it in the world; as it will be more especially in the latter day: we often read of the Lord’s establishing his church and people in the world, (^{<4018>}Psalm 48:8 87:5 ^{<4019>}Isaiah 2:2);

the Lord [is] his name; Jehovah, the self-existing Being, the Being of beings; who is able to perform whatever he undertakes, and so is equal to this work, of settling and establishing his interest.

Ver. 3. *Call unto me, and I will answer thee*, etc.] This is spoken not to Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it; but to the prophet, encouraging him to seek the Lord by prayer, promising an answer to him. So the Targum,

“pray before me, and I will receive thy prayer:”

and show thee great and mighty things; or, “fortified ones”^{f641}; which are like fortified cities, that cannot easily be come at, unless the gates are opened to enter into; and designs such as are difficult of understanding, which exceed human belief, and which reason cannot comprehend and take in; and such are the great things of the Gospel. Some copies read it, “things reserved”^{f642}; as the Targum; and so Jarchi, who interprets it of things

future, of things reserved in the heart of God, and which he purposed to do; and very rightly:

which thou knowest not; until revealed; and from hence it appears, that by these great and hidden things are not meant the destruction of Jerusalem, and the seventy years' captivity, and return from that, things which Jeremiah had been made acquainted with time after time, and had prophesied of them; but spiritual blessings hereafter mentioned, some of which the deliverance from Babylon were typical of Ben Melech interprets these of comforts great and strong.

Ver. 4. *For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel*, etc.] The destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, which was now fulfilling, is here mentioned as a pledge of the accomplishment of spiritual blessings after spoken of; and to assure the prophet, that as he would with his own eyes see the fulfilment of the prophecies he had delivered out in the name of the Lord concerning that, so likewise as certainly would the other be brought to pass:

concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which were thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword; by "the mounts", which the Chaldeans raised without the city; or by the engines they placed there, by which they cast out stones into the city, to the demolishing of the houses in it; not in common only, but particularly the houses of the king and nobles, which they especially directed their shot at; and by "the sword", hammers, axes, and mattocks, for which sometimes this word is used, when they entered into the city. Though some render the words, "which are thrown down for mounts, and for the sword"^{f643}; that mounts might be made of them within, on which the Jews might fight and defend themselves against the Chaldeans. So the Targum,

"which they pulled down, and threw up mounts to strengthen the wall, against those that kill with the sword;"

and so Jarchi interprets it.

Ver. 5. *They come to fight with the Chaldeans*, etc.] Either the Jews out of the country, or their auxiliaries, their neighbours, to oblige them to break up the siege; but all to no purpose: or rather the Jews within; who, from the mounts erected, fight with the Chaldeans; or by sallying out upon them:

but [it is] to fill them with the dead bodies of men; the mounts, made of their houses, or their houses themselves; it is only to make them graves, and fill them with these carcasses:

whom I have slain in mine anger, and in my fury; that is, suffered to be slain, being wroth and angry with them, for their sins, as follows:

and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from the city; had no pity for it, showed no mercy to it, gave it no help and assistance, or protection, having withdrawn his presence from it. So the Targum,

“I have caused my Shechinah to depart from this city, because of their wickedness.”

Ver. 6. *Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them*, etc.] That is, the church of God, the members of it, typified by Jerusalem; and it is to be understood of the healing of their spiritual maladies, the diseases of sin, through the blood of the Messiah, who should arise with healing in his wings; that is, with remission of sin, which is often meant by healing in Scripture: Christ is the physician; his blood the balm in Gilead, which being applied to those that are diseased with sin, to sin sick souls, it makes an effectual cure of them; so that they shall not say they are sick, because their iniquities are forgiven them; (see ^{<4017>}Psalm 103:3 ^{<2334>}Isaiah 33:24 ^{<3012>}Malachi 4:2) (^{<2483>}Jeremiah 18:23);

and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth; the same with “grace and truth”, which are come by Christ, (^{<4017>}John 1:17); under the Old Testament, these were figured out by types and shadows; but not revealed clearly, as under the New Testament, to which this prophecy belongs. “Peace” may intend peace made with God by the blood of Christ; peace of conscience, which he gives, and arises from a sense of pardon and atonement by his blood, and justification by his righteousness; and all kind of spiritual welfare, prosperity, and happiness; of which there will be an abundance, especially in the latter days of the Messiah, (^{<3728>}Psalm 72:8). “Truth” may design the faithfulness of God, in fulfilling all his promises and prophecies concerning the Messiah, and salvation by him, and may stand opposed to the types and shadows of the old law; and include the Gospel, the word of truth, and all the doctrines of it; which are clearly and fully revealed by the spirit of truth, wisdom, and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ. Here begins the account of the great, mighty, and hidden things the

Lord promised to show the prophet, (^{283B}Jeremiah 33:3). The Targum of this last clause is,

“and I will reveal the gate of repentance unto them, and I will show them, how they shall walk in the way of peace and truth;”

and the Syriac version is,

“I will reveal unto them the paths of peace and faith;”

but the word here used signifies abundance, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe.

Ver. 7. *And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return*, etc.] Mention being made of the return of the captivity of Israel, or the ten tribes, as well as that of Judah, shows that this prophecy does not relate to the return of the Jews from their seventy years' captivity in Babylon; but is to be understood spiritually, of a release of the mystical and spiritual Israel of God from the captivity of sin, Satan, and the law, by the Messiah:

and will build them as at the first; in the latter day, as at the beginning or first times of the Gospel; when the temple of the Lord was built by Christ, as the chief master builder, and by his apostles under him, upon himself, the foundation of the apostles and prophets; he being the corner stone of it, whereby it became a habitation for God through the Spirit. Since that time, by means of heretics and false teachers, and especially by the man of sin, the tabernacle of David, or church of Christ, is greatly fallen into ruin, and needs rebuilding and repairing; and this will be done; and then it will be a beautiful structure, as at the first, or as it was in the times of the apostles; (see ^{445K}Acts 15:16).

Ver. 8. *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me*, etc.] Even by the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, of heart, lip, and life, in allusion to the purifications under the law, (^{610J}1 John 1:7); (see ^{372S}Ezekiel 36:25);

and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me; for Christ's sake, and through his stoning sacrifice, and upon the foot of full satisfaction made by him. A heap of words is here used, to express the fulness of pardoning grace through the blood of Christ, which reaches to all manner of sin; and this is

the great and peculiar blessing of the new covenant; (see ^{<2834>}Jeremiah 31:34).

Ver. 9. *And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise, and an honour,* etc.]

That is, the church and people of God, being redeemed and rebuilt by Christ, and being cleansed from their sins in his blood, and all their iniquities forgiven for his sake, would be a cause of joy to themselves and others, and bring joy, praise, and honour unto God: so the church, in the latter day, will be an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations, and a praise in the earth, (^{<2805>}Isaiah 60:15 62:7); and here they are said to be so,

before all the nations, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them; in redeeming them by the Messiah; calling them by his Spirit and grace; justifying them by the righteousness of Christ; pardoning their sins through his blood; making them meet for, and giving them a title to, eternal glory and happiness; all which would be made known, as it has been to the Gentiles, through the preaching of the Gospel; and which has occasioned joy and gladness among them, and praise and thanksgiving unto God, and which has redounded to his honour and glory:

and they shall fear and tremble, for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it; that is, they shall fear the Lord, and tremble at his word; not with a slavish, but filial fear, which is consistent with joy and gladness; and which fear will be influenced not by the terrors of the law, but by the goodness of God; being of the same nature with the fear of the converted Jews at the latter day, who will fear the Lord, and his goodness, (^{<2805>}Hosea 3:5); so the Gentiles, seeing and hearing of the goodness of God bestowed upon the believing Jews, will be solicitous for the same, and be encouraged to seek after it; and finding it, shall be engaged to fear the Lord, and worship him.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord, again there shall be heard in this place,* etc.] This is to be connected with the beginning of (^{<2831>}Jeremiah 33:11); and what follows to be put in a parenthesis:

which ye say [shall be] desolate without man and without beast: as in (^{<2833>}Jeremiah 32:43); the destruction of it being now certain and inevitable; and by which such desolation would be made throughout the country, that very few men or cattle would be left:

[even] in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate; as they were already, the country being in the hands of the

enemy, and the city almost depopulated by the sword, famine, and pestilence, and just about to be delivered up: and so

without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast; neither inhabited by man or beast; which is an hyperbolical exaggeration of the miserable condition of the city, and country; expressing the unbelief and despair of the Jews, at least of some of them, ever seeing better times: whereas, be it so, that this was or would be the case; yet here should be heard again, in the times of the Messiah, when he should appear in Judea, and his Gospel be preached there, from whence it should go into all the world, what follows:

Ver. 11. *The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness*, etc.] Such is the voice of the Gospel to all sensible sinners; whose eyes are opened to see their lost estate; whose ears are opened to hear the joyful sound: whose hearts are opened to attend to the things spoken in it; who are humble and contrite, wounded and broken in spirit, and have a spiritual understanding of things given them: to these the Gospel preached is glad tidings of great joy; since it contains in it the doctrines of peace and pardon through the blood of Christ; of justification through his righteousness; of rest in him, and salvation by him. It is a voice of joy and gladness to all believers in Christ; since hereby they hear of Christ whom they love; they hear of the love of God in him, and of the love of him to them; it is food to their souls; and when found, under the hearing of it, it is the joy and rejoicing of their hearts; and whereas they are continually sinning in thought, word, or deed, the doctrine of pardon must be joyful to them. Moreover, this may be meant of the voice of those that come to the church of God, with songs of joy and gladness, for electing, redeeming, calling, pardoning, and justifying grace; the voice of young converts, and of all them that rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh; (see ²³⁵⁰ Isaiah 35:10); and why may not the ordinance of singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, be included? since those are enjoined to be sung, and are sung in Gospel churches, (⁴¹⁵⁹ Ephesians 5:19 ⁵¹⁸⁶ Colossians 3:16);

the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; which, literally understood, is expressive of great joy and happiness; as the contrary signifies great calamity and distress; (see ²⁴⁷³ Jeremiah 7:34 ⁶⁸²³ Revelation 18:23). It may be understood of such who are in such a natural relation to one another; and yet their voice may intend their joining together in spiritual praise to God. Moreover, by the “bridegroom” may be meant

Christ, who has espoused his people to himself, and is their husband, and behaves as such towards them, in all tenderness, care, love, and affection; and his voice was heard in Judea's land as the bridegroom; John heard it, and rejoiced at it, and so did many others; (see ^{<4195>}Matthew 9:15) (^{<4199>}John 3:29); and the Gospel indeed is no other than his voice; and a soul quickening, soul comforting, and soul alluring, and charming voice it is. And by the "bride" may be meant the church, who is the bride, the Lamb's wife, being married to him; whose voice of prayer and praise to Christ, and of encouragement to sensible sinners, is heard in Zion, and is very desirable, (^{<2124>}Song of Solomon 2:14 ^{<6217>}Revelation 22:17);

the voice of them that shall say, praise the Lord of hosts; the husband of his church, and Redeemer of his people, and who is the sovereign Lord of all; the voice of such is heard, who stir up others to this work and service, and enforce it by the reasons following:

for the Lord [is] good; originally and essentially in himself, and the fountain of goodness to others; the good Head and Husband of his church; the good Samaritan: the good Shepherd of his sheep, and Saviour of his people:

for his mercy [endureth] for ever; it is from everlasting to everlasting; in his love and pity he has redeemed his church; and this is seen in his tender care of her, and will endure to eternal life: these words seem to be taken out of (^{<4946E>}Psalms 106:1 107:1,2 136:1); and were used by the Jews at the laying of the foundation of the second temple, (^{<4581E>}Ezra 3:11);

[and] of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord; the church of the living God, the materials of which are lively stones, or true believers in Christ; into which none should enter without an offering; and this should be a spiritual one, the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; which God has enjoined as well pleasing to him, because it glorifies him. This shows that this prophecy belongs to Gospel times; since no other sacrifice is mentioned as brought into the house of God but the sacrifice of praise. And remarkable is the note of Kimchi on this passage;

“he does not say a sin offering, or a trespass offering, because at this time there will be no ungodly persons and sinners among them, for they shall all know the Lord. And so our Rabbins of blessed memory say, all offerings shall cease in time to come (the times of the Messiah) but the sacrifice of praise;”

for I will cause to return the captivity of the land as at the first, saith the Lord: a release from spiritual captivity, or redemption by Christ; being the foundation of all solid joy, praise, and thanksgiving.

Ver. 12. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts,* etc.] Which phrase, or what is answerable to it, is often repeated, to give authority to what is said, and to command a belief of it:

again, in this place which is desolate; which was said to be so, (⁻²⁴³⁰Jeremiah 33:10 32:43); and indeed was so; and was near utter destruction, as to be

without man and without beast; both falling into the hands of the enemy; and that not in the city of Jerusalem only, but

in all the cities thereof; of the land of Judea; and from thence in other countries, even in Gentile ones:

shall be an habitation of shepherds, causing [their] flocks to lie down; which is expressive of great peace, no foreign enemy to make afraid or disturb the shepherds and their flocks; and of diligence and industry, plenty and prosperity; though this is to be understood not in a literal, but mystical sense. For by “shepherds” are meant the apostles of Christ, the first ministers of the Gospel, and pastors of churches, that should be first raised up in the land of Judea, and then sent into and spread in all the world; shepherds under Christ, of his raising, qualifying, and calling; to whom he gives a commission to feed his sheep and lambs; assigns them their distinct flocks, and gives them food to feed them with, and to whom they are accountable for those under their care, and the gifts bestowed upon them; and whose business lies in feeding the flock with the solid doctrines of the Gospel, by faithfully administering the ordinances, and in all directing to Christ, where they may find pasture; as also in ruling and governing according to the laws of Christ; in watching over the sheep that they go not astray, and in protecting and defending them from beasts of prey. By the “habitation” of these shepherds is meant the house of God, where the word is preached, and ordinances are administered; here are the shepherds’ tents, which, like the tents of Kedar, which were shepherds’ tents also, are mean and coarse without, but rich and beautiful within; and are like tents, movable from place to place; and it is the glory and happiness of a country where they are. And by “flocks”, or “flock”, for it is in the singular number, are meant the church of Christ, which is but one, the general assembly and

church of the firstborn written in heaven, and the several particular congregated churches; consisting of such persons as may be compared to sheep, being weak and timorous, meek and humble, harmless and inoffensive; of persons gathered out of the world, distinguished by the grace of God, and folded together in a Gospel church state; though but few, and despised of men, and persecuted, a little flock, and a flock of slaughter: these, by their shepherds, are made “to lie down” in a good fold at night, where they are safe and secure; these shepherds watch over them; angels encamp about them; salvation is walls and bulwarks to them; and God himself a wall of fire around them; and in the day they are made to lie down in the green pastures of the word and ordinances, where they have an abundance, a sufficiency of provisions; and at noon under the shadow of Christ, where they have rest, and where they are screened and sheltered from the heat of a fiery law, of Satan’s fiery darts, and of the world’s persecution.

Ver. 13. *In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south,* etc.] Into which three parts the land of Judea was divided; (see Gill on “²⁶³⁴Jeremiah 32:44”);

and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah; in the cities of the two tribes, of which Jerusalem was the metropolis; and which returned from the captivity, and settled here, and were in being when the Messiah came, here prophesied of, the great Shepherd of the sheep:

shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth [them], saith the Lord; alluding to the custom of shepherds telling their flocks, when they led them out of the fold in the morning, and when they put them in at evening^{f644}; or to the tithing of them, (⁸⁷²Leviticus 27:32); this is not to be understood literally, but mystically. So Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel interpret it of the Israelites going in and out under the hands of their king, that goes at the head of them; and the Targum, of the King Messiah, and who is no doubt meant. The elect of God, who are intended by the “flocks”, were in eternal election considered as sheep, and by that act of grace were distinguished from others; and so when an exact account was taken of them, their names were written in heaven, and in the Lamb’s book of life; and had this seal and mark put upon them, “the Lord knows them that are his”, (⁸¹⁹2 Timothy 2:19); also in the gift of them to Christ; in the covenant of grace, when they were brought into the bond of that covenant,

they were likewise considered as sheep, distinct from others; and were told into the hands of Christ, where they are kept, and who has a most perfect knowledge of them; and in the effectual calling they will again pass under his hands; they are then as sheep that had gone astray, returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls; and when they are separated from others, and special knowledge is taken of them, and Christ's mark, the sanctification of the Spirit, is put upon them; and at the last day, when Christ shall deliver them up to the Father, he will say, lo, I and the children, or sheep, whom thou hast given me; and they will all be numbered, and not one will be wanting.

Ver. 14. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”^{f645}; future times are respected; yet such as would quickly come; five or six hundred years more, and then would be fulfilled what is after promised. This is ushered in with a “behold”, as being a matter of importance, and deserving attention, and even as calling for admiration. This is the principal of the great and mighty things the Lord promised to show to the prophet, (^{233B}Jeremiah 33:3); even the coming of the Messiah, and what concerns his person and office:

that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah; or, “that good word”^{f646}; that gracious word concerning Christ and salvation by him; that mercy promised to the fathers; that good thing that came out of Nazareth: the good Shepherd that laid down his life for the sheep, preferable to the shepherds before spoken of: or rather, “that best word”^{f647}; the positive used for the superlative, as frequent in the Hebrew language. Many good words or promises are made before, concerning the spiritual welfare and prosperity of the church; but this is the best of all; this is the better thing provided for saints under the Gospel dispensation, and promised to them, who are meant by the houses of Judah and Israel; for these phrases, as the Jews themselves allow, show that the words belong to the times of the Messiah; and which God, that is true and cannot lie, and who is faithful, that has promised, and is able to perform, will do.

Ver. 15. *In those days, and at that time*, etc.] In those very selfsame days before spoken of; in those days to come, and which were hastening on; in the fulness of time, agreed on between Jehovah and his Son; the appointed, fixed, determined time:

will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; not Zerubbabel, but the Messiah; who is not only a branch of David's family, and therefore said to grow up unto him, being of his seed, his son, and offspring; but a Branch of righteousness, or a righteous Branch; perfectly righteous in himself, and the author of righteousness unto others; which cannot be said of Zerubbabel, or of any other branch springing from David but the Messiah; and of him the Targum interprets it, paraphrasing it thus,

“the Messiah of righteousness;”

and Kimchi's note is,

“this is the King Messiah;”

and so it is by other Jewish writers^{f648} interpreted of him:

and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land; judgment upon the blind Pharisees given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and upon the world, and the prince of it, who was cast out by him; and though he came not at first to judge the world and all the individuals of it, as he will do at his second coming; yet all judgment, rule, and government of his church, is committed to him by his Father; and he is on the throne to order and establish it with judgment, and to overrule all things for the good of it, and his own and his Father's glory: and he has “wrought” out an everlasting “righteousness”, agreeably to law and justice, for the justification of his people; for which reason he and they have the name in (²⁴³¹⁶Jeremiah 33:16).

Ver. 16. *In those days shall Judah be saved*, etc.] The elect of God among the Jews; and all such who are Jews inwardly, who truly believe in Christ, and confess his name, and praise him, and give him the glory or salvation. Judah signifies one that confesses or praises the Lord; such shall be saved from sin, Satan, the law, wrath, hell, and damnation, by the Branch of righteousness, the Messiah; who was raised up and sent to be a Saviour; came into the world for this purpose; has obtained salvation for his people; is the Captain and author of it; nor is it in any other; hence his name is called Jesus; and this salvation is to be had from him at all times; as in those days in which it was first wrought out, so throughout the whole Gospel dispensation: for “now is the day of salvation”, (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 6:2); and indeed this is to be understood, not as exclusive of the Old Testament dispensation, when believers were saved by the same Lord Jesus as we are; only this is expressive of the impetration of this salvation by the

incarnate Saviour; and of the more clear discovery and revelation of it; and of the application of it to a greater number of persons; and which is sure to all the spiritual seed of Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, who “shall be saved” with an everlasting salvation: it is not said they “may” be saved, but they “shall” be saved; not may be saved if they will; or, however, this is not left on such a precarious footing; but they are made willing to be saved by Christ in the day of his power, yea, they are already saved:

and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; the inhabitants of it; such who are come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; these being saved by Christ, are in the utmost safety; they have nothing to fear from the justice of God, that is satisfied; nor from the law, that is fulfilled; nor from their enemies, they are conquered and destroyed; God is pacified towards them; is the God of peace with them; and they have peace with him, and enjoy great serenity and tranquillity of mind; and must needs dwell safely, since Jehovah is around them as the mountains around Jerusalem; Christ is their strong hold, into which they run and are safe; the Holy Spirit within them is greater and mightier than their enemies in the world; angels encamp about them, and salvation is walls and bulwarks to them:

and this [is the name] wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our righteousness; the same with the Messiah’s name, (²³¹⁶Jeremiah 23:6); he is Jehovah; and he is our righteousness; the author of it, by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and which becomes ours by being wrought out for us, bestowed on us, imputed and applied to us. The Targum renders it here, as in the other place,

“this is the name wherewith they shall call him;”

and so the Vulgate Latin version; but this is contrary to the Hebrew text, which has “her”, and not “him”. R. Joseph Kimchi reads it, “and this who calls her [is] the Lord our righteousness”; which is followed by some Christian writers^{f649}. Some interpret it, who calls her by his Gospel to the salvation promised and performed; others, who calls her to dwell safely; others render it, “this [is the name] with which he [the Lord] shall call him, for her”, for the sake of the church, the Lord our righteousness^{f650}; but David Kimchi and Ben Melech take the sense to be this,

“the holy blessed God shall call Jerusalem the Lord our righteousness;”

and certain it is that this is the name imposed on the church here meant, as Hephzibah and Beulah, in (²³³⁴Isaiah 62:4); and why may she not be as well called “Jehovah Tzidhenu”, the Lord our righteousness, as “Jehovah Shammah”, the Lord is there? (³⁸⁸⁵Ezekiel 48:35). She is called “Jehovah”, not as deified by him, but as united to him; and our “righteousness”, as justified by him. Christ and his church are one, as head and members are; and therefore are called by the same name: hence the church is called Christ, (⁴⁶¹²1 Corinthians 12:12); they are in a marriage relation; Christ is the husband, and the church is his spouse; and as husband and wife bear the same name, so do Christ and his church; moreover, not only Christ is made righteousness to his people, but they are made the righteousness of God in him; his righteousness is put upon them, and imputed to them, so that they are righteous as he is righteous, (⁴⁰³³1 Corinthians 1:30 ⁴⁷²¹2 Corinthians 5:21 ⁴¹¹⁷1 John 3:7).

Ver. 17. *For thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Confirming the above promise concerning the Messiah; giving a reason why his coming may be expected; and why the salvation, justification, and final perseverance of his church and people, are certain things, and to be depended upon:

David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; or, “there shall not be cut off unto David a man”^{f651}; and this is not to be understood of the temporal kingdom of David, which has been at an end long ago: Jeconiah, that was carried captive into Babylon, was written childless, and left no issue; and Zerubbabel, the only one of David’s seed that made any figure after the captivity, was not a king; this is only true of the man Christ Jesus, of the seed of David, and is his son, to whom has been given the throne of his father David; and who reigns over the house of Jacob for ever; and of whose kingdom there is no end, (⁴⁰¹³Luke 1:32,33); and as long as he is King of saints, which will be for ever, David will not want a man to sit upon his throne. David’s earthly kingdom was but a typical and shadowy one; a type of Christ’s spiritual kingdom, which has succeeded it, and in which Christ is David’s son and successor, and whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

Ver. 18. *Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me*, etc.] The Levitical priesthood has been abolished long ago; that was typical of Christ’s priesthood, and is succeeded by it; who is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek; and who, having offered up himself a sacrifice here on earth for his people, ever appears in heaven, in the presence of

God, on their behalf, making intercession for them; and as long as he continues to do so, which will be always, a man shall not be wanting before the Lord:

to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually; that is, to present that sacrifice before him, and plead the efficacy and virtue of it with him, which was typified by all those sacrifices, and has superseded them, being much better than they. Some understand this of a continuance of Gospel ministers unto the end of the world, who succeeded the priests and Levites; but as they are never called priests and Levites in the New Testament; nor were they properly the successors of the priests and Levites; rather it may be applied unto all believers now, who are priests unto God, and offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ; but the first sense is best.

Ver. 19. *And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah*, etc.] For the further explanation and confirmation of what is before said; and which came at the same time as the other; this being not a new prophecy, but an illustration of the former:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 20. *Thus saith the Lord, if you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night*, etc.] The same with the ordinances of the sun, moon, and stars, (²⁸¹⁵Jeremiah 31:35,36); the original constitution and law of nature, settled from the beginning of the world, and observed ever since, in the constant revolution of day and night; and which was formed into a covenant and promise to Noah, after the deluge, that day and night should not cease, as long as the earth remained, (⁰⁰⁸²Genesis 8:22); and which has never been, nor can be, broken and made void: so

that there should not be day and night in their season; or turn; continually succeeding each other: this, as it would not be attempted, so could never be effected by any mortals, if it were.

Ver. 21. [*Then*] *may also my covenant be broken with David my servant*, etc.] A type of the Messiah, with whom the covenant of grace is made, stands fast, and will never be broken; (see ¹⁸⁰⁸Psalms 89:3,28,34); for, as the other is impossible, the breaking of the covenant with day and night, or hindering the certain rotation of them; so likewise as impossible is the breaking of the covenant with David concerning the perpetuity of his kingdom in the Messiah:

that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; which he has in Christ, and ever will have; for he shall reign for ever and ever:

and with the Levites my priests, my ministers; of the line of Phinehas, to whom an everlasting priesthood was promised, and which has been fulfilled in Christ, who has an unchangeable priesthood; a priesthood that will never pass from him, and go to another; (see ^{<42513>}Numbers 25:13) (^{<30724>}Hebrews 7:24).

Ver. 22. *As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured*, etc.] As the stars of heaven are innumerable, and the sand of the sea immeasurable:

so will I multiply the seed of David my servant; the Messiah; the son and antitype of David; and who is often called by his name; and as the son of David is the servant of the Lord, his spiritual seed are meant, which shall endure for ever; and in Gospel times, especially in the latter part of them, shall be very numerous; (see ^{<3829>}Psalms 89:29,36);

and the Levites that minister unto me; meaning the same as before; not ministers of the Gospel, for they never were, or will be, so numerous as here expressed; but true believers in Christ, who are all priests unto God, and minister in holy things, offering up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise through Christ: these Levites are the same with the seed of David, or Christ, in whom the kingdom and the priesthood are united.

Ver. 23. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah*, etc.] Upon the same subject, concerning the continuance of David's seed; with a refutation of a calumny uttered against the Lord about the rejection of them:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 24. *Considerest thou not what this people have spoken*, etc.] The words are directed to the prophet by an interrogation, if he had not considered in his mind what he heard the people say; not the Chaldeans, with whom the prophet was not; but the unbelieving Jews, either the profane part of them, who had a wicked view in it, to accuse God, and discourage the godly; or the weaker sort of the good people, indulging unbelief and despondency:

saying, the two families which the Lord had chosen, he hath even cast them off? the kingdom and the priesthood, as Jarchi; the family of David and the family of Aaron, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; the, one with respect to the kingdom, and the other with respect to the priesthood; so Abarbinel, which seems right: though some interpret it of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; and others of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; but since the covenant with David, and with the priests, are before spoken of, and the seed of David afterwards, it seems rather to regard the two houses of David and Aaron, which the Lord chose for the kingdom and priesthood to continue in; but by the captivity of the royal family, and of the priests in Babylon, just now about to take place, it was suggested that both were cast off by the Lord, and that there would be no more kings out of the one, nor priests out of the other:

thus they have despised my people: as being rejected of God, whom he would never more regard or restore to their former condition in church and state; so giving them up for lost, that they would be no more a nation and church, having kings to reign over them, or priests to minister for them:

that they should be no more a nation before them; either before their kings and priests, or in the sight of those persons who spoke the words before related.

Ver. 25. *Thus saith the Lord,* etc.] In answer to the above calumny:

if my covenant [be] not with day and night; that is, if it should not stand; if it should be broken; or there should be no longer a succession of day and night:

[and if] I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; concerning the course of the sun, moon, and stars, and the influence of the heavenly bodies; and concerning the fruits of the earth, the seasons of the year, seedtime and harvest, summer and winter; if these are not settled and fixed, and do not appear according to appointment and promise.

Ver. 26. *Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant,* etc.] R. Jonah thinks that Jacob is put instead of Aaron, because of the two families of David and Aaron before mentioned; but in this latter part of the chapter no mention is made of priests at all; and by the “seed” is meant one and the same, the spiritual seed of Christ, the antitypical David, and servant of the Lord; and which are no other than the seed of Jacob, over whom the Messiah reigns; or the spiritual Israel of God, whether Jews or Gentiles,

and whom the Lord never casts away, so as to perish; but they shall all be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: (see Gill on “~~26137~~Jeremiah 31:37”); and even the seed of Jacob, and of David, who was of Jacob, in the line of Judah, shall not be in such sense rejected:

[so] that I will not take [any] of his seed [to be] rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that is, any of the seed of David taken literally; from whom the Lord has taken one, or raised up one of his seed, even the Messiah, to be a ruler over all the spiritual seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; or of all that tread in their steps: but inasmuch as by the seed of Jacob and David may be meant the spiritual seed of Christ, by rulers taken from them may be intended spiritual rulers and governors of the church, or ministers of the Gospel:

for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them; not only their captivity from Babylon, and so the family of David restored and continued till the Messiah should spring out of it; but the spiritual captivity of the Israel of God, of which the other was a type, and would be brought about by the Messiah; who in his love and pity should redeem them, as he has, from sin, Satan, law, hell, and death.

CHAPTER 34

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 34

In this chapter is a prophecy of the taking and burning of Jerusalem; of the captivity of Zedekiah king of Judah; and of the destruction of the whole land, because of their breach of covenant to let servants go free. The time of this prophecy is observed, (^{2841D}Jeremiah 34:1,6,7); the taking and burning of the city, (^{2841B}Jeremiah 34:2); the carrying captive the king, who yet should not die a violent death, but in peace, and should have an honourable funeral, (^{2841B}Jeremiah 34:3-5); the covenant the king, princes, and people entered into, to let their servants go free, according to the law of God, which was at first observed, and afterwards retracted, (^{2841B}Jeremiah 34:8-11); which conduct is taken notice of and resented, (^{2841B}Jeremiah 34:13-16); and they are threatened with the sore judgments of God, sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity, the king, princes, priests, and people; and with the destruction, not on of Jerusalem, but of the rest of the cities of Judah, (^{2841F}Jeremiah 34:17-22).

Ver. 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord*, etc.] This prophecy came to Jeremiah, and was delivered by him, when he was at liberty, and before his imprisonment, and was the occasion of it, as appears from (^{2841D}Jeremiah 32:2-5); compared with (^{2841D}Jeremiah 34:2,3); the prophecies not standing in the proper order in which they were given out; for the prophecy, in this first part of the chapter at least, was delivered out before that in the thirty second chapter:

when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem; when this mighty monarch appeared before Jerusalem with a numerous army, consisting of Chaldeans, the natives of his own kingdom, and with the auxiliary troops of each the kingdoms he had subdued and made tributary to him, even people of almost every nation under the heavens; and invested it, and laid siege to it, and lay against it:

and against all the cities thereof; the rest of the cities of Judah, which were as daughters of Jerusalem, the metropolis or mother city:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel*, etc.] Who, though the covenant God of Israel, yet provoked by their sins, sends the following message to their king:

go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him: alone; and tell it to no other but him, at least at present; the message being more peculiar to him, and must, had it been told to the people, been very disheartening to them:

behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire; (see ^{248B}Jeremiah 32:3); which was exactly accomplished, (^{248B}Jeremiah 52:13).

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt not escape out of his hand*, etc.] Though he would, and did attempt to do it, (^{248B}Jeremiah 52:8,9);

but shall surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; he was taken on the plains of Jericho, and delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon at Riblah; as may be seen in the place just referred to:

and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon; and that was all; for they were quickly put out by him:

and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon; (see ^{248B}Jeremiah 32:3 52:9,11).

Ver. 4. *Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah*, etc.] Which, though a king, he ought to hearken to; and, besides, what follows was for comfort, being a mitigation of his sentence, and containing in it mercy, as well as judgment:

thus saith the Lord of thee, thou shalt not die by the sword: of the king of Babylon; or a violent death; and therefore fear not to deliver up thyself and city into his hands; which he might be twelfth to do, fearing he would put him to death immediately.

Ver. 5. [*But*] *thou shalt die in peace*, etc.] Upon his bed, a natural death, and in good friendship with the king of Babylon; and, it may be, in peace with God; for before his death, some time in his captivity, he might be brought to true repentance for his sins:

and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee: so shall they burn [odours] for thee. The sense is, that he should have an honourable burial; and that sweet odours and spices should be burned for him, as were for the kings of Judah his predecessors, particularly Asa, (~~4464~~ 2 Chronicles 16:14). Josephus says ^{f652}, that Nebuchadnezzar buried him in a royal manner; though this seems to refer to what the people of the Jews in Babylon would do in honour of him, by burning for him. The Rabbins say, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech observe, that they burned their beds and ministering vessels, or household goods ^{f653}, as was usual on such occasions. The Talmudist ^{f654} say, all this honour was done him for that single act of ordering Jeremiah to be taken out of the dungeon; for this was done honour to persons: so, when Gamaliel the elder died, Onkelos the proselyte burned for him seventy Tyrian pounds ^{f655}; not such a quantity of money, but goods that were worth so much; and this was a custom with the Heathens, who used to burn the bodies of the dead, to burn their garments with them, and their armour, and whatever were valuable and esteemed of by them life; and particularly odoriferous things, as frankincense, saffron, myrrh, spikenard, cassia, and cinnamon ^{f656}; and which seem to be meant here, by comparing the passage with the case of Asa before mentioned; for though the word “odours” is not in the text, it seems rightly enough supplied by us, as it is by other interpreters ^{f657}. The Vulgate Latin version very wrongly translates it, “and shall burn thee”; for it was not the manner of the Jews to burn the bodies of the dead, but to inter them in the earth; and so Tacitus ^{f658} observes, it was the custom of the Jews not to burn, but after the manner of the Egyptians to bury in the earth nor does it appear to have been the custom of the Babylonians or Chaldeans, as should seem from the account that is given of the death and burial of the Babylonian monarch in (~~2344~~ Isaiah 14:4-11);

and they will lament, [saying], Ah lord! alas! our lord the king is dead. The form of lamentation said over him, as the Jews record ^{f659}, was,

“alas! King Zedekiah, who is dead, drank the dregs of all ages;”

was punished for the sins of men in all generations past:

for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord; both that which respects his captivity, and that which refers to his death; the manner of it, and his honourable interment, which shall be accomplished.

Ver. 6. *Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words,* etc.] The threatening, as well as the consolatory ones; he kept back no part of the message he was sent with, but faithfully delivered the whole:

unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem; though he knew it would displease him, and bring himself into trouble, as it did; for upon this he was put into prison.

Ver. 7. *When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem,* etc.] Had laid close siege to it, and still continued it:

and against all the cities of Judah that were left; unconquered by him; when he invaded the land, he fought against, and took, and ravished all the cities that lay in his way; and it seems there were none that stood out against him but Jerusalem, now besieged by him, and two others, next mentioned:

against Lachish, and against Azekah; for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah; two cities that had been fortified by Rehoboam, (^{<4100>}2 Chronicles 11:9); and were the only ones besides Jerusalem, which as yet had not fallen into the hands of the king of Babylon.

Ver. 8. [*This is*] *the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord,* etc.] Here begins a new prophecy, which was delivered some time after the former; that was given out while the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem; this after he had quitted the siege for a while, and was gone to meet the king of Egypt, who was coming to the relief of the city, as appears from (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 34:21,22); though the Jews^{f660} say this was delivered in the seventh year of Zedekiah, in the first month, and tenth day of the month; at the same time that the elders of Israel came to Ezekiel, to inquire of the Lord by him, (^{<2500>}Ezekiel 20:1); which was two years before the king of Babylon came against Jerusalem; but this seems not likely. It is said to be

after that the King Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people that [were] at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them; not unto the people, or to themselves, the king and the people; unless the sense is, that the king and the people entered into an agreement among themselves to make proclamation, that liberty would be granted by them to their servants; for the liberty proclaimed was to the servants, and not to them. This seems to confirm it, that it was while the city was besieged that this covenant was made; since it was made only with the people at Jerusalem, which were pent up in it; for otherwise it would in all probability have been made with

all the people of the land; and seems to have been done with this view, to obtain this favour of the Lord, that they might gain their freedom from the enemy, and come not under the yoke and into the servitude of the king of Babylon: and very probable it is that they did not do this of their own accord, but were exhorted to it by Jeremiah; who perhaps, among other sins, had reproved them for the breach of the law respecting the liberty of servants.

Ver. 9. *That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, [being] an Hebrew, or an Hebrewess, go free, etc.*] This is the proclamation that was agreed to be made, that every manservant and maidservant, that serve six years an apprenticeship, should be freed from their servitude, according to the law in (⁴²⁰Exodus 21:1,2); a law founded upon justice and equity, mercy and compassion; done for the honour of the Jewish nation, that they might be a free people, and in commemoration of their deliverance from their servitude in Egypt. This law, as it seems, had been long neglected, and servants had been retained in bondage beyond their due time, through the oppression and covetousness of their masters, and the neglect of the civil magistrates; who should have took care that such a law was put in execution, and that servants were not oppressed. Some have thought that it was at the beginning of the sabbatical year that this proclamation was made, when, according to the law, there should be a release of servants, (⁶⁵⁰Deuteronomy 15:1); but that was not a release of servants, but of debts; for if a servant had not served out his time, the sabbatical year, or year of release, did not discharge him; though the year of jubilee did, according to Maimonides^{f661}, who says,

“if the year of release happens in any of the six years, he (the servant) serves in it; but if the year of jubilee happens within the time, even though he has been sold but one year before it, he is free;”

that none should serve himself of them, [to wit], of a Jew his brother; or cause them to serve him, oblige them against their will to continue in his service; or by any means avail himself of them, and receive to himself any profit or advantage by their service, they being Jews and brethren; which seems to be added, both as the reason of the law, because they were brethren of the same nation and religion with them, and to distinguish them from other servants, who notwithstanding this law might be retained as such.

Ver. 10. *Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant,* etc.] The king had made with the people. Here the princes are mentioned, who were not before, but included in the people; they and the rest of the people are here meant, who having agreed to the covenant,

heard that everyone should let his manservant, and everyone his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more; or any longer, which they had done, contrary to law: when they understood that this was the sum of the covenant they had entered into, and this the intent of the proclamation they agreed unto; or when they heard the law read and explained by the prophet, concerning the manumission of the Hebrew servants, when the time of their servitude was expired,

then they obeyed, and let [them] go; dismissed them from their service, in obedience to the law of God, agreeably to their own covenant, and the proclamation of liberty they assented to. The whole might be rendered thus, “and all the princes and all the people obeyed, which had entered into the covenant, to let everyone his manservant, and everyone his maidservant, go free, not to serve themselves of them any more, and they obeyed, [I say], to let [them] go”; so far they did well, and were praiseworthy, that they kept the law of God, and their own covenant.

Ver. 11. *But afterwards they turned,* etc.] From the law of God, and their own agreement, and returned to their former usage of their servants; they changed their minds and measures. This seems to be done, when the king of Babylon, hearing the king of Egypt was coming to break up the siege of Jerusalem, quitted it, and went forth to meet him, as appears from (^{<3B2>}Jeremiah 34:21 37:5); the Jews now finding themselves at liberty, and out of danger as they imagined, wickedly rebelled against the law of God; perfidiously broke their own covenant, repenting of what they had done, and returned to their former ways of oppression and cruelty; which shows they were not hearty and sincere in their covenant:

and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids; which was done by force, contrary to the will of their servants and handmaids, and in violation of the law of God, and their own solemn oath and covenant.

Ver. 12. *Therefore the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord,* etc.] The word of Jehovah the Son, from Jehovah the Father, because of this transgression of the princes and people, and as soon as it was committed by them; for it is plain, from (^{<262>}Jeremiah 34:21), that it was before the Chaldean army returned to Jerusalem, after its departure from it: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel,* etc.] The covenant God of Israel, their Creator, Redeemer, and Benefactor:

I made a covenant with your fathers; gave them a system of laws, among which was that of release of servants:

in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt; that is, at that time, quickly after, when they were come to Mount Sinai; this shows what fathers are meant, the Jewish ancestors that came out of Egypt, brought from thence by the mighty hand of God, and indulged with many favours by him, both in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan, where he brought and settled them:

out of the house of bondmen; where they were bondmen, servants, and slaves: this is mentioned, to put them in mind of their former state and condition; to observe unto them the foundation and ground of the law concerning servants, how equitable and merciful it was, and to aggravate their sin; who though their fathers had been bondmen, and they must have been so too, had they not been released, yet acted such a cruel part to their servants, who were their brethren, in not discharging them in due time:

saying; giving out the following law, as a part of the covenant made with their fathers.

Ver. 14. *At the end of seven years,* etc.] Not when seven years were elapsed and fully completed; but within the compass of seven years, or as soon as the seventh year was began; for this term of seven years is the term of the seventh year coming in, and not going out, as appears from the law itself, (^{<127>}Exodus 21:9); and from an after clause in this verse, “when he hath served thee six years”; at the end of which, and the beginning of the seventh: and so Maimonides^{f662} interprets this law,

“he whom the sanhedrim sold served six years from the day of his sale, and at the beginning of the seventh year he was free.”

though the Vulgate Latin version very wrongly renders it, “when seven years are completed”; which version Sanctius takes a good deal of pains to reconcile to the original law. A Hebrew might sell himself for more years than six; he might sell himself for ten or twelve, as the above Jewish writer says, and nothing could release him but the year of jubilee; and that would do it, if he had served but one year^{f663};

let ye go every man his brother, an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; or, “hath sold himself unto thee”^{f664}; to be a servant; for money was not given with apprentices to their masters, as is usual with us; but masters gave money for their servants, and bought them either of themselves, or of the magistrates; hence it is said, “if thou buy an Hebrew servant”, etc. (⁽¹²⁾Exodus 21:2). A Hebrew servant was sold either against his will, or with it; if a man committed a theft, and he had not wherewith to make restoration, the sanhedrim or magistrates said him: if he was exceeding poor, the law gave him liberty to sell himself; but he might not sell himself as long as he had anything left, even a covering; and after that was gone, he might sell himself; and he was bought with silver or the value of silver or by contract or bond^{f665};

and when he hath served thee six years, thou shall let him go free from thee; or “from with thee”^{f666}; from being with thee, from being in thy house, as well as from being in thy service; he was to be dismissed, so as to go where he pleased, and work for himself, or another, as he thought fit;

but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear; to obey the laws of God, and particularly this concerning servants. This is not to be understood of the fathers with whom the covenant was first made, and to whom this law was first given; but their posterity in later times, who yet lived long before the present generation, and so might with great propriety be called their fathers; and by which it appears that this law had been long neglected.

Ver. 15. *And ye were now turned*, etc.] Or, “today indeed ye were turned”^{f667} some little time ago, indeed, it must be owned, that ye turned from the evil ways of your fathers, for which you were to be commended, as having acted a better part than they:

and had done right in my sight; what was acceptable to the Lord, approved of by him, being agreeably to his law; and it would have been well if they had continued so doing:

in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; for a manservant, or maidservant, was his neighbour, and to be treated as such, and loved as himself, especially a Hebrew one, of the same nation and religion; and not to be used as a slave, or retained for ever in bondage:

and ye made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name; this circumstance is mentioned as an aggravation of the breach of the covenant they had made, to dismiss their servants according to law; it was made in a very solemn manner, in the presence of God, appealing to him as a witness; it was done in the temple, a sacred place, devoted to him and his worship; which was called by his name, the temple of the Lord, and where his name was called upon, and where were the symbols of his presence.

Ver. 16. *But ye turned and polluted my name*, etc.] Changed their minds, and turned from their resolutions they had entered into, and the good ways they were walking in, and returned to their former evil practices; and so polluted the name of God by taking it in vain, and breaking the covenant they had agreed to:

and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at pleasure: or, “according to their soul”^{f668}; according to their souls’ desire, what was very agreeable and acceptable to them, and gave them a real pleasure; which did not last long, since they caused them

to return to their former service and bondage under them:

and brought them into subjection: forced them to come back to their houses, and into their service, and be subject to them, and obey their commands as formerly:

to be unto you for servants and for handmaids; to do the business of such, as they had done before.

Ver. 17. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*, etc.] This being the case, and this their crime, which was provoking to the Lord;

ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty everyone to his brother, and everyone to his neighbour; for though they did proclaim liberty, they did not act according to it; they did not give the liberty they proclaimed, at least they did not continue so to do; as soon almost as they

had granted the favour, they took it away again; and because they did not persevere in well doing, it is reckoned by the Lord as not done at all:

behold, I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord; or rather against them; he dismissed them from his service, care, and protection, and consigned them to other lords and masters: he gave them up

to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; to rule over them; and gave them liberty to make havoc of them, and destroy them, that what was left by the one might be seized on by the other:

and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth: or, “for a commotion”^{f669}; to be moved, and wander from place to place in great fear and terror, not knowing where to settle or live comfortably. This was a liberty to go about in foreign countries where they could, for relief and shelter, being banished from their own land; but this was a liberty very miserable and uncomfortable; and indeed no other than captivity and bondage; and so it is threatened that what remained of them, who were not destroyed with the sword of the Chaldeans, or perished not by pestilence and famine, should be carried captive, and be miserable vagabonds in each of the kingdoms and nations of the world.

Ver. 18. *And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant*, etc.] The covenant the king, princes, and all the people made, to let their servants go free, is called the Lord’s covenant, because made in his name, in his presence, and before him as a witness; and very probably the calf that was cut in pieces on this occasion, after mentioned, was sacrificed to him, which made him a party concerned; unless this is to be understood of the covenant of God in general made with Israel on Mount Sinai; and so is distinct from the other covenant, which may be more especially designed in the next clause:

which have not performed the words of the covenant made before me; did not perform what they promised to do in the presence of the Lord, as in (²³⁴¹⁵Jeremiah 34:15);

when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof; which was a rite or custom used in making and confirming covenants; a calf, or some other creature, were cut in pieces, and the parts laid in order, and the covenantees passed between these parts; signifying thereby, that if they did not fulfil the engagements they entered into, they imprecated to be cut to pieces as that creature was. Some footsteps of this practice are to be

seen as early as the times of Abraham, (¹¹⁵⁹Genesis 15:9,10,17); upon which place Jarchi observes, that it was the way of making a covenant to divide a beast, and pass between the parts of it; and this custom obtained among the Chaldeans, Greeks, and Romans; or what was very similar to it. Cyril^{f670} says this custom was by the Chaldeans, who might take it from Abraham. A people called Molotti had something of this kind among them: for they confirmed the covenants they swore to by cutting oxen into little pieces^{f671}; and Homer seems to have a respect to such a practice when he says that the priest, after he had prayed to Apollo, slew the sacrifice, and flayed it, and cut it in pieces, making duplicates^{f672}, alike to one another. Cicero^{f673} is thought to have the same custom in view; and likewise Virgil^{f674}, when he speaks of the covenant made between Romulus and Tatius king of the Sabines, whom he represents as standing armed before the altar of Jupiter, holding caps, and joining in covenant by killing a swine, and cutting it in pieces; in like manner Livy^{f675} describes the covenant made between the Romans and Albanians, when the herald at arms, reciting the conditions, called aloud

““hear, O Jupiter”, etc.”

if the Roman people first fail in observing these,

“strike them as I now strike this hog; and so much the more, as thou art more able and mighty;”

which being said, he struck it with a flint stone; hence the phrase, “ferire foedus”, to strike or make a covenant; and, in allusion to the above custom, making a covenant is commonly called, in the Old Testament, “cutting a covenant”. Some versions, as the Syriac interpreter, render it, “I will make the men as the calf they cut in twain”, etc. they shall be cut in pieces as that is; (see ¹¹⁶¹Matthew 24:51).

Ver. 19. *The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem*, etc.] Here is a particular enumeration of the persons that had made the covenant, and transgressed it, and that should suffer for so doing; the princes of Judah, distinguished from the princes of Jerusalem, design such princes as lived without Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, and presided over them, though now at Jerusalem, having fled thither, upon the invasion of the king of Babylon, for their safety; as the princes of Jerusalem, or the magistrates of that city, are distinguished from the princes of the blood, and from the courtiers, both in this and (¹¹⁶²Jeremiah 34:21);

the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land; that is, as many as had got into Jerusalem to secure themselves from the common enemy: the “priests” also were concerned herein, who had menservants, and maidservants, as well as others; and, besides, were persons doubtless concerned in drawing up the covenant and the form of an oath, as well as in slaying the sacrifice, and cutting it into pieces, and laying the parts in order: it is more surprising that there should be “eunuchs” here; that such should be in the court of the king of Judah, and have offices in it, and preside in them, as among the Gentiles. The Targum renders the word “princes”:

which passed between the parts of the calf; signifying their assent to the covenant, and wishing they might be so used if they broke it.

Ver. 20. *I will even give them into the hand of their enemies*, etc.] The Chaldeans, who were the enemies of the Jews, that were come from a far country to invade, dispossess, ravage, and plunder them; and what can be a greater punishment than to be given up into an enemy’s hand, to be in his power, and at his mercy?

and into the hand of them that seek their life; not their wealth and substance only, but their lives also; nothing less will content them:

and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth; not only such should be the cruelty of their enemies that sought their lives, that they should slay them with the sword, and give them no quarter; but such their inhumanity, that they should not suffer their carcasses to be buried, but leave them exposed to birds and beasts of prey; of the princes of Judah, (see ⁻²⁶²⁰⁻Jeremiah 52:10).

Ver. 21. *And Zedekiah king of Judah, and his princes*, etc.] These were either the princes of the blood, the sons of Zedekiah, and his nobles and courtiers, as distinct from the princes in (⁻²⁶⁴⁹⁻Jeremiah 34:19); these shall not be spared, neither the king, nor his sons, nor those of the privy council: but those

will I give I to the hands of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life; as in (⁻²⁶⁴⁰⁻Jeremiah 34:20);

and into the hand of the king of Babylon’s army; or, “even into the hand”¹⁶⁷⁶ etc. and so this is an explanation of the former, and shows who

their enemies were, and those that sought their life. The accomplishment of this may be seen in (²⁶¹⁹Jeremiah 52:9-11);

which are gone up from you; departed from Jerusalem, as the Chaldean army did upon hearing that Pharaoh king of Egypt was marching with his army to raise the siege of Jerusalem; upon which they left it, and went forth to meet him; and this encouraged the wicked Jews to break their covenant, and reduce their servants to bondage again, they had let go free; (see ²⁶¹⁶Jeremiah 37:5).

Ver. 22. *Behold, I will command, saith the Lord, and cause them to return to this city*, etc.] The Lord of hosts, or armies, was “Generalissimo” of Nebuchadnezzar’s army, had it at his command, and could direct it as he pleased, and order it to march and countermarch as he thought fit: it was under the direction of his providence that it departed from Jerusalem, to try the inhabitants of it; and now, by a secret instinct, he would so powerfully work upon it, and by the ordering of external causes so manage it, that it should return to Jerusalem again, and carry on the siege with redoubled rigour:

and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire; they fought against it by shooting arrows from their bows, casting stones from their engines, and by beating down the walls with their battering rams; with which making breaches, they entered in and took the city; and burnt the temple, palaces, and other houses, with fire; of all which see the accomplishment in (²⁶¹⁴Jeremiah 52:4,7,13);

and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant: many of them were already; the king of Babylon having taken, ravaged, and plundered them before he came to Jerusalem; and whither the inhabitants of them, that escaped the sword, fled for security; and others of them, that were not, now should be made desolate upon the taking of Jerusalem, as Lachish and Azekah, (²⁶¹¹Jeremiah 34:7); which should fall into the hands of the enemy, and the inhabitants thereof be forced to flee into other countries, or would be carried captive; so that they would be without any, or have but few to dwell in them.

CHAPTER 35

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 35

In this chapter the disobedience of the people of the Jews unto God is aggravated by the obedience of the Rechabites to their father; and the one are threatened with the judgments of God upon them, and the other have a promise of the divine blessing. The time of this prophecy is observed; (^{2451D}Jeremiah 35:1); an order to bring the Rechabites into one of the chambers of the temple, which was done accordingly, (^{2451D}Jeremiah 35:2-4); wine is set before them to drink; which they refuse; alleging the command of their father to the contrary, (^{2451E}Jeremiah 35:5-7); which they had carefully and constantly obeyed in every part of it, excepting that which respects their dwelling in tents; for which they give a reason, (^{2451B}Jeremiah 35:8-11); by this instance of filial obedience to parents, the disobedience of the Jews towards their Father, which is in heaven, is aggravated; who, though he gave them laws and commandments, and sent his prophets to put them in mind of them, and exhort them to obedience, yet hearkened not to them, (^{2451D}Jeremiah 35:12-15); wherefore the Lord threatens to bring all the evil on them he had pronounced, (^{2451E}Jeremiah 35:16,17); and promises the sons of Rechab that there should be always some of them that should minister unto him, (^{2451B}Jeremiah 35:18,19).

Ver. 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord*, etc.] Not as following the former prophecies; for they must be delivered seventeen years after this. The prophecies of Jeremiah are not put together in their proper time in which they were delivered. The preceding prophecies were delivered in the “tenth” and “eleventh” years of Zedekiah’s reign: but this

in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; in what part of his reign is not certain; but it must be after Nebuchadnezzar had invaded the land, (^{2451D}Jeremiah 35:11); very probably in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, after he had been the king of Babylon’s servant three years, and rebelled against him, (^{1220E}2 Kings 24:1,2);

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Go unto the house of the Rechabites*, etc.] Or “family”,^{f677}; these are the same with the Kenites, who descended from Hobab or Jethro, Moses’s father in law, (^{<0016>}Judges 1:16 4:11 ^{<0025>}1 Chronicles 2:55); these, as their ancestors, became proselytes to Israel, and always continued with them, though a distinct people from them; these here had their name from Rechab, a famous man in his time among those people:

and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the Lord; into the temple; for they were worshippers of the true God, though foreigners and uncircumcised persons; and so might be admitted into places belonging to the temple:

into one of the chambers; of the temple, where there were many; some for the sanhedrim to sit in; others for the priests to lay up their garments and the vessels of the sanctuary in; and others for the prophets and their disciples to converse in together about religious matters:

and give them wine to drink; set it before them, and invite them to drink of it, and thereby try their steady obedience to their father’s commands. Now this family was brought to the temple either in vision, as it seemed to the prophet; or really, which latter is most probable; and that for this reason, that this affair might be transacted publicly, and many might be witnesses of it, and take the rebuke given by it; and, as some think, to reproach the priests for their intemperance.

Ver. 3. *Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniyah*, etc.] Who was, no doubt, the most famous and leading man in this family:

and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites; the several branches of the family, especially the males; the women perhaps only excepted; whom it might not be so decent to gather together on such an occasion, to drink wine; or at least offer it to them.

Ver. 4. *And I brought them into the house of the Lord*, etc.] Into the temple, as he was ordered; that is, he invited them thither, and they came along with him, having, no doubt, a respect for him as a prophet; and the rather, as it is highly probable he came in the name of the Lord to them:

into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God; a prophet, as the Targum and Syriac version; and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it. This must be understood of Hanan, and not Igdaliah, as the

accents show: he is thought by some to be the same with Hanani the seer, in the times of Asa, (^{<4407>}2 Chronicles 16:7);

which [was] by the chamber of the princes; these were not the princes of the blood, the sons of Jehoiachim; their chambers or apartments were not in the temple, but in the royal palace; but these were the princes or rulers of the people, as they are called, (^{<4048>}Acts 4:8); the sanhedrim, whose this chamber was, as Dr. Lightfoot^{f678} has observed:

which [was] above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door: a porter, whose chamber or lodge was under that in which the sanhedrim sat. The Targum calls him a treasurer; one of the seven “amarcalim”, who had the keys of several chambers, where the vessels of the sanctuary and other things were put; and Kimchi observes, the word we render door comprehends the vessels of the sanctuary, and the vessels of wine, and other things.

Ver. 5. *And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups*, etc.] Which the prophet might have out of the chambers where these vessels were, and particularly from Maaseiah, if he was a keeper of them, as before observed. The number of men gathered together was probably very large; and therefore pots, or large vessels of wine, were prepared, and set before them, and cups, lesser vessels, to drink out of:

and I said unto them, drink ye wine; he invited them to it, and bid them welcome; nay, more, he might not only encourage, but enjoin them to drink it; though, as Gataker observes, he does not say unto them, “thus saith the Lord, drink wine”; for then they must have done it, and doubtless would; since it is right to obey God rather than man, even parents.

Ver. 6. *But they said, we will drink no wine*, etc.] Or “we do not drink wine”^{f679}; we are not used to it; we never do drink any; it is not lawful for us to do it; nor will we, let who will solicit us:

for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father; not their immediate father, but their progenitor; perhaps the same Jonadab is meant who lived in the times of Jehu, and rode with him in his chariot; by which it appears he was a man of note and figure, and who lived near three hundred years before this time, (^{<4205>}2 Kings 10:15); which is more likely than that he should be a descendant of his, and the proper father of the present Rechabites, which is the opinion of Scaliger^{f680}:

commanded us, saying, ye shall drink no wine, [neither ye], nor your sons, for ever; as long as any of them were in the world. What was the reason of this command, and of what follows, is not easy to say; whether it was to prevent quarrels and contentions, luxury and sensuality; or to inure them to hardships; or to put them in remembrance that they were but strangers in the land in which they lived; or to retain them in the original course of life their ancestors had lived in, feeding cattle; be it what it will, these his sons thought themselves under obligations to observe it; and perhaps finding, by experience, it was for their good so to do.

Ver. 7. *Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have [any],* etc.] That is, they were not to build houses, sow seed, or plant vineyards, for themselves, for their own profit and advantage; nor possess either of these through purchase or gift: all this was enjoined them, partly because they were strangers in the land of Israel, as is suggested in the latter part of the verse, and so were to have no inheritance in it; and partly because the pastoral life was what their ancestors had lived; and therefore Jonadab was desirous it should be continued in his posterity; as well as because by this means they would live not envied by the Israelites, among whom they were; since they did not covet to get any part of their possessions into their hands; as also these being their circumstances, upon any public calamity, as sword, famine, or pestilence, they could more easily remove to other places; and likewise, by observing these rules, would not be liable to some sins, as drunkenness, worldly mindedness, etc. which are often the cause of great calamities. The Essenes, a sect among the Jews afterwards, seem in some things to have copied after these Rechabites:

but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; which they could move from place to place, for the convenience of pasture for the cattle, the business they were brought up in, and were always to exercise:

that ye may live many days in the land where ye [be] strangers; for they were not Israelites, as before observed, but Kenites, the descendants of Jethro; they were proselytes of the gate only; and now, partly on account of their obedience to parents, which had annexed to it the promise of long life in the land in which they lived; and partly because they would, by such a course of life, give no umbrage to, nor raise any jealousy in, the minds of the inhabitants of it, they might expect a continuance in it.

Ver. 8. *Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father,* etc.] The above was the charge he gave them; and this, in every

article of it, they had carefully and constantly kept, though it had been for the space of three hundred years, or thereabout; as follows:

in all he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; which was the first of the precepts he gave them: and which they were now tempted to disregard, but were resolved to observe it, as they had hitherto done. The rest of the articles follow.

Ver. 9. *Nor build houses for us to dwell in*, etc.] This explains that part of the charge more fully, which respects building of houses; which did not restrain them from building houses for others, if any of them were masters of that art; which is not very likely, since they were wholly brought up in the field as shepherds; but it forbade them building any for themselves, and making use of them by dwelling in them:

neither have we vineyard, nor field, or seed; any piece of ground planted with vines, or field sown with corn, or any seed to sow with; so exactly conformable were they to the prescriptions of their ancestor. Diodorus Siculus^{f681} reports of the Nabatheans, a people of Arabia, descended from Nebaioth, (see ⁻²³⁰⁷Isaiah 60:7); that they have several laws which are much the same with those enjoined the Rechabites; for he says,

“it is a law with them not to sow corn, nor to plant any plant that bears fruit, nor to make use of wine, nor to build houses; and whosoever is found doing any of these things is, reckoned worthy of death; and the reason of their having such a law is, because they think that those who possess such things are easily compelled by men in power to do whatever is commanded them, for the sake of the enjoyment of them.”

Ver. 10. *But we have dwelt in tents*, etc.] Ever since, until very lately, when they had taken up their dwelling in Jerusalem; the reason of which is presently given:

and have obeyed, and done according to all Jonadab our father commanded us; and should it be objected, that in one point they had not obeyed, in that they had left their tents, and now dwelt in Jerusalem; they had this to say in answer to it, and as the reason of their so doing, as follows:

Ver. 11. *But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land*, etc.] Into the land of Judea to invade it, which was in the

reign of Jehoiakim, in the fourth year of it, after he had served him three years, and rebelled against him; (see Gill on “²⁸⁵Jeremiah 35:1”);

that we said, come, and let us go to Jerusalem; they said one to another, let us not stay here to be destroyed by a foreign enemy; but let us go to Jerusalem, a fortified city, where we may be safe:

for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians; for Nebuchadnezzar’s army in this expedition consisted of Chaldeans and Syrians, and of other nations, (¹²¹⁰2 Kings 24:2);

so we dwell at Jerusalem; for the present. It seems as though this was quickly after Nebuchadnezzar’s incursion, and when he was but just departed; so that their fears had not wholly subsided; and they, as yet, had not returned to their tents, and former manner of living; hence it appears that the Rechabites did not look upon this command of their father as equal to a divine precept, which must be always obeyed; but that in case of necessity it might be dispensed with, and especially when in danger of life, and when human prudence required it; and in which case the lawgiver himself would have dispensed with it, had he been on the spot.

Ver. 12. *Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah*, etc.] After the Rechabites had been tried whether they would break the command of their father, respecting drinking of wine; and steadfastly persisted in their resolution not to drink, urging the reason of it, and vindicating their conduct in another respect:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] The Lord of armies in heaven and earth; the Creator of Israel; their benefactor, covenant God and Father and whom they professed to worship; God and not man; infinitely greater than Jonadab, whose precepts had been observed by his posterity:

go and tell the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; this is an order to the prophet to remove from the chamber where he was with the Rechabites, and go to the court of the people, where they were assembled for worship; or into the city of Jerusalem, and gather the heads of them together, and declare the following things to them:

will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the Lord; from this instance and case of the Rechabites, who had so constantly obeyed their father, and hearkened to his words, though but a man; a father of their flesh; an earthly father; and who had been dead long ago; and therefore much more ought they to hearken to the Father of their spirits; their Father which is in heaven, and who lives for ever.

Ver. 14. *The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed,* etc.] That article particularly, respecting drinking wine, has been carefully observed; which, though so agreeable to the nature of man, what cheers the heart of God and man, and was not prohibited them by any law of God; yet, being forbidden by their father, they abstained from it:

for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment; though prescribed them three hundred years ago; during all which time they had punctually observed it, even to that very day; which might with great truth and strictness be said; since they had that very day refused to drink any:

notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early, and speaking; who am the eternal God; the King of kings; the great Lawgiver, able to save and to destroy; who had spoken to them, and given them laws as soon as they were a people, very early, in the times of Moses, on Mount Sinai and Horeb; and of which they had been reminded time after time, and enforced by proper arguments and motives; whereas the command of Jonadab was that of a mere man, not above three hundred years ago, and of which his posterity had never been put in mind, but as it was handed down from father to son; and this they constantly observed:

but ye hearkened not unto me; so that their disobedience was greatly aggravated.

Ver. 15. *I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets,* etc.] One after another, ever since the times of Moses, to explain and enforce the laws given; a circumstance not to be observed in the case of the Rechabites; who yet, without such intimations, kept the charge their father gave them:

rising up early, and sending [them]; (see ²⁰⁷³Jeremiah 7:13 11:7);

saying, return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them; all which were of a moral nature, and what were in themselves just and fit to be done; that they should repent of their sins, refrain from them, and reform their lives, and abstain from idolatry, and worship the one only living and true God, which was but their reasonable service; whereas abstinence from wine, enjoined the Rechabites, was an indifferent thing, neither morally good nor evil; and yet they obeyed their father in it, and when they had not that advantage by it, as is next promised these people:

and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: a land flowing with milk and honey; and in which they might build houses, plant vineyards, sow fields, and possess them; which the Rechabites might not do:

but ye have not inclined your ear, and hearkened unto me; they did not listen to his precepts, nor obey them; they would not so much as give them the hearing, and much less the doing.

Ver. 16. *Because the son of Jonadab the son of Rechab,* etc.] Here we have the contrast between the Rechabites and the Israelites; the obedience of the one, and the disobedience of the other; the design of which is to aggravate and expose the sin of the Jews, since the former

have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; that particular commandment of not drinking wine, which they had never once violated in such a course of time; nor could they now be prevailed upon, even by the prophet himself, to do it:

but this people hath not hearkened unto me; the Lord their God, their father that bought them, made them, and established them. Gross ingratitude! (⁴⁵¹⁶Deuteronomy 32:6).

Ver. 17. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] Provoked by such ill usage:

behold, I will bring upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the evil that I have pronounced against them: which Abarbinel interprets of all the threatenings and curses in the law and the prophets respecting the Jews, until the times of Jeremiah; though it may more especially intend the evil, God by him had pronounced upon them;

namely, that the Chaldean army should come into their land, besiege Jerusalem, and take it, and carry captive its inhabitants:

because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered; he spoke to them by his prophets, he called to them in his providences, and took every method to warn them of their sin and danger, and bring them to repentance and reformation; but all to no purpose. The Targum is,

“because I sent unto them all my servants the prophets, but they obeyed not; and they prophesied to them, but they returned not.”

Ver. 18. *And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites,* etc.] To the family of them, to those that were with him in the temple, and while they were there; and what he said to them, which is as follows, was by the order and direction of the Lord:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; he uses the same titles, when speaking to them, as to the Jews, expressive of his sovereignty, power, and grace:

because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father; that particular command concerning not drinking wine:

and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; all the rest, as well as that; though they were many, they took notice of them, and observed them; they kept them in their minds and memory, and made them the rule of their actions, and conformed to them in all respects.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] Who has enjoined children obedience to their parents, and has promised to reward it, and does:

Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever; which may be understood of a long time, of ages to come; or as long as the people of the Jews were a people, or the world should stand, the posterity of this man should continue: or, “a man shall not be cut off from Jonadab etc.”^{f682}; his offspring shall never fail. It is certain that some of this family returned from the captivity, (^{<125>}1 Chronicles 2:55); and, according to Scaliger^{f683}, the Hasidaeans sprung from them. And, if any credit could be given to Benjamin Tudelensis, there were Rechabites in the twelfth

century, since the times of Christ; for he tells^{f684} us, that in his travels he found a place where Jews dwelt, who were called Rechabites. The phrase, “to stand before me”, is by the Targum paraphrased,

“ministering before me;”

serving and worshipping God, for they were religious people; that is, in their own families, carrying on religious worship among themselves, and not in the temple, where they had no office, and did no service; though some think they had, because called scribes, (~~105~~1 Chronicles 2:55). Kimchi says that some of their Rabbins asserted that the daughters of these people married priests, and so some of their children’s children offered sacrifice on the altar. And if what Eusebius reports from Hegesippus is true, there were priests of this family after the times of Christ; for he says^{f685}, that when the Jews were stoning James the just, a priest of the sons of Rechab cried out, saying, stop, what are ye doing? but these testimonies are not to be depended on; however, we may be sure of this, that the promise of God shall not fail, but be certainly accomplished. Very appropriate are the words of the learned Altin^{f686} upon this subject:

“not only the Lord promises length of life to the obedient, which proselytes, equally with Israelites, have the promise of; but, particularly, that the posterity of Jonadab should not perish, should have a place in the church of God, and an admission to the gracious enjoyment of God; not as priests and Levites, but as other Israelites and strangers, (~~2604~~Isaiah 56:4,7); so that the posterity of Jonadab must still continue, and hope of restoration of them with the Israelites remains; as in (~~2436~~Jeremiah 31:36,37); but in the same way and manner; so that being equally sharers in exile, they are to be restored after a long interruption. Indeed, the family is not at this day known; but from the ignorance of men, to the denial of a thing, there is no available argument. Families cannot be confounded, since they descend by the fathers; mothers do not belong to them; and as is the father as to tribe, so also is the son and grandson, and so on. A genealogical series may perish from the knowledge of men, but not from the nature of things, and the knowledge of God. Though the seeds of wheat, barley, and other things, may be mixed together, that men cannot distinguish them, yet their distinction does not perish; and God not only knows it, but also discovers it,

when he makes every seed to rise in its own body, (~~4:157~~ 1
Corinthians 15:37,38); so must we judge concerning families.”

Perhaps, since these Rechabites were proselytes, and not Israelites, the conversion of the Gentiles may be respected; who are priests in a spiritual sense, and minister before the Lord, offering up, through Christ, the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise; and such a generation to serve the Lord will never be wanting.

CHAPTER 36

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 36

This chapter gives an account of an impious action of King Jehoiakim's burning the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies read unto him, and the consequence of it. The order to write this roll, the time when, the contents and use of it, are in (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 36:1-3); the writing of it by Baruch, the order of the prophet to read it to the people on such a day, with the view he had in so doing, (²⁸⁹⁴Jeremiah 36:4-7); the reading of it by Baruch to the people first, (²⁸⁹⁸Jeremiah 36:8-10); then to the princes, being sent for by them, upon a report made to them, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 36:11-15); the king being acquainted with it, Jehudi was sent to fetch the roll, who read it to the king, (²⁸⁹⁶Jeremiah 36:16-21); who having heard part of it, burnt it, notwithstanding the intercession of some of his princes to the contrary, (²⁸⁹²Jeremiah 36:22-25); and who also ordered the apprehension of Jeremiah and Baruch, who could not be found, (²⁸⁹⁶Jeremiah 36:26); upon this a new roll is ordered to be written, (²⁸⁹⁷Jeremiah 36:27,28); which was done with some additions to it, respecting the destruction of the land, and the people in it, by the Chaldeans; and particularly the death of the king, and his want of burial, (²⁸⁹³Jeremiah 36:29-32).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah,* etc.] Eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem:

[that] this word came unto Jeremiah from the Lord; the following order to write in a roll all his prophecies he had hitherto delivered:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Take thee a roll of a book,* etc.] A roll of parchment, which being wrote on, and rolled up, was called a book; but books, in those times, did not consist of leaves cut and stitched together, and bound up, as our books are, but sheets of parchments being written upon, were glued together, and then rolled up; hence such writings were called volumes; which name we still retain, and give to books, though the same practice is not used:

and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah; for though Israel was carried captive before the times of Jeremiah, and his prophecies were chiefly directed against Judah; yet as there were some of the ten tribes mixed with them, they were included in these prophecies, and therefore mentioned:

and against all the nations; such as Egypt, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, (^{-249B5}Jeremiah 9:26);

from the day that I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day; that is, from the time the Lord called him to prophesy in his name, which was in, the thirteenth year of Josiah, who reigned one and thirty years; and this being the fourth year of Jehoiakim, it must be the three and twentieth year of his prophesying, and the a course of full two and twenty years; (see ^{-240D2}Jeremiah 1:2 25:3); now all the sermons, discourses, and prophecies, he had delivered out against one and another, during this time, must all be written in one roll or book, that that they might be read. Kimchi says their Rabbins^{f687} would have it that this roll was the book of the Lamentations, called by them “Megallah”, or roll.

Ver. 3. *It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them*, etc.] Not that there was any uncertainty in God as to the knowledge of future events, any more than a change in his purposes: he had purposed to bring evil upon them, which purpose would not be disannulled; and he knew that the Jews would not hearken to the prediction of it, or be concerned about it, and repent of their sins, and reform; but this method he was pleased to take, as being, humanly speaking, a probable one to awaken their attention, and which would leave them inexcusable:

that they may return every man from his evil way; repent of it, and reform:

that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin; by not inflicting on them the punishment and ruin threatened: where repentance is, remission of sin is likewise, and both are the gifts of divine grace, when spiritual and evangelical.

Ver. 4. *Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah*, etc.] One of his disciples, and whom he had before made use of in the purchase of a field of his uncle’s son, and to whom he gave the evidence of the purchase, (^{-249D2}Jeremiah 32:12); he was probably a better penman than the prophet, or

a quicker writer; however, he thought proper, for quicker dispatch, to make use of him as his amanuensis:

and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book; it seems that Jeremiah had not committed any of his prophecies to writing; and yet it cannot be thought that by the mere strength of memory he could repeat every discourse and prophecy he had delivered in the space of two and twenty years; wherefore it must be concluded, that that same Spirit, which first dictated the prophecies to him, brought them fresh to his memory; so that he could readily repeat them to Baruch, who took them down in writing on a roll of parchment.

Ver. 5. *And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I [am] shut up,* etc.] In prison, according to Jarchi; but this is not likely, for then there would have been no occasion for an order to take him, (^{287b}Jeremiah 36:26). Grotius thinks he was obliged by the king's order to stay at home; possibly he might be restrained by the Spirit of God, or had not freedom in his own mind to go abroad; there might be a restraint, an impulse upon his spirit, by the Spirit of God. Some think he was under some legal pollution, which made him unfit to go into the temple: for it follows:

I cannot go into the house of the Lord: labouring either under some bodily infirmity, or ceremonial defilement, or was forbidden by the king. What was the true cause is not certain; but so it was, that either he was discharged, or disabled, or disqualified, from going into the house of God.

Ver. 6. *Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth,* etc.] The roll being finished, Baruch is ordered to read it, which was the end of writing it: and since the prophet could not go himself, he sends another in his room, to read

the words of the Lord in the ears of the people, in the Lord's house, upon the fasting day; the day of atonement; the great fast, which was on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; and so a different time of reading from that in (^{287b}Jeremiah 36:9). This was a very proper time to read it in, when the people were fasting and humbling themselves before the Lord; though some think this was a fast proclaimed by Jehoiakim, to avert the vengeance threatened by the Chaldean army:

and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities; to keep the feast of tabernacles; as they did five days after the

fast, or day of atonement; and this seems to be the second reading of the roll enjoined.

Ver. 7. *It may be they will present their supplication before the Lord*, etc.] Or, “perhaps their supplication will fall”^{f688}; they will present it in an humble manner before him; alluding to the prostration of their bodies, and dejection of their countenances, in prayer:

and will return every man from his evil way; not only pray for mercy, but repent of sin, and reform; without which mercy is not to be expected:

for great [is] the anger and fury that the Lord hath pronounced against this people; a very sore judgment, no less than the utter destruction of their city, temple, and nation.

Ver. 8. *And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him*, etc.] Here follows Baruch’s obedience to the prophet’s commands; which he considered no doubt as the will of the Lord, who directed the prophet to give the orders he did; and which he punctually observed, in all respects, as to things, time, and place:

reading in the book the words of the Lord in the Lord’s house; the prophecies of Jeremiah, which came from the Lord, and which he had transcribed into a book from the mouth of the prophet; these he read before the people in the temple, a first, if not a second time, before the reading of it recorded in the following verses.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month*, etc.] This was a different time of reading the book from the former, enjoined by the prophet, and performed by Baruch, (²⁸⁸⁶Jeremiah 36:6,8); that was on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; this was in the fifth year of his reign, and in the ninth month of the year, a year and two months after the former, as it should seem; but Jehoiakim’s fifth year beginning in the seventh month after the day of atonement, this ninth month is to be reckoned not from the beginning of his fifth year, but from the beginning of the ecclesiastical year in the spring; so that this was but two months after the former reading:

[that] they proclaimed a fast before the Lord: this was not an ordinary fast, or a common annual one of divine appointment, which came in course, but an extraordinary one, upon some particular occasion. Some

think it was on account of the dearth, drought, and famine in the land, (²⁴⁴⁴Jeremiah 14:1); and others, which seems most likely, take it to be on account of the calamity threatened the nation by the Chaldean army. This fast was not in course, but was proclaimed by the order of the king and his council; and it may be at the request of the people, at least they, greed and consented to it, and indeed are represented in the text as the proclaimers; for so the word “they” is explained in the following clause, which should be rendered, not

to all the people, but even “all the people in Jerusalem”^{f689},

and all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem: these proclaimed the fast; they applied to the government for one, or however obeyed the king’s orders, and published and proclaimed a fast; not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but those who came from other cities on business, or for safety, or for worship.

Ver. 10. *Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the Lord*, etc.] The prophecies of Jeremiah he had taken from him in writing on a roll of parchment; these he read in the temple, in a part of it, after described:

in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe; not a scribe of the law, or an officer of the temple, but the king’s chancellor or secretary of state; for this is the title, not of Gemariah, who had a chamber in the temple here mentioned, in which Baruch read his roll, and was an officer there, but of Shaphan, as the accents show, and as his title runs elsewhere, (¹²²¹⁹2 Kings 22:9,10); which chamber was

in the higher court; it looked into it, which some say was the court of the priests; but into that Baruch, not being a priest, could not enter: rather, according to Dr. Lightfoot, it was the court of Israel, on the same ground with it, though parted from it, and divided from the court of the women by a wall, to which they went by an ascent of fifteen steps; so that it might with great propriety be called the higher court:

at the entry of the new gate of the Lord’s house; the eastern gate, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it: here Baruch read his roll,

in the ears of all the people; that were in the court; so that being in a chamber, he must read out of the chamber window, or in a balcony before it.

Ver. 11. *When Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan,* etc.] Who was present when Baruch read in the roll to the people in his father's chamber; but his father was absent, and was with the princes in the secretary's office at the same time, as (^{2BR2}Jeremiah 36:12) shows: the son seems to be a more religious man than the father, unless he was placed as a spy, to hear and see what he could: however, when he

had heard out of the book all the words of the Lord: which were spoken by the Lord to Jeremiah, and which Baruch read out of the book he had written in his hearing; for it is a vain conceit of Abarbinel, that Micaiah did not hear these words from the mouth of Baruch reading, but out of the book which he looked into; for then it would have been said, which he had "seen" or "read" out of the book, and not "heard".

Ver. 12. *Then he went down into the king's house,* etc.] The royal palace, which was not upon the mountain on which the temple stood, but lay lower, and therefore Micaiah is said to go down to it; with what design he went thither is not certain, whether out of ill will to Jeremiah and Baruch, or out of good will, being affected with what he had heard, and desirous that some steps might be taken by the government to prevent the calamities coming upon them, according to these prophecies; which latter seems most probable, since no charge or accusation is brought by him; and since his father, with others, to whom he gave the account afterwards, interceded with the king that the roll might not be burnt, (^{2BR2}Jeremiah 36:25); however, immediately after he had heard the roll read, he went to the king's house:

into the scribe's chamber; the secretary's office; formerly his grandfather Shaphan's, now Elishama's:

and, lo, all the princes sat there; some of them are mentioned by name:

[even] Elishama the scribe; or secretary; the prime minister, the principal secretary of state, and therefore named first, in whose chamber or office they were:

and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah; who this person was, or his office, is not known; he is nowhere else made mention of; and who his father was is not certain:

and Elnathan the son of Achbor; the same that Jehoiakim sent to Egypt to fetch Uriah from thence, (^{2BR2}Jeremiah 26:22);

and Gemariah the son of Shaphan: who was Micaiah's father, and in whose chamber Baruch read the roll:

and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah; of this prince also no account is given elsewhere:

and all the princes; the rest of them, who were either members of the great sanhedrim, or courtiers; it appears from hence that this court was very profane and irreligious; for though they had proclaimed a fast, to make a show of religion, or at the importunity of the people; yet they did not attend temple worship and service themselves, but were all together in the secretary's office, very probably about political affairs.

Ver. 13. *Then Micaiah declared all the words that he had heard*, etc.] The sum and substance of them; for it cannot be thought that he should retain in his memory every word that he had heard; though, as it is very probable he was much struck and affected with what he had heard, he might remember and declare a great deal of it:

when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people; and this he also declared, no doubt, that what he had heard, and then related, were read by Baruch out of a book; as is clear from the princes sending for Baruch, and ordering him to bring the roll along with him, as in (~~2884~~ Jeremiah 36:14).

Ver. 14. *Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi*, etc.] Who, according to Junius, was the king's apparitor: he is described by his descent,

the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi; him the princes sent, being not one of their body, but a servant at court:

to Baruch; who was very probably still in the temple, where Micaiah left him:

saying, take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come; that is, to the king's palace, to the secretary's office, where they were, and bring the roll along with him he had been reading to the people, and of which Micaiah had given them some account; and which had such an effect upon them, as to make them desirous of hearing it themselves;

so Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them; which showed great boldness and intrepidity in him, to go at once, without any hesitation, to court, and appear before the princes with his roll,

which contained things so very disagreeable to the king and his ministry; but as he had not been afraid to read it publicly before the people in the temple, so neither was he afraid to read it before the princes at court.

Ver. 15. *And they said unto him, sit down now*, etc.] Or, “pray sit down”^{f690}; they received him very courteously, and treated him with great humanity, and showed much respect to him, in beseeching him to sit down by them:

and read it in our ears; as he had done in the ears of the people, with an audible voice, clearly and distinctly, that they might be able to hear it, so as to understand it:

so Baruch read [it] in their ears; without any fear or dread, though in the king’s palace, and before an assembly of princes; nor did he excuse himself on account of weariness, having just read it to the people; or upbraided the princes with not being in the temple, where they might have heard it.

Ver. 16. *Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words*, etc.] In the roll or book read by Baruch; they heard them read patiently, which was what the king afterwards would not do:

they were afraid both one and another; both good and bad; for there were some of both sorts among them: or, “a man to his friend”^{f691}; they looked at one another, and knew not what to say to each other, as men amazed and astonished; they trembled at what they heard, the threatenings were so terrible, and the calamity threatened so great; and they consulted together what they should do with this roll, or what course they should take to avert the threatened vengeance, and particularly whether they should acquaint the king with it or not; and which they thought the safest and most prudent part to do:

and said unto Baruch, we will surely tell the king of all these words; this they said, not to terrify Baruch, or out of any ill will to him; but partly for their own security, lest they should incur the king’s displeasure, should he come to the knowledge of it any other way; and chiefly hoping it might have some effect upon him, to cause a reformation; though of this they were dubious, and rather feared it would exasperate him; and therefore desired that Baruch and Jeremiah would hide themselves, (²⁸³⁹Jeremiah 36:19); this was the sense of some of them, of those that were good men among them, and wished things were otherwise than they were.

Ver. 17. *And they asked Baruch,* etc.] The following question, which may seem at first sight an odd, needless, and trifling one, as some have called it:

saying, tell us now, how didst thou write all these words at his mouth? this question does not regard the manner of writing them, whether with ink or not, for that they could see with their eyes, and yet Baruch's answer seems to have respect to this, as if he so understood them; nor barely the matter of them, as whether it was the substance of what was contained in the roll that Jeremiah dictated, and that only, leaving it to Baruch to use what words he would, or whether the express words were dictated by him; but rather it seems to have regard to the possibility of doing it: by the question it appears, that Baruch had told the princes that the prophet had dictated all these things to him, and he had taken them down in writing from his mouth; now they wanted more satisfaction about the truth of this matter. It was a difficulty with them how it was possible for Jeremiah to recollect so many different discourses and prophecies, delivered at different times, and some many years ago, and so readily dictate them to Baruch, as fast as he could write them; wherefore they desire he would tell them plainly and faithfully the truth of the matter, how it was, that so they might, if they could, affirm it with certainty to the king; since, if this was really fact which he had related, these prophecies originally, and the fresh dictating of them, must be from the Spirit of God, and would certainly have their accomplishment.

Ver. 18. *Then Baruch answered them,* etc.] At once, without any hesitation, plainly and fully:

he pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth; that is, the Prophet Jeremiah delivered by word of mouth, not the substance only of this roll, but the express words of it, and everyone of them, and that clearly and distinctly, without any hesitation, or premeditation; by which it is plain it was by the Spirit of the Lord he did it; neither matter nor words were Baruch's, but were exactly as they were delivered:

and I wrote [them] with ink in the book; as they saw with their eyes, and which was the manner of writing with the Jews so early; Baruch had no further concern in this matter than to provide pen, ink, and parchment, and to make use of them as he did, just as the prophet dictated and directed him.

Ver. 19. *Then said the princes unto Baruch*, etc.] Being satisfied with his answer:

go hide thee, thou and Jeremiah, and let no man know where ye be. Some of these princes at least seem to be good men, and believed what was read to them, and had a value for the prophet and his scribe, and were concerned for their welfare; and knowing the furious temper of the king, and his little regard to the prophets; and fearing he would resent what had been so publicly read to the people, provided against the worst; and in point of prudence advised Baruch and his master to abscond, and not let anyone know, no, not their nearest friends, where they were, lest they should be betrayed; nor did they, the princes, desire to know themselves. Jeremiah might be in prison, as some have thought, at the first reading of the roll, which was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and be at liberty now, which was in the fifth year; (see ^{<2811>}Jeremiah 36:1,9).

Ver. 20. *And they went in to the king into the court*, etc.] The inner court, the king's court, where he usually resided; though very probably they did not rush in at once; but first sent to know whether the king could be spoke with, or would admit them, they having something to communicate to him; which they might do by the person in waiting, by whom they were introduced:

but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe; they did not take it with them, but left it in the secretary's office; and, no doubt, put it up safe in some chest or scrutoire, as something valuable, and not to be exposed to everyone; or to be thrown about, torn, or trampled on, as a book of no use and value: very probably it was with the consent of Baruch that it was left with them: and this was a point of prudence in them not to take it with them when they went to the king:

and told all the words in the ears of the king; that is, the sum and substance of them; for it cannot be thought they should remember every word in the roll; but the main of it they did, and rehearsed it in a very audible manner.

Ver. 21. *So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll*, etc.] The same person the princes sent to Baruch to come to them, and bring the roll with him, (^{<2814>}Jeremiah 36:14). This the king did, out of curiosity, and to satisfy himself of the truth of what the princes said; and by this it appears they had

told him of the roll, which contained what they had given him a summary of, and where it was:

and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber; or, “out of the chamber of Elishama the scribe”; who knew where it was, being present at the reading of it in the secretary's office, and saw where it was laid; or, however, was directed by the secretary where it was, and might have the key of the chest or scrutoire given him in which it was laid:

and Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes that stood by the king: as he doubtless was ordered; and which he did so loudly, clearly, and distinctly, that the king and all the princes could hear; which princes were those who had heard it before, and were come to the king to acquaint him with the substance of it; and who stood by the side of the king, or about him, in honour to him; though there might be also others besides them, who were before with the king, and waiting on him; and Abarbinel thinks that other princes distinct from those that went to the king are meant. When it is said that Jehudi read the roll in the hearing of the king and princes, it must be understood of a part of it only, and not the whole; as (^{<2B73>}Jeremiah 36:23) shows.

Ver. 22. *Now the king sat in the winter house, in the ninth month*, etc.] The month Cisleu, which answers to part of November, and part of December; and so was the midst of winter, and a proper time for the king to be in his winter house; though, as this was a fast day, it would have been more proper for him to have been at the worship of God in the temple, (^{<2B1D>}Jeremiah 36:9). This winter house probably was a winter parlour, as distinguished from a summer parlour, (^{<47B1>}Judges 3:20); and both might be under the same roof, or parts of the same house; only the one might be more airy and cool, and the other more close and warm. Kings had their summer and winter houses; (see ^{<41B5>}Amos 3:15); this circumstance is mentioned for the sake of what follows, the burning of the roll; and accounts for there being a fire at hand to do it:

and [there was a fire] on the hearth burning before him; there was a stove, or some such vessel or instrument, in which a large fire of wood was made, at which the king sat to keep himself warm while the roll was reading, and about which the princes stood.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves*, etc.] Either three or four of the breadths of parchment, which were

glued together, and rolled up; or three or four of the columns in those breadths. The meaning is, he had read a few of them. The Rabbins^{f692} would have it, that three or four verses in the book of the Lamentations are meant:

he cut it with the penknife; that is, he cut the roll to pieces with a penknife he had in his hand, or lay near him. It is difficult to say who it was that did this; whether Jehudi that read the roll, or Jehoiakim the king that heard it; most interpreters understand it of the latter; but the connection of the words carries it to the former; for the nearest antecedent to the relative he is Jehudi; though it is highly probable he did it at the king's command; or, however, saw by his countenance and behaviour that such an action would be grateful to him; and that he was highly displeased with what had been read, and could not hear any longer with patience:

and cast it into the fire that [was] on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that [was] on the hearth; that is, he cast it into the fire, and there let it lie, until it was wholly consumed; a very impious action, to burn the word of God; a full evidence of an ungodly mind; a clear proof of the enmity of the heart against God, and of its indignation against his word and servants; and yet a vain attempt to frustrate the divine predictions in it, or avert the judgments threatened; but the ready way to bring them on.

Ver. 24. *Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments*, etc.] They were not struck with horror at such an impious action as the burning of the roll; nor afraid of the judgments and wrath of God threatened in it; nor did they rend their garments in token of sorrow and mourning on account of either, as used to be when anything blasphemous was said or done, or any bad news were brought. The Jews from hence conclude, that whenever a man sees the book of the law torn or cut to pieces, he should rend his garments^{f693}. The persons here meant are not the princes that first heard the roll read in the secretary's office, for they were afraid, (²⁸⁶⁶Jeremiah 36:16); unless they now dissembled in the king's presence, or had shook off their fears; however, if they are included, three must be excepted, whose names are mentioned in (²⁸⁶⁵Jeremiah 36:25); and those who are more especially designed are expressed in the next clause:

[neither] the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words; not all that were in the roll, for they only heard a part; but all that were in that part, which was enough to make them fear and tremble; but they were

hardened in their sins; and by the hardness and impenitence of their hearts treasured up wrath against the day of wrath. These servants of the king seem to be those in waiting, and not the princes that came to him; however, they were not all of this complexion and character, since it follows:

Ver. 25. *Nevertheless, Elnathan, and Delaiah, and Gemariah,* etc.] Three of the five princes mentioned in (²⁸⁸²Jeremiah 36:12);

had made intercession to the king, that he would not burn the roll; or suffer it to be burnt; this they did either at first, as soon as the roll was brought, that if the king should not like it, yet they besought him that he would not destroy it; or rather when they saw what Jehudi was going to do with it, either by the express order, or at the connivance of the king; then they humbly entreated that such an action might not be done, which gave them a secret horror, though they might endeavour to hide it as much as possible:

but he would not hear them; or he would not receive it of them, as the Targum; that is, their supplication and intercession; but either cast the roll into the fire himself, or permitted Jehudi to do it; nor would he suffer it to be taken out till it was all consumed.

Ver. 26. *But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech,* etc.] Or, “the king’s son”, as the Targum; though it rather seems to be the proper name of a person, one of the king’s servants; since it is not probable he would send his own son on such an errand; and had he, he would rather have been called his own son than the king’s son; besides, Jeconiah, who succeeded him, seems to be his eldest son, and yet he now could not be more than twelve years of age; whereas this Jerahmeel must be a man grown; and had he been an elder son, as he must, he would have succeeded him, unless it can be thought that he died before his father:

and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; in order to bring them before the king, or to imprison them, or put them to death, for which they might have the king’s warrant; the one for prophesying, and the other for writing out and reading his prophecies; though Baruch may be called a scribe, not for being the amanuensis of Jeremiah; but because he was one of the scribes of the law, or doctors of the people:

but the Lord hid them; the princes advised them to hide themselves, and they did, very probably in a house of some of their friends; but this would not have been sufficient, had not the Lord took them under his protection; there was no doubt a special providence concerned for them; but by what means this preservation was is not known. Kimchi suggests that these messengers sought for them in the very place where they were, and could not find them; and conjectures that the Lord set darkness about them, or weakened the visive faculty of those that searched for them, that they could not see them.

Ver. 27. *Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah*, etc.] In the place where he was hid; the Lord knew where he was, for he hid him, and therefore could send his word to him:

after the king had burnt the roll; either with his own hands, or had ordered it to be burnt, or connived at the burning of it:

and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah; hence the Jews^{f694} gather, that when a man sees the book of the law burnt, that he is bound to rend his garments twice; once for the burning of the paper or parchment, and again for the burning of the writing; but no other is meant than the roll, in which the prophecies were written, Baruch took from the mouth of Jeremiah:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 28. *Take thee again another roll*, etc.] Or a piece of parchment; or rather several pieces of parchment glued or rolled up together:

and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burnt; just as when the two tables of the law were broken, two others were made, and the same laws written on them; and so here the same Spirit of God, which brought to the mind of the prophet all his former discourses and prophecies, so that he could readily dictate them to Baruch, could and did renew them again; wherefore Jehoiakim's burning of the roll signified nothing: all attempts to destroy the word of God are in vain; they always have been, and will be; for the word of the Lord endures for ever.

Ver. 29. *And thou shall say to Jehoiakim king of Judah*, etc.] Or, "concerning"^{f695} him; since the prophet was hid, and he was in quest of him; nor was it safe for him to appear in person before him; though this

may be understood as what should be put into the second roll, and in that he addressed to him:

thus saith the Lord, thou hast burnt this roll; or “that roll”; or had suffered or ordered it to be burnt, giving this as a reason for it:

saying, why hast thou therein written; what the king would have to be a great falsehood, and which he thought never came from the Lord; but was a device of Jeremiah, to whom he ascribed the writing of them, though it was Baruch’s, because dictated by him:

saying, the king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? by killing some, and carrying off others, so that the destruction should be complete. He takes no notice of himself and his family, as if his concern was only for the nation; and that he took it ill that anything should be said which expressed the ruin of that, and might dishearten the inhabitants of it.

Ver. 30. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, of Jehoiakim king of Judah,* etc.] Or, “concerning”^{f696} him; for Jehovah is not here said to be “the Lord of Jehoiakim”, though he was, being King of kings, and Lord of lords; but as speaking concerning him, and threatening him, as follows:

he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; that is, none of his issue that should reign after him, or succeed him in the throne of David and kingdom of Judah; for his son Jeconiah reigned but three months, which is reckoned as nothing, and could not be called sitting upon the throne; and, besides, was never confirmed by the king of Babylon, in whose power he was, and by whom he was carried captive; and Zedekiah, who followed, was not his lawful successor, was brother to Jehoiakim, and uncle to Jeconiah, and was set up by the king of Babylon in contempt of the latter; and as for Zerubbabel, he was no king, nor was there any of this family till the Messiah came:

and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. The sense is, he should have no burial but that of an ass, (²²²⁸Jeremiah 22:18,19); should be cast into a ditch, and be exposed to the heat of the sun in the daytime, and to nipping frosts at night, and so putrefy and become nauseous; and though the body would be insensible of it, yet would it be very reproachful to the character of a prince, and shocking to any to behold; and very disagreeable and dreadful for himself to hear and think of.

Ver. 31. *And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity*, etc.] In cutting the roll pieces, and burning it, as Abarbinel interprets it; which either was done by himself, or by his order, and with his connivance; and at which perhaps his sons were present, and expressed a pleasure in it; and his servants that stood by assented to it, excepting three; nor were they afraid of the judgments of God for it, nor in the least shocked at it, (^{2Rm2}Jeremiah 36:24,25); though this may be understood of all their iniquities they had been guilty of, the singular being put for the plural:

and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; the sword, famine, and pestilence; the destruction of their land, city, and temple; and their captivity in Babylon:

but they hearkened not; to what was said to them, neither in the first nor in the second roll.

Ver. 32. *Then took Jeremiah another roll*, etc.] Of parchment; several sheets joined together, which made up a roll or volume:

and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who was by office a public notary or scribe of the law, as well as the amanuensis of the prophet:

who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burnt in the fire; not one was lost; all were recovered again, through the fresh inspiration of the Holy Spirit, under which Jeremiah dictated the selfsame things in the same words to Baruch again; so that the king got nothing by burning it, but an addition of guilt, and a heavier denunciation of wrath and vengeance, as follows:

and there were added besides unto them many like words; of the same nature and argument, of the threatening kind more especially. The Rabbins^{f697}, who take the roll to be the book of Lamentations, very triflingly observe, that the first roll had only the three alphabets, in the first, second, and fourth chapters that the addition is the treble alphabet, in the third chapter the whole of the fifth chapter. Here it may not be amiss to insert the testimony of Eupolemus^{f698}, an Heathen historian, concerning Jeremiah and his prophecies in the times of Jehoiakim.

“Joachim, (for so he calls him,) in his times Jeremiah the prophet prophesied, being sent of God, to take the Jews sacrificing to a golden idol, called by them Baal, and to declare unto them the

calamity that was coming upon them; but Joachim would have laid hold on him, and burnt him alive; then he (the prophet) said that with those sticks they should prepare food for the Babylonians, and that they should dig canals from the Tigris and Euphrates when carried captive; wherefore, when Nebuchadnezzar king of the Babylonians heard what was prophesied by Jeremiah, he besought Astibares, king of the Medes, to join his forces with him; and having gathered and joined together the Babylonians and Medes, a hundred and eighty thousand foot, and a hundred and twenty thousand horse, with ten thousand chariots, first destroyed Samaria, Galilee, Scythopolis, and the Jews that inhabited Gilead; and then marched to Jerusalem, and took alive Joachim king of the Jews; and having taken out the gold, silver, and brass in the temple, sent it to Babylon, excepting the ark and the tables in it, for this remained with Jeremiah;”

compare with this (~~3078~~Jeremiah 22:18 25:1-27:22 ~~1241~~2 Kings 24:1-4).

CHAPTER 37

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 37

This chapter makes mention of the reign of Zedekiah, and what happened in it; of his message to Jeremiah, to pray for the kingdom; of the king of Babylonian's raising the siege of Jerusalem, on hearing the king of Egypt was coming to its relief; of the assurance the prophet gave that the Chaldean army would return again, and destroy the city; of the prophet's attempt to depart the city, his imprisonment, conversation with Zedekiah, and his clemency to him. A short account is given of Zedekiah, and of the disobedience of him and his people to the word of the Lord, (^{2450B}Jeremiah 37:1,2); of the message sent by him to the prophet to pray for them, (^{2450B}Jeremiah 37:3); the time, when Jeremiah was at liberty, and the siege of Jerusalem was raised, (^{2450B}Jeremiah 37:4,5); the prophet's answer to them from the Lord, assuring them the Chaldeans would return and burn the city, (^{2450B}Jeremiah 37:6-10); the prophet attempting to go out of the city is stopped, and charged as a deserter to the Chaldeans; is had before the princes, and beat and imprisoned, (^{24571B}Jeremiah 37:11-15); but the king sending for him out of prison, and having some private discourse with him, upon the prophet's expostulation and intercession, his confinement was mitigated, and bread allowed him, (^{24576B}Jeremiah 37:16-21).

Ver. 1. *And King Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned*, etc.] The brother of Jehoiakim, whose untimely death, and want of burial, are prophesied of in the preceding chapter. The name of Zedekiah was Mattaniah before he was king; his name was changed by the king of Babylon, who made him king, (^{12247B}2 Kings 24:17);

instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim: the same with Jehoiakim, or jeconiah, called Coniah by way of contempt; he reigned but three months, and so was not reckoned as a king, not being confirmed by the king of Babylon, but was carried captive by him, and his uncle placed in his stead:

whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah; to whom he became tributary, and swore homage and fealty, (^{14663B}2 Chronicles 36:13).

Ver. 2. *But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land,* etc.] The king, his courtiers and subjects the royal family, nobility, and common people; they were all degenerate and corrupt. Jarchi observes, that Jehoiakim was wicked, and his people righteous; and that Zedekiah was righteous, and his people wicked but he seems to found his character on that single action of taking Jeremiah out of prison; whereas, according to this account, king and people were all wicked: for neither one or other

did hearken unto the words of the Lord, which he spake by Jeremiah the prophet; neither those which were spoken in the former nor in the latter part of his reign, concerning the destruction of the city by the Chaldeans. This short count is given to show how just it was to give up such a prince and people to ruin.

Ver. 3. *And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest,* etc.] That is, Zephaniah the priest, as the accents shew; though his father Maaseiah was doubtless a priest too; according to the Syriac version, both Jehucal, called Jucal, (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 38:1); and Zephaniah, were priests; since it reads in the plural number, “priests”: these the king sent as messengers

to the Prophet Jeremiah, saying, pray now unto the Lord our God for us. This message was sent either upon the rumour of the Chaldeans coming against Jerusalem, as some think; or rather when it had departed from the city, and was gone to meet the army of the king of Egypt; so that this petition to the prophet was to pray that the king of Egypt alight get the victory over the Chaldean army, and that that might not return unto them. Thus wicked men will desire the prayers of good men in times of distress, when their words, their cautions, admonitions, exhortations, and prayers too, are despised by them at another time.

Ver. 4. *Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people,* etc.] Was at full liberty, and could go out of the city, and come in, when he pleased; or go into any part of it, and converse with the people, and prophesy to them; which he could not do in the latter part of Jehoiakim’s reign, who sent persons after him and Baruch to take them, and they were obliged to hide themselves, yea, the Lord hid them, (²⁴⁸¹Jeremiah 36:19,26); but now he was under no restraint, as least as yet:

for they had not put him into prison; not yet; they afterwards did, (²⁴⁷⁵Jeremiah 37:15).

Ver. 5. *Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt,* etc.] At the time the above message was sent to Jeremiah. Zedekiah, though he had took an oath of homage to the king of Babylon, rebelled against him, and entered into a league with the king of Egypt, to whom he sent for succour in his distress; and who, according to agreement, sent his army out of Egypt to break up the siege of Jerusalem; for though the king of Egypt came no more in person out of his land, after his defeat at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, (^{244D}Jeremiah 46:2 ^{1240E}2 Kings 24:7); yet he sent his army to the relief of Jerusalem:

and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem; which was in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign that they first besieged it, and is the time here referred to, (^{2490E}Jeremiah 39:1);

heard tidings of them; the Egyptian army, and of its coming out against them; the rumour of which might be spread by the Jews themselves, to intimidate them; or which might come to them by spies they had in all parts to give them intelligence of what was doing; and what they had was good and certain, and on which they acted:

they departed from Jerusalem: not through fear, but to meet the Egyptian army, and give them battle, before they could be joined by any considerable force of the Jews. It was at this time the covenant was broken about the manumission of servants, (^{2490E}Jeremiah 34:10); which conduct ill agrees with their desire of the prophet's prayer.

Ver. 6. *Then came the word of the Lord unto the Prophet Jeremiah,* etc.] At the time when the messengers came to him from the king to pray for them; for (^{2450E}Jeremiah 37:4,5) are to be included in a parenthesis:

saying; as follows: which is an answer to the messengers.

Ver. 7. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel,* etc.] Which are the usual titles and characters the Lord takes to himself, when he spake by the prophet; (see ^{2484E}Jeremiah 34:2,13);

thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me, to inquire of me; in an oracular way; for by this it seems that they were not only sent to desire the prophet to pray for them, but to obtain an oracle from the Lord, confirming it to them, that the Chaldean army which was gone would not return any more; this they were willing to believe, but wanted to have a confirmation of it from the Lord; and so the Targum,

“to seek an oracle from me;”

or to ask instruction or doctrine from me: now these messengers are bid to go back and tell the king, his nobles, and all the people of the land, what follows:

behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt, into their own land; being afraid to face the Chaldean army; or being defeated and driven back by it. Josephus^{f699} says there was a battle fought between the Egyptians and Chaldeans, in which the latter were conquerors, and put the former to flight, and drove them out of all Syria. Jarchi relates a fable, how that the Egyptian army came by ships, and that at sea they saw strange appearances, upon which they said one to another, what means this? they replied, these are our fathers, whom the fathers of those we are going to help drowned in the sea; and immediately returned to their own land.

Ver. 8. *And the Chaldeans shall come again*, etc.] To Jerusalem, after they have defeated or drove back the Egyptian army:

and fight against this city; with fresh rigour and resolution; being exasperated by the methods taken to oblige them to raise the siege:

and take it, and burn it with fire; as they did, (²³⁰⁸Jeremiah 39:8).

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord, deceive not yourselves*, etc.] Or, “your souls”; with a false opinion, a vain persuasion and belief of the departure of the Chaldeans never to return; which they would have confirmed by the Lord; or, “lift not up your souls”^{f700}; with vain hopes of the above things: self or soul deception is a dreadful thing; and sad is the disappointment when men are elated with a false and vain hope:

saying, the Chaldeans shall surely depart from us; they had departed from Jerusalem; but they were persuaded they would depart out of the land of Judea, and go into their own land, the land of Babylon, from whence they came, and never return more:

for they shall not depart; out of the land of Judea, into their own land; at least not till they had done the work they were sent about.

Ver. 10. *For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you*, etc.] Supposing the whole army of the Chaldeans had been vanquished and slain by the Egyptians, the confederates of the Jews;

or should they be slain by them in a second siege of them, excepting a few next mentioned:

and there remained [but] wounded men among them; and supposing that those of them that were left, that were not slain, were everyone of them wounded men, and so disabled for fighting, as might be thought:

[yet] should they rise up every man in his tent; where he was smitten, and lay wounded; or where he was carried to be cured of his wounds; such should rise up like persons from the dead almost, and fight with such strength and spirit, that they should soon take the city, though in such a condition:

and burn this city with fire; this being a thing determined by the Lord, and nothing should hinder it; for it matters not what the instruments are; though ever so impotent and disabled, they shall do the work allotted to them. Wherefore all the hopes of the Jews, founded upon the departure of the Chaldean army, were vain ones.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans were broken up from Jerusalem*, etc.] When the siege of the city was broken up and raised: or, when they “went up from Jerusalem”^{f701}; were gone from it;

for fear of Pharaoh’s army; or rather “because of Pharaoh’s army”^{f702}. The word “fear” is not in the text; nor did they leave Jerusalem for fear of his army, but to meet it, and give it battle, as they did; however, by this means there was a freer egress and regress from and to the city.

Ver. 12. *Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem*, etc.] At least he attempted to do so, taking the opportunity of the siege of the city being broke up: what were his reasons for it are not certain; whether that he might not be put into prison, which he might fear for what he had just prophesied of concerning the return of the Chaldean army, that should take the city, and burn it; or to save himself from the destruction which he was sure would come upon it; or because he found he could do no good by his preaching and prophesying in it: however his view was

to go into the land of Benjamin; his native country, the tribe he belonged to; and very likely to Anathoth in that tribe, where he was born, and had lived. Josephus^{f703} is express for it, which he says was twenty furlongs from Jerusalem:

to separate himself thence in the midst of the people: or, “to slip away thence in the midst of the people”^{f704}; the siege being raised, the people that had fled to Jerusalem for safety crowded out again to go into their own countries, which the prophet thought to take the advantage of, and slip away in a crowd unobserved; though the words may be rendered, “to take part from thence in the midst of the people”^{f705}; either to take part of the spoil left there by the Chaldean army; or with the priests there, of what belonged to them, of whose number he was, (~~200~~ Jeremiah 1:1). The Targum is,

“to divide an inheritance which he had there in the midst of the people;”

and to the same sense are the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions^{f706}.

Ver. 13. *And when he was in the gate of Benjamin,* etc.] One of the gates of the city so called, either because it stood in the tribe of Benjamin, as part of Jerusalem did; or because it led to the land of Benjamin, whither the prophet was going: and just as he had got to that gate, and was going through it, he was stopped by

a captain of the ward there; who was placed at this gate, that none should go out to the Chaldeans, according to Kimchi; but rather he was the keeper of the gate, not at this time only, but always; Josephus^{f707} calls him one of the rulers:

whose name [was] Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah: the grandson as some think, of that Hananiah the false prophet, of whose death Jeremiah the prophet prophesied, (~~236~~ Jeremiah 28:16); and the Jews have a tradition that Hananiah ordered his son Shelemiah, that if he ever had an opportunity to bring Jeremiah to ruin, to do it; and the same charge Shelemiah gave to his son Irijah, who, having this opportunity, laid hold on him; Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbanel, make mention of it:

and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, thou fallest away to the Chaldeans; it looks as if, though he might not have a family grudge against him, as the Jews suggest, yet had a hatred of him for his prophecies, and therefore fixes this calumny on him; for otherwise, why did he suffer the people to pass in great numbers without any such charge?

Ver. 14. *Then said Jeremiah, [it is] false,* etc.] Or a “falsehood”^{f708}; as undoubtedly it was;

I fall not away to the Chaldeans; for the Chaldean army was gone from the city; nor did Jeremiah like so well to be with an idolatrous people; for after the city was taken, when Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard gave him his choice, either to go with him to Babylon, where he promised to take care of him; or to go to Gedaliah, who was made governor of Judah; he chose rather to be with him, and his poor company:

but he hearkened not to him; would not hear his defence, or however would not give any credit to it, being unwilling to let slip this opportunity of doing him ill will:

so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes; the princes of Zedekiah's court, or the princes of the people, the civil magistrates; or it may be the great sanhedrim, who he knew had no good disposition towards the prophet.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the princes were wrath with Jeremiah*, etc.] For attempting to depart the city, and go off to the Chaldeans, as Irijah had suggested to them, and to whom they hearkened; and perhaps would not hear what the prophet had to say for himself; and if they did, it had no weight with them:

and smote him; either with their fists, or with rods, or a scourge; perhaps he underwent the punishment of forty stripes save one, according to the law; and they may be said to smite or beat him, because they ordered it to be done:

and put him in prison, in the house of Jonathan the scribe; or secretary of state; such an one as Elishama was in Jehoiakim's time, who had a house or apartment at court as he had, who was now dead or removed, (²⁸⁶²Jeremiah 36:12);

for they had made that the prison; which had not used to be; but by the courtiers, and with the consent of this scribe, secretary, or chancellor, it was made a prison; not for common malefactors, but for state prisoners; and a bad prison it seems it was. Very probably this scribe was a very cruel wicked man, who used those very ill that were his prisoners; and indeed, if he had not been of such a character, he would scarcely have suffered his house to have been made a prison.

Ver. 16. *When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon*, etc.] Or, "into the house of the pit"^{f709}; a dungeon, like a pit or ditch, dark, dirty, or dismal:

and into the cabins; or “cells”^{f710}; into a place more inward than the cells, as the Targum; into the innermost and worst part in all the prison, where a man could not well lie, sit, nor stand:

and Jeremiah had remained there many days; in this very uncomfortable condition; very probably till the Chaldean army returned to Jerusalem, as he foretold it should.

Ver. 17. *Then Zedekiah the king sent and took him out*, etc.] After Jeremiah had been in prison for some time; and the Chaldean army being returned, and having renewed their siege, the king is frightened; and knowing the prophet was in prison, sends a messenger to take him out from thence, and bring him to him; which was accordingly done:

and the king asked him secretly in his house; he took him into some private apartment, and there alone conferred with him, for fear of his princes and courtiers; who he knew bore no good will to the prophet, and would be ready to charge him with timidity;

and said unto him,

is there [any] word from the Lord? he means any particular word of prophecy, any late one, and what concerned their present circumstances, showing what would be the issue of the return of the Chaldean army; for prophecy did not come at all times, nor even according to the will of man, but always according to the will of God, and when he thought fit; this the king knew very well, and he wanted a comfortable word, some good news of the failure of the present attempt:

and Jeremiah said, there is; but not such an one as he wanted; it was of the same strain with the former, and confirmed all that the prophet had from time to time told him and his predecessor what would certainly be the case:

for, said he, thou shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon; which was boldly and faithfully said, to be said to the face of the king himself, risking his life in so doing; or, at least, exposing himself to severer treatment, if severer could be used.

Ver. 18. *Moreover, Jeremiah said unto King Zedekiah*, etc.] Having this opportunity with him alone, and perhaps observing the king was melted and softened with what he had said; however, finding liberty in his own

mind, he enlarges his discourse, and freely expostulates with him in the following manner:

what have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison? or, “what have I sinned?” have I been guilty of treason against thee, O king? or of scandal and defamation of any of thy nobles and courtiers? have I done any injury to any of the king’s subjects? has there been any falsehood in my prophecies? has not everything appeared to be true that I have spoken, concerning the coming of the Chaldeans to invade the land, and besiege the city? and concerning the return of the Chaldean army when broken up? why then should I be cast into prison, and detained there? is it not a clear case that what I have said comes from the Lord? and therefore ought not to be used in this manner.

Ver. 19. *Where [are] now your prophets that prophesied unto you,* etc.] Your false prophets, as the Targum; what is become of their prophecies? where is the truth of them, to which general credit has been given? where are they? let them appear and defend themselves, if they can, from the charge of lying, and of being false prophets? or where are they? tacitly suggesting the different circumstances of him and them; he, who was a true prophet, was laid in a prison; they, who were false prophets, were caressed in the palaces of the king and his nobles, and in favour with the people in general:

saying, the king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land? gave out that the king of Babylon would never invade the land of Judea, or besiege the city of Jerusalem, which proved false; and still they had the front to say, that when the siege was raised, he would never come again; whereas he was then returned to it, and was now besieging it; so that here were notorious falsehoods delivered out by them.

Ver. 20. *Therefore hear now, one pray thee, O my lord the king,* etc.] When the prophet spoke in the name of the Lord, and the words of the Lord, it was with great boldness and majesty; but when he spoke for himself, and on his own behalf, it was with great submission, as it became a subject to his king; and whom he owns as his sovereign lord, though a wicked prince, and whose destruction he knew was at hand:

let my supplication be accepted before thee; or, “fall before thee”: (see  Jeremiah 36:7); which was as follows:

that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe; but that he might be discharged from his confinement; or however be removed into another prison, not so uncomfortable and disagreeable as this man's house or prison was; and which perhaps was still the worse through his cruel and ill natured carriage to him; and which all together endangered his life: wherefore he adds,

lest I die there; for though he had continued there many days, yet the place was so exceedingly noisome, that he thought he could not long continue there, was he remanded back to it.

Ver. 21. *Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison*, etc.] He did not think fit to discharge him entirely, lest it should give offence to the princes, who had committed him; but he ordered him to be put in a court belonging to the prison, where he might breathe in a freer air, and have liberty of walking to and fro, where his friends might be admitted to come and see him:

and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street; it seems there was a street in Jerusalem so called, where the bakers lived; and perhaps the king's bakers; who had orders to deliver to the prophet every day a piece or loaf of bread, as much as was sufficient for a man; or, however, as much as the scarcity of provisions in a siege would allow. Kimchi makes mention of a Midrash, which interprets this of bread made of bran, which was sold without the palace; as if it was coarser bread than what was eaten at court:

until all the bread in the city was spent; that is, as long as there was any. These were the king's orders:

thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison: until the city was taken; unless a small time that he was in the dungeon of Malchiah, out of which he was taken again, and restored to the court of the prison, and there continued; (see ²³¹⁶Jeremiah 38:6,13, 28).

CHAPTER 38

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 38

This chapter is taken up in giving an account of Jeremiah's being cast into a dungeon; his deliverance from it; and private conversation with King Zedekiah. The occasion of the prophet's being cast into a dungeon was his discourse to the people, which four of the princes represented to the king as seditious, and moved to have him put to death; and, being delivered into their hands, was put into a miry dungeon, (~~2801~~Jeremiah 38:1-6). Ebedmelech, the Ethiopian, hearing of his miserable case, represented it to the king, and interceded for his release; which being granted, with the help of thirty men, and by means of old clouts and rotten rags, let down by cords, drew him up, and placed him in the court of the prison, (~~2804~~Jeremiah 38:7-13). King Zedekiah sends for Jeremiah, and has a private conference with him about the state of affairs; when the prophet faithfully told him how things would issue, and gave him his best advice, (~~2804~~Jeremiah 38:14-23); upon parting, the king desires the conference might be kept a secret from the princes, which was accordingly done, (~~2804~~Jeremiah 38:24-27); and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison till the taking of Jerusalem, (~~2808~~Jeremiah 38:28).

Ver. 1. *Then Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur*, etc.] Of these two persons we nowhere else read. Some think that Pashur, whose son Gedaliah was, is the same as is mentioned (~~2801~~Jeremiah 20:1-18); which is not likely, since he was a priest, and this son a prince:

and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah; these had been sent by the king to Jeremiah, to inquire of the Lord, and to pray for him and his people, (~~2801~~Jeremiah 21:1 37:3); all four were princes, prime ministers of state, of great power and authority, and to whom the king could deny nothing, or withstand, (~~2804~~Jeremiah 38:4,5); these

heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken to all the people; that is, to as many of them as came to the court of the prison to visit him; some out of good will, and some out of ill will; and others out of curiosity; being desirous to know by the prophet how things would go with them; and by

which means what he said was spread all over the city, and came to the ears of the above princes; and no doubt there were persons enough officious enough to carry these things to them:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, he that remaineth in this city*, etc.] Of Jerusalem; that does not go out of it, and surrender himself to the Chaldeans; but continues in it fighting against them:

shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; that is, by one or other of these:

but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live: that goes out of the city, throws down his arms, delivers up himself to the Chaldean army, and submits to their mercy, shall have quarters given him, and his life shall be spared:

for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live; or, “his soul, and it shall live”^{f711}; comfortably and in safety; he shall escape with his life, and that shall be preserved from the sword, famine, and pestilence; and whereas it was, as it were, lost, it shall be recovered out of the jaws of death, out of the above calamities it was exposed to; and so be like a prey taken out of the hands of the mighty, and be quite safe.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord, this city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon’s army*, etc.] When those found in it should be put to the sword, or carried captive: this the prophet declares with the greatest certainty; and what he had often affirmed for twenty years past, and now stands to it, having had fresh assurances from the Lord that so it would be; and which he faithfully published; though he had received some favours from the court, had his liberty enlarged, and was now eating the king’s bread, he was not to be bribed by these things to hold his peace; but the nearer the ruin of the city was, the more confident was he of its destruction:

which shall take it; or, “that it may take it”^{f712}; being delivered into its hands by the Lord, without whose permission the Chaldean army could never have taken it: or “and he shall take it”^{f713}; that is, the king of Babylon.

Ver. 4. *Therefore the princes said unto the king*, etc.] The four princes mentioned in (^{281E}Jeremiah 38:1), having heard what Jeremiah said to the people, laid the case before the king, and addressed him upon it in the following manner:

we beseech thee, let this man be put to death; or,

“let this man now be put to death,”

as the Targum. They speak very disrespectfully of the prophet, him “this man”; and with great authority to the king and not in a submissive supplicating way, as we render it; the king, being in distress, was in their hands; he stood in fear of them, and could do nothing against their will and pleasure; and they urge that he might die instantly; they were for taking away his life at once. The reason they give follows:

for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words to them; dispirited the soldiers who were set for the defence of the city, such of them as were left, who were not taken off by the sword, famine, or pestilence; since, if what Jeremiah said was true, all attempts to defend it must be in vain; and the people be without any hope of being delivered out of the hands of the enemy:

for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt; than which nothing was more false; for the prophet foreseeing that their lives were in danger, through the sword, famine, or pestilence, by continuing in the city, advised them to go out of it, and surrender to the Chaldeans, whereby they would be preserved.

Ver. 5. *Then Zedekiah the king said, behold, he [is] in your hand*, etc.] In your power, to do with him as you please. This is either a grant of the king, allowing them to do as they thought fit; or a declaration of their power, supposing them to be the princes of the sanhedrim, as Grotius thinks, to judge of a false prophet, and condemn him; but that they were such does not appear; nor does their charge of the prophet, or their procedure against him, confirm it. The former sense seems best:

for the king [is] not [he that] can do [any] thing against you; which is said either in a flattering way, that such was their interest in him, and so great his regard for them, that he could not deny them any thing. So it is in the old translations, “for the king may deny you nothing”; and, “the king

can deny you nothing”: or else in a complaining way, suggesting that, he was a king, and no king; that he had no power to oppose them; they would do as they pleased; and therefore it signified nothing applying to him; he should not say any thing against it; he would have no concern in it; they might do as they pleased, since he knew they would.

Ver. 6. *Then took they Jeremiah*, etc.] Having the king’s leave, or at least no prohibition from him; they went with proper attendants to the court of the prison, and took the prophet from thence:

and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that [was] in the court of the prison; this was a dungeon that belonged to the prison which Malchiah had the care of, or which belonged to his house, which was contiguous to the court of the prison. The Targum renders it, Malchiah the son of the king; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions; but it is not likely that Zedekiah should have a son that was set over his dungeon, or to whom one belonged, or should be called by his name: here the princes cast the prophet, in order that he should perish, either with famine or suffocation, or the noisomeness of the place; not caring with their own hands to take away the life of a prophet, and for fear of the people; and this being a more slow and private way of dispatching him, they chose it; for they designed no doubt nothing less than death:

and they let down Jeremiah with cords; there being no steps or stairs to go down into it; so that nobody could come to him when in it, or relieve him:

and in the dungeon [there was] no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sunk in the mire; up to the neck, as Josephus^{f714} says. Some think that it was at this time, and in this place, that Jeremiah put up the petitions to the Lord, and which he heard, recorded in (~~2185~~ Lamentations 3:55-57); and that that whole chapter was composed by him in this time of his distress.

Ver. 7. *Now when Ebedmelech the Ethiopian*, etc.] The Targum renders it,

“a servant of King Zedekiah;”

which Jarchi, and other writers, following, make Zedekiah to be the Ethiopian; so called, because as an Ethiopian differs in his skin, so Zedekiah differed in his righteousness, from the rest of his generation; and this his servant, he, with others^{f715}, takes to be Baruch the son of Neriah, but without any foundation; but, as Kimchi observes, with whom Abarbanel and Ben Melech agree, had this word “Ebedmelech” been an appellation,

the usual article would have been prefixed before the word “king”, as in the next clause; and somewhere or other his name would have been given; but it is a proper name, as Ahimelech, and Abimelech. A servant of the king he might be, and doubtless he was; and perhaps had this name given him when he became a proselyte; for such he seems to be, and a good man; who had a great regard to the prophet, because he was one; and had more piety and humanity in him, though an Ethiopian, than those who were Israelites by birth:

one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house; an officer at court; one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber. Josephus^{f716} says he was in great honour; so the Targum renders it,

“a great man;”

a man in high office, of great authority; taking it to be a name of office, as it sometimes is; though it may be understood, in a proper sense, of a castrated person; for such there were very commonly in kings' palaces, employed in one office or another, and especially in the bedchamber: now this man

heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; for though the princes did it with all possible secrecy, it was known at court, and came to the ears of this good man; and indeed the dungeon was not far from the court; and some have thought he might have heard the groans of Jeremiah in it; however, he came to the hearing of it, and was affected with the relation of his case, and determined to save him, if possible:

the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; the same in which the prophet was taken, (²⁵⁷¹³Jeremiah 37:13); here he sat to hear and try causes, courts of judicature being held in gates of cities; or to receive petitions; or rather it may be to consult about the present state of affairs, what was best to be done in defence of the city, and to annoy the besiegers; and it may be to have a view of the enemy's camp, and to sally out upon them; for that he was here in order to make his escape is not likely.

Ver. 8. *And Ebedmelech went forth out of the king's house*, etc.] As soon as he heard of the prophet's distress, he immediately went out from his apartments in the king's palace, where he performed his office, and his business chiefly lay, or where he dwelt, to the gate of Benjamin, where the king was; and if he was here for the administration of justice, it was a

proper time and place for Ebedmelech to lay the case of Jeremiah before him:

and spake to the king; freely, boldly, and intrepidly, in the presence of his nobles:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 9. *My lord the king*, etc.] He addresses him as a courtier, with great reverence and submission, and yet with great boldness:

these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet; meaning the princes, who might be present, and whom he pointed at, and mentioned by name; which showed great courage and faithfulness, as well as great zeal for, and attachment to, the prophet; to charge after this manner persons of such great authority so publicly, and to the king, whom the king himself stood in fear of: he first brings a general charge against them, that they had done wrong in everything they had done to the prophet; in their angry words to him; in smiting him, and putting him in prison in Jonathan's house; and particularly in their last instance of ill will to him:

whom they have cast into the dungeon; he does not say where, or describe the dungeon, because well known to the king, and what a miserable place it was; and tacitly suggests the cruelty and inhumanity of the princes:

and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for [there is] no more bread in the city; or very little; there was none to be had but with great difficulty, as Kimchi observes; and therefore though the king had ordered a piece of bread to be given him daily, as long as there was any in the city; yet it being almost all consumed, and the prophet being out of sight, and so out of mind, and altogether disregarded, must be in perishing circumstances, and near death; and must inevitably perish, unless some immediate care be taken of him. It may be rendered, "he will die"^{f717}, etc. or the sense is, bread being exceeding scarce in the city, notwithstanding the king's order, very little was given to Jeremiah, while he was in the court of the prison; so that he was half starved, and was a mere skeleton then, and would have died for hunger there; wherefore it was barbarous in the princes to cast such a man into a dungeon. It may be rendered, "he would have died for hunger in the place where he was, seeing there was no more bread in the city"^{f718}; wherefore, if the princes had let him alone where he was, he would have died through famine; and therefore acted a

very wicked part in hastening his death, by throwing him into a dungeon; this is Jarchi's sense, with which Abarbinel agrees.

Ver. 10. *Then the king commanded Ebedmelech the Ethiopian*, etc.] Being affected with the case of the prophet; and repenting of the leave he had given the princes to do with him as they pleased, gave orders as follows:

saying, take from hence thirty men with thee; from the place where the king was, the gate of Benjamin; where very probably at this time was a garrison of soldiers, thirty of which were ordered to be taken; or these were to be taken out of the king's bodyguard, he had here with him. Josephus^{f719} calls them thirty of the king's servants, such as were about the king's person, or belonged to his household; and so the Syriac version of (^{<3881>}Jeremiah 38:11) says that Ebedmelech took with him men of the king's household; but why thirty of them, when three or four might be thought sufficient to take up a single man out of a dungeon? Abarbinel thinks the dungeon was very deep, and Jeremiah, an old man, could not be got out but with great labour and difficulty. Jarchi and Kimchi say, the men were so weakened with the famine, that so many were necessary to draw out one man; but the true reason seems rather to be, that should the princes, whom the king might suspect, or any other, attempt to hinder this order being put in execution, there might be a sufficient force to assist in it, and repel those that might oppose it:

and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon before he die; the king speaks honourably of Jeremiah, giving him his title as a prophet, and expresses great concern for him; and orders them to hasten the taking him up, lest he should die before, which he suggests would give him great concern.

Ver. 11. *So Ebedmelech took the men with him*, etc.] The thirty men, as the king ordered: as soon as ever he had got the grant, he immediately set about the work, and lost no time to save the prophet's life:

and went unto the house of the king under the treasury; from the gate of Benjamin he went to the king's palace, and to a particular place under the treasury; by which "treasury" may be meant the treasury of garments, or the royal wardrobe, under which was a place, where clothes worn out, or cast off, were put: the Septuagint represent it as underground, a cellar under the wardrobe:

and took thence old cast clouts, and old rotten rags: the Syriac version has it, such as cattle were wiped and cleaned with:

and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah; for it was so deep, that men could not reach to put them into the hands of the prophet; and, had they been thrown in, they might have been scattered about and be out of his reach, who stuck in the mire; or they would have been in all likelihood greatly bedaubed with the mire.

Ver. 12. *And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah*, etc.] Being come to the dungeon, and at the mouth of it, he addressed him in a very humane and friendly manner, and directed him how to make use of the rags he let down for his ease and benefit:

put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine arm holes under the cords; the cords were first put under his arm holes to draw him up with, and then these clouts and rags were put under the cords; lest they should cut into his flesh, at least hurt him, and give him pain, the whole weight of his body resting on them; and perhaps these parts had received some hurt when he was let down into the dungeon with cords, when they were not so careful of him; and therefore needed some soft rags the more to be put under them at this time; all which shows what an affection this man had for the prophet and holy tender he was of him:

and Jeremiah did so; he put the rags between the cords and his arm holes.

Ver. 13. *So they drew up Jeremiah with cords*, etc.] The men that were with Ebedmelech, as many as were necessary; he overlooking, directing, and encouraging:

and he took him out of the dungeon; alive, according to the king's orders and design, and in spite of the prophet's enemies: the thing succeeded according to wish; the Lord ordering and prospering every step:

and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison; from whence he had been taken, and where he was replaced; Ebedmelech having no warrant to set him at entire liberty; nor would it have been prudent to have solicited that, which might too much have exasperated the princes; and besides, here, according to the king's order, bread was to be given him, as long as there was any in the city; so that it was the most fit and proper place for him to remain in; wherefore what Josephus^{t720} says, that he dismissed him, and set him free, is not true.

Ver. 14. *Then Zedekiah the king sent and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him*, etc.] When the prophet was taken out of the dungeon, and brought to the court of the prison, of which the king had knowledge, he sent some person or persons to bring him to him, to have some private conversation with him:

into the third entry that [is] in the house of the Lord; what place is meant Jarchi confesses his ignorance of, but conjectures it was the court of the Israelites; the outward court, and the court of the women, being before it. Kimchi rightly takes it to be a place through which they went from the king's house to the house of the Lord; no doubt the same that is called the king's ascent, by which he went up thither, shown to, and admired by, the queen of Sheba, (^{<1105>}1 Kings 10:5); in which there were three gates or entrances, as Dr. Lightfoot observes^{f721}; the first, the gate of the foundation; the second, the gate behind the guard; and the third, the gate Coponius; and here the king and the prophet had their interview:

and the king said to Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing, or "a word"; a word of prophecy; or whether there was a word of prophecy from the Lord, concerning him, his people, and city, and what it was; and what would be the event of the present siege, whether it would issue well or ill:

hide nothing from me; be it what it will, whether grateful or not; he had been told again and again how things would be; but still he was in hopes that something more favourable and consolatory would come from the Lord to him.

Ver. 15. *Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah*, etc.] Here follows the prophets answer, in which he tacitly desires to be excused saying any thing upon this head, since it might be attended with danger to himself, and be of no service to the king; and therefore prudently thought fit to come into some agreement with the king, to secure himself, if he insisted upon it:

if I declare [it] unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? this he might fear, from past experience of the king's conduct; for, though he might not slay him with his own hands, or give orders to others to do it; yet he might deliver him up to the will and mercy of his princes, as he had done before; not that the prophet was afraid to die, or was deterred through fear of death from delivering the word of the Lord, and doing his work; but he thought it proper to make use of prudent means to preserve

his life; besides, he had no express order from the Lord to say anything concerning this matter at this time:

and if give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken to me? or, “thou wilt not hearken to me”^{f722}; so the Targum, Syriac, and Vulgate Latin versions; and therefore it was to no purpose to give him any advice; from all this the king might easily understand the prophet had nothing to say that would be agreeable to him; however, he was very desirous to know what it was, and therefore promises indemnity and security, as follows:

Ver. 16. *So Zedekiah the king swore secretly unto Jeremiah,* etc.] The king not only gave the prophet his word, but also annexed to it his oath, that his life should be in no danger, either from him or his princes; this oath was made secretly, both for the honour of the king, he swearing to a subject, and that it might not be known by the princes, and for fear of them:

saying, [as] the Lord liveth, that made us this soul; or “these souls”, as the Targum: here a superfluous word, **ta**, is used; which, as the Jews observe, is one of the eight words which are written, but not read: he swears by the living God, by whom only men should swear, whenever it is necessary; this is the proper form of an oath; the appeal is to be made to the eternal God, that knows all things, the Father of spirits, the Maker of souls, and giver of the lives of all men, and who can take them away when he pleases. The sense is, may the living God, who has made my soul and yours, and given life to us both, may he take away my soul, my life, from me, if ever I make any attempt upon yours;

I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of those that seek thy life; he not only promises and swears to it, that he would not take away his life with his own hands, or give orders to take it away; but he would not deliver him into the hands of his princes, who he knew were implacable enemies, and sought all opportunities and advantages against him; but then he makes no promise that he will take any counsel or advice that should be given him; as to this, he would lay himself under no obligation to observe, resolving to take his own way; if he liked it, to follow it; if not, to reject it; he would not be bound by it.

Ver. 17. *Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah,* etc.] Being thus indemnified and secured by the king’s word and oath, he proceeds freely to lay before the king the whole matter as from the Lord:

thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; the prophet does not give the following advice in his own name, but in the name of the eternal Jehovah, the Lord of armies above and below, and who had a special regard to the people of Israel, and their welfare; and therefore it became the king to show the more regard unto it:

if thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes; the generals of his army, whose names are mentioned, (^{240B}Jeremiah 39:3); the king not being with his army at this time, but at Riblah, (^{240B}Jeremiah 39:5); the meaning is, if he would open the gates of Jerusalem, and go forth from thence to the Chaldean army, and surrender himself and the city into the hands of the princes in it, and general officers of it:

then thy soul shall live; in thy body, and not be separated from it; or live comfortably, in peace and safety, though not in so much splendour and glory as he had done:

and this city shall not be burned with fire; as had been threatened; and as the Chaldeans would be provoked to do, should it hold out to the last extremity; but should preserve it upon a surrender:

and thou shall live, and thine house; not only himself, but his wives and children, and servants.

Ver. 18. *But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes,* etc.] And surrender to them:

then shall this city be given into the hands of the Chaldeans; if not willingly delivered up by the king of Judah, it shall be forcibly taken by the king of Babylon's army, through the permission of God; with respect to whom it is said to be given unto them, even by him who has the disposing of cities and kingdoms:

and they shall burn it with fire; as it had been often foretold it should, and as it accordingly was, (^{240B}Jeremiah 39:8);

and thou shalt not escape out of their hand; though he might hope he should, and would attempt to do it, yet should be taken; and though he should not be slain, yet should never regain his liberty, or get out of their hands, when once in them; (see ^{240D}Jeremiah 52:7-9,11).

Ver. 19. *And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah,* etc.] In answer to this advice he gave him, persuading him to give up himself and the city into the hands of the Chaldeans:

I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans; who did go out of the city, and surrendered to the Chaldeans, whom Zedekiah had cruelly used, or severely threatened:

lest they deliver me into their hands, and they mock me; that is, lest the Chaldeans should deliver him into the hands of the Jews, and they should jeer and scoff at him, for doing the same thing he had forbidden them on the severest penalty; or lest they should put him to death in the most revengeful and contemptuous manner, as Kimchi's note is: but all this was either a mere excuse, or showed great weakness and pusillanimity, and was fearing where no fear was; for, on the one hand, it was not reasonable to think that the Chaldeans, when they had got such a prize as the king of the Jews, that they should easily part with him, and especially deliver him up into the hands of his own people; and, on the other hand, it is not likely, that, should he be delivered into their hands, they would ever have treated him in so scornful and cruel a manner, who was their prince, and a partner with them in their captivity.

Ver. 20. *But Jeremiah said, they shall not deliver [thee],* etc.] To take off the above excuse, or remove that objection, the prophet assures the king that the Chaldeans would never deliver him into the hands of the Jews; he might depend upon it, it would never be done:

obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord, which I speak unto thee; the counsel he had given him, to surrender to the Chaldeans, was not from himself, but from the Lord: and though he had no express order to give it at that time, yet it was what was agreeable to the will of God, and what he had exhorted the people to in the beginning of this chapter; and therefore, since it came from the Lord, as it ought to be attended to, so he might be assured of the divine protection, should he act according to it:

so it shall be well with thee, and thy soul shall live; that is, it would not only be much better with him than he feared, but than it would be with him should he obstinately stand out to the last; he should have more respect and honour from the king of Babylon; and not only have his life spared, but enjoy more of the comforts of life; particularly the sight of his eyes, which he lost when taken.

Ver. 21. *But if thou refuse to go forth*, etc.] Out of Jerusalem, to the Chaldean army, and submit to them:

this [is] the word that the Lord hath showed me, or the thing which should certainly come to pass; the word of prophecy the Lord had showed to the prophet, and which he now declares to the king; who asked of him a word, was desirous to know whether there was a word from the Lord, and what it was; and this it is which follows, in case he continued impenitent, obstinate, and disobedient.

Ver. 22. *And, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house*, etc.] That were left in the royal palace when Jehoiakim and Jeconiah were carried captives; or which were left of the famine and pestilence in, Zedekiah's house; or would be left there when he should flee and make his escape; meaning his concubines, or maids of honour, and court ladies;

[shall be] brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes: who shall use them as they think fit, and dispose of them at pleasure:

and those [women] shall say, thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: or, "the men of thy peace"^{f723}; the false prophets, and the princes that hearkened to them, and promised and flattered him with peace and prosperity, these deceived him; they set him on to hold out against the Chaldeans, and not believe the Prophet Jeremiah; and they prevailed with him to do so, though it was against himself, and his own interest:

thy feet are sunk in the mire; not literally, as some Jewish writers suppose, that he got into a quagmire when he fled; though there may be a hint in the expression to the miry dungeon in which he suffered the prophet to be cast; and was now got into one himself, in a figurative sense, being involved in difficulties, out of which he could not extricate himself:

[and] they are turned away back; meaning either his feet, which were distorted, and had turned aside from the right way; or now could go on no further against the enemy, but were obliged to turn back and flee; or else the men of his peace, the false prophets and princes, who had fed him with vain hopes of safety, now left him, and every man shifted for himself. This would be said by the women, either in a mournful manner, by way of complaint; or as scoffing at the king, as a silly foolish man, to hearken to such persons; and so he that was afraid of being mocked by the Jews is jeered at by the women of his house.

Ver. 23. *So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans*, etc.] Not the citizens of Jerusalem; but, as Kimchi observes, the Chaldeans that should enter the city shall bring them out to the Chaldeans without: or it may be rendered impersonally, “they shall be brought out”: not only the ladies at court, that waited on him and his queen, as before; but all his wives and concubines, and his children, or his sons rather; for at the taking of the city no mention is made of daughters, only of sons, who were slain before his eyes, (^{281b}Jeremiah 39:6);

and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon; not by him personally, for he was not present at the taking of him, but by his army, who having taken him, brought him to him, and delivered him into his hand, (^{281b}Jeremiah 39:5);

and thou shalt cause this city to be burnt with fire; or, “thou shall burn this city with fire”^{f724}; be the moral cause of it; through his sin and obstinacy, impenitence and unbelief, the burning of the city might be laid to his charge; his sin was the cause of it; and it was all one as if he had burnt it with his own hands. All this is said to work upon him to hearken to the advice given; but all was in vain.

Ver. 24. *Then said Zedekiah to Jeremiah*, etc.] Not a word signifying his approbation of the counsel given him, or that he intended to take it; his silence showed the reverse:

let no man know of these words: that had passed between them; of the conference and conversation they had had together, at least not the particulars of it; the thing itself was known, as appears by what follows, that the king and prophet had been discoursing together; but what they talked of, he desires might be concealed, pretending the prophet’s good, though it was his own honour and safety he sought:

and thou shall not die; as he had promised he should not, and had sworn to it; but suggests by this, that if he disclosed the conversation, he should took upon himself free from his word and oath; so that this carried something menacing in it: or it may be rendered “that thou die not”^{f725}; intimating, that if the princes should come to the knowledge of what he had said, of the advice he had given, they would surely put him to death; and therefore, for his own safety, he desires the whole may be kept a secret.

Ver. 25. *But if the princes hear that I have talked to thee*, etc.] Which the king suspected they would; and could hardly think but somebody or other

would see him and the prophet talking together; who would be officious enough to go and acquaint the princes with it, though he had endeavoured to be as private as possible; however, to provide against the worst, he instructs Jeremiah what to say to them, should they hear of their being together:

and they come unto thee: as he did not doubt but they would, as soon as ever they had notice of it:

and say unto thee, declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king; hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the king said unto thee: the king knew how inquisitive they would be, and sift the prophet to the bottom, to know both what the prophet said to the king, about the state of affairs respecting the Chaldeans, and the surrender of the city to them, which they supposed to be the subject of the discourse; and what were the king's thoughts about it, and his determinations concerning it; and in order to make the prophet easy, and more free and open to tell the whole matter, he suggests they would promise him his life should not be taken away.

Ver. 26. *Then thou shalt say unto them,* etc.] Here the king puts words into the prophet's mouth, what he should say to the princes, to put them off from inquiring further, and so keep the matter a secret:

I presented my supplication before the king; or "caused [it] to fall"^{f726}; delivered it in an humble and submissive manner:

that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there; this he had entreated of the king before, (⁽⁻²⁴⁵⁷⁾Jeremiah 37:20); and now, no doubt, renewed his request, having this fair opportunity with the king alone to do it; or, however, it is highly probable he did it upon this hint of the king. This shows how much the king stood in fear of his princes in this time of his distress; and that he had only the name of a king, and had not courage and resolution enough to act of himself, according to the dictates of his mind; yea, that he feared men more than he feared the Lord.

Ver. 27. *Then came all the princes to Jeremiah, and asked him,* etc.] After he had parted with the king, and was come back to the court of the prison; as soon as the princes had been informed of the interview between the king and the prophet, which soon came to their ears, they came in a body to him, to the court of the prison, where he was, and asked him of what passed between him and the king:

and he told them according to all those words that the king had commanded; what he told them, no doubt, was truth; though he did not tell them all the truth; which he was not obliged to do, having no command from God, and being forbid by the king:

so they left off speaking with him; or, “were silent from him”^{f727}; went away silent, not being able to disprove what he had said, or object unto it, and finding they could get nothing more out of him:

for the matter was not perceived; or, “was not heard”^{f728}; though there were persons that saw the king and the prophet together, yet nobody heard anything that passed between them; and therefore Jeremiah could not be confronted in what he had said, or be charged with concealing anything.

Ver. 28. *So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison*, etc.] Where he was ordered to be by the king, before he was cast into the dungeon, and where he was replaced by Ebedmelech; and which was now confirmed by the king, and here he continued:

until the day that Jerusalem was taken; but how long it was from his conversation with the king, to the taking of the city, is not certain:

and he was [there] when Jerusalem was taken; as appears from (²³⁹⁴Jeremiah 39:14). Kimchi connects this with the beginning of the next chapter; and so the Targum, rendering it,

“and it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken;”

namely, what is related in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 39

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 39

This chapter gives an account of the taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, according to the several prophecies of Jeremiah concerning it. The time of taking it, and by whom, after a siege of eighteen months, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:1-3); several things relating to King Zedekiah; his flight; the taking of him; the bringing him to the king of Babylon, and his sentence on him; the execution of that sentence, slaying his sons and nobles, putting out his eyes, and carrying him in chains to Babylon, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:4-7); the destruction of the city is described, by burning the houses in it, breaking down its walls, carrying the people captive, all, except a few poor persons left in the land, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:8-10); the preservation of Jeremiah, according to the king of Babylon's orders by his princes; and the committing him to the care of Gedaliah, the governor of the poor Jews, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:11-14); and the chapter is concluded with a promise of the protection of Ebedmelech, made by the Lord before the taking of the city, while the prophet was in prison; and which, no doubt, had its accomplishment, (²⁸⁹¹Jeremiah 39:15-18).

Ver. 1. *In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month,* etc.] The month Tebet, which answers to part of our December, and part of January; so that it was in the winter season the siege of Jerusalem began:

came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it; provoked by Zedekiah's breaking covenant with him, and rebelling against him, who had set him upon his throne, in the room of his nephew; so that here was a mixture of perfidy and ingratitude, which he was determined to revenge; and being impatient of it, came at such an unseasonable time of the year for a long march and a siege. The king of Babylon came in person at first; but having begun the siege, and given proper orders to his generals for the carrying of it on, and supposing it would be a long one, retired to Riblah in Syria, either for pleasure or for business. The time of beginning the siege exactly agrees with the account in (⁴²³⁰2 Kings 25:1); only there it is more particular, expressing the day of the month, which was the tenth of it; and so in

(²⁵⁰⁴Jeremiah 52:4). The reason of inserting the account of the siege and taking of the city, in this place, is both to show the exact accomplishment of Jeremiah's prophecies about it, and to lead on to some facts and predictions that followed it.

Ver. 2. [*And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month,* etc.] The month Tammuz, which answers to part of June, and part of July:

the ninth [day] of the month, the city was broken up; or taken by storm; the walls of it were broken by engines and battering rams, so that the Chaldeans could enter it, and take it. This was just a year and a half after it had been besieged, not being able to hold out any longer, because of the famine; (see ²⁵⁰⁶Jeremiah 52:6,7).

Ver. 3. *And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in,* etc.] Into the city: a breach being made in the walls to take possession of it:

and sat in the middle gate; according to Jarchi, this was a gate of the temple; the gate Nicanor, the eastern gate, which was between the gate of the court of the women and the gate of the temple; who observes, that their Rabbins say, the middle gate was the gate in which the wise men made their decrees and constitutions: so that, in "the place of judgment, wickedness was there"; as in (²⁰⁸⁶Ecclesiastes 3:16); and Josephus^{f729} says, that the city was taken in the middle of the night, when the enemies' generals went into the temple; but rather, according to Kimchi, it was one of the gates of the city of Jerusalem; according to Abarbinel, Jerusalem had three walls, and this was the gate of the middle wall; but others take it to be the gate in the middle wall, between the upper and lower city; perhaps it is the same called the second gate, (³⁰¹⁰Zephaniah 1:10); and might be the chief and principal gate where these princes placed their seats in triumph as victors, and so fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah, (³⁰¹⁵Jeremiah 1:15); though they might have another reason for it, their own safety; here they sat till the city was well searched and cleared, lest there should be any ambush laid for them, and cut them off as they entered. The names of some of them were as follow:

[even] Nergalsharezer: according to Kimchi, these are two names of two distinct persons; but generally thought to be one name of the same person; so Josephus, who calls him Nergelearus. The first part of the name "Nergal" was the name of an idol with the Cushites, (²⁷³⁰2 Kings 17:30); and it was usual with the Heathens to give the names of their idols to their

kings, princes, and great men. The other part, “Sharezer”, is a name of one of Sennacherib’s sons; and seems to be an Assyrian name, (²³⁷⁸Isaiah 37:38). The next is called

Samgarnebo; though, according to Hillerus^{f730}, this is a surname of the former, to distinguish him from another Nergalsharezer after mentioned, taken from his office: this name signifying the “strict keeper of Nebo”, the temple of the idol Nebo; (see ²³⁶¹Isaiah 46:1). The next is

Sarsechim Rabsaris; for these are not two names of different persons, but of the same person. The first is his proper name, which signifies the “prince of the Scythians”; the other his name of office, and signifies the “chief eunuch”, or the “chief of the eunuchs”. The last name is

Nergalsharezer Rabmag; these names belong to the same person, who is called from his office “Rabmag”, the “chief magician”, or the “chief of the magicians”, to distinguish him from the other Nergalsharezer before mentioned: these,

with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon, entered the city and took it.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, [that] when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war*, etc.] That is, when Zedekiah and his soldiers saw the princes and generals of the Chaldean army enter the city through a breach made in the wall, and take possession of the middle gate; which they might see from some high tower where they were for safety, and to make their observation of the enemy:

then they fled; finding they were not able to keep their posts and resist the enemy:

and went forth out of the city by night; it being the middle of the night, as before observed out of Josephus, that the city was taken; and they took the advantage of the darkness of the night to make their escape: this they chose rather to do than to surrender to the Chaldeans, and lie at their mercy: and they went

by the way of the king’s garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls; which lay either between the wall of the city and the outworks, as some; or between the old wall and the new one Hezekiah built, (¹⁴³⁵2 Chronicles 32:5); as others; or rather between the wall of the city and the wall of the

king's garden; this being a private way, they took it. The Jews have a fable, and which is related both by Jarchi and Kimchi, that there was a cave or vault underground, from the king's house to the plains of Jericho; and by this way the king went that he might not be seen; but God prepared a hind, which the Chaldean army saw, and pursued, and which went into the cave, add they after it; and when they were at the mouth of the cave they saw Zedekiah coming out of it, and took him:

and he went out the way of the plain; on the south side of the which led to Jericho; and on which side the kings garden was; not that he went alone, but his wives, and children, and princes, and men of war with him; (see ~~251~~ Jeremiah 52:7).

Ver. 5. *But the Chaldean army pursued after them*, etc.] Being informed of the flight of them, by those who surrendered to them, as Josephus says; or not finding the king, his family, nobles, and guards, at the palace, where they expected them; and, knowing which way they must take, pursued after them; not the whole army, only a part of it; for some must remain at Jerusalem to demolish the city, and take the spoil of it:

and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; not far from it, as Josephus says; and who also observes, that when his friends and generals saw the enemy near, they left him, and shifted for themselves, and only a few were with him when overtook:

and when they had taken him they brought him to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath: which is generally thought to be Antioch in Syria; whither he had retired from the siege of Jerusalem, having left it to his generals to refresh himself in this pleasant place, as it seems it was; or that he might be nearer his own kingdom, if any troubles should arise in it during his absence; however, here he was, and here the army brought Zedekiah to him, and those they took with him; which must be very agreeable to the king of Babylon to have this perfidious and ungrateful prince in his power:

where he gave judgment upon him: or passed sentence on him, which was to have his eyes put out: or, "spake judgments with him"¹⁷³¹; he severely chide him, and upbraided him for the injury he had done him; the perfidy he had been guilty of in breaking his oath and covenant. So Josephus says,

“after he came to him, Nebuchadnezzar began to call him a wicked man and a covenant breaker, unmindful of promises he had made to

preserve the country for him; he reproached him with ingratitude, in receiving the kingdom from him he had taken from Jehoiakim, and given to him, who had used his power against the giver; but, says he, the great God that hates thy manners has put thee into our hands.”

Ver. 6. *Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes*, etc.] Not with his own hands, but gave orders to do it: these must be very young, at least some of them; since Zedekiah at this time was but thirty two years of age. This must be a dreadful spectacle for him to behold; and the consideration must be cutting, that it was owing to his own obstinacy in not taking the advice of the Prophet Jeremiah to surrender to the Chaldeans, whereby he and his family would have been saved, (²⁶⁸⁷Jeremiah 38:17);

also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah; who did not come over to the Chaldean army and surrender themselves; such who advised the king to stand out to the last, and who fled, and were taken with him; as many of them as fell into the hands of the king of Babylon. Jarchi says those were the sanhedrim, who loosed Zedekiah from his oath to Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 7. *Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes*, etc.] By what means is not certain; however, hereby the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled, that his eyes should see the king of Babylon, as they did, before they were put out, and that he should not die by the sword, (²⁶⁴⁸Jeremiah 34:3,4); and also the prophecy of Ezekiel, (²⁶²³Ezekiel 12:13); that he should be brought to Babylon, and yet should not see it; for his eyes were put out before he was carried there: a full proof this of the prescience of God; of his foreknowledge of future and contingent events; of the truth and certainty of prophecy, and of the authority of divine revelation:

and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon; with two brass or iron chains, or fetters, for both his legs; and thus bound he was carried to Babylon, where he remained to the day of his death.

Ver. 8. *And the Chaldeans burnt the king's house*, etc.] His palace: this was a month after the city was taken, as appears from (²⁶²²Jeremiah 52:12,13);

and the houses of the people, with fire; the houses of the common people, as distinct from the king's house, and the houses of the great men,

(~~2523~~ Jeremiah 52:13); though Jarchi interprets of the synagogues. It is in the original text in the singular number, “the house of the people”; which Abarbinel understands of the temple, called, not the house of God, he having departed from it; but the house of the people, a den of thieves; according to Adrichomius^{f732}, there was a house in Jerusalem called “the house of the vulgar”, or common people, where public feasts and sports were kept; but the former sense seems best:

and broke down the walls of Jerusalem; demolished all the fortifications of it, and entirely dismantled it, that it might be no more a city of force and strength, as it had been.

Ver. 9. *Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard*, etc.] The Targum is,
 “the captain of those that kill;”

of the soldiers, of the militia. Some render it, the captain of the “cooks”; others, of the “butchers”^{f733}; but no doubt it was a military office he bore; he was captain of the forces that were left in Jerusalem, after the other part went in pursuit of the king and those with him; or the captain of a company, being sent by the king of Babylon to execute a commission of his: the same

carried away into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city; that were left of the pestilence, famine, and sword; and who were found in it when it was taken:

and those that fell away, that fell to him; that fell to the Chaldean army during the siege of the city; and those that betook themselves to Nebuzaradan, and voluntarily surrendered themselves to him afterwards:

with the rest of the people that remained; in other cities in the land of Judah.

Ver. 10. *But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah*, etc.] Because they would have been of no service to the Chaldeans, but a burden to them; and because they had nothing to fear from them; they had no arms to rebel against them, nor money to purchase any; and because it would be to their interest to have the land manured, and not lie waste, that they might have some tribute from it:

and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time; as their own property to dress and cultivate, and receive the advantage of them; though very probably a tax was laid upon them; or they were to pay tribute to the king of Babylon; or, however, contribute out of them to the support of the government that was placed over them; and this was a happy incident in their favour; here was a strange change of circumstances with them; though the nation in general was in distress, they, who before had nothing, are now proprietors of vineyards and fields, when the former owners were carried captive: there might be much of the justice of God conspicuous in this affair; such who had been oppressed and ill used by the rich are now retaliated with their possessions. The Targum is,

“and he appointed them to work in the fields and in the vineyards in that day.”

Ver. 11. *Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard*, etc.] Of whom he had heard, by one or another of his generals or officers; who had been informed, by those Jews that deserted to them, that Jeremiah had prophesied of the taking of the city by the Chaldeans; had advised the people to fall off to them; and had even exhorted the king and princes to surrender up the city, and themselves, unto them; and that he had suffered much on this account; wherefore the Lord put it into the heart of this monarch, otherwise not at all disposed to the prophets of the Lord, to show regard to him; and therefore, when he sent Nebuzaradan upon an expedition to Jerusalem, he gave him a particular charge concerning Jeremiah:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 12. *Take him, and look well to him*, etc.] Take him out of prison; take him under your immediate care; receive him kindly, and use him humanely; provide everything necessary for him, and let him not want for anything: or, “set thine eyes upon him”¹⁷³⁴ look pleasantly at him, and let him be always under your view and inspection; treat him not with neglect and contempt, but see to it that nothing is wanting to him:

and do him no harm; no injury to his person by beating, imprisoning, or starving him; nor suffer any to be done to him by the common soldiers, or by his own people:

but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee: let him have whatever he asks for: this was great favour from a Heathen prince indeed, and more than he met with from his own countrymen.

Ver. 13. *So Nebuzaradan captain of the guard sent,* etc.] When he was come to Jerusalem, one of the first things he did was, he sent a messenger or messengers to the court of the prison where Jeremiah was, to bring him from thence; and this he did not alone, but with the rest of the princes, who had the same charge, and were joined in the commission with him: two of them are mentioned by name,

Nebushasban Rabsaris and Nergalsharezer Rabmag; the latter of these is manifestly one of the princes that first entered Jerusalem, at the taking of it, (see Gill on “^{249B}Jeremiah 39:3”); and perhaps the former is the same with Sarsechim Rabsaris, as Hillerus^{f735} thinks, mentioned at the same time, who might have two names; unless we suppose there were two persons in the same office:

and all the king of Babylon’s princes: so that great honour was done to the prophet, to have them all charged with his commission from the king; and to be sent unto, and for, by them all.

Ver. 14. *Even they sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison,* etc.] Where he was, when Jerusalem was taken, (^{249B}Jeremiah 38:28); and where he remained until this order came:

and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan; the father of this person seems to be the same who saved Jeremiah from being delivered into the hand of the people, to be put to death by them, in Jehoiakim’s reign, (^{249B}Jeremiah 26:24); and he himself was doubtless a prince of Judah, that deserted to the Chaldeans during the siege, and was in esteem with them, and appointed a governor over those that were left in the land: now what is here recorded was not done immediately after Jeremiah was taken out of the court of the prison; for however it was, whether through the multiplicity of business, or the neglect of inferior officers, who did not attend to the charge the captain of the guard gave them concerning Jeremiah; though he was taken out of prison, he was bound in chains, and carried among the captives to Ramah; where, very probably, Nebuzaradan, looking over his prisoners, to his great surprise finds the prophet among them; when he released him, and, after some discourse with him, sent him to Gedaliah; (see ^{240B}Jeremiah 40:1-5);

that he should carry him home; or, “to the house”^{f736}; either to the house of Gedaliah, as Kimchi; or rather to the house of Jeremiah in Anathoth:

so he dwelt among the people; that were left in the land, being at full liberty.

Ver. 15. *Now the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison*, etc.] This prophecy was before the taking of the city, and after the prophet had been took out of the dungeon by Ebedmelech; though here inserted after the city was taken; and that to show the great regard the Lord has to such who show favour to his prophets; for though we have no account of the accomplishment of this prophecy, there is no doubt to be made of it; and that Ebedmelech was saved from the general destruction, as is here predicted:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 16. *Go and speak to Ebedmelech the Ethiopians*, etc.] Not that the prophet was to go, or could go, out of prison, to deliver this message to Ebedmelech; but that he should, as he had opportunity, acquaint him with it; either by writing to him, or by word of mouth, when he should visit him; for no doubt he sometimes did, having so great a respect for the prophet:

saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; whom Ebedmelech, though an Ethiopian, served; being a proselyte, and a good man; and therefore would listen unto and believe what came from him:

behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; meaning the prophecies delivered out by Jeremiah, which Ebedmelech was no stranger to, these should be accomplished; not what promised good, on condition of repentance and amendment; but what threatened evil to the city, and the inhabitants of it, even the destruction of them:

and they shall be [accomplished] in that day before thee; signifying that he should live till then, and his enemies would not be able to take away his life; and that he should see with his eyes all that was predicted accomplished, and he himself safe amidst all this.

Ver. 17. *But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord*, etc.] As from the famine and pestilence, so from the sword of the Chaldeans, and from all the evil that shall come upon the city in the day of its destruction:

and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the man of whom thou [art] afraid; for though he was a bold and intrepid man, as appears by his charging the princes and prime ministers of state with having done evil to the prophet, and that in the presence of the king; yet at times he was not without his fears, which is the case of the best of men; and whereas he knew the courtiers owed him a grudge, for the freedom he took with their characters before the king, and for his friendship to Jeremiah, he might fear they would seek to do him a mischief, and contrive his ruin, in some way or another; but here he is assured he should not be given into their hands; or rather, as Jarchi, into the hands of the Chaldeans; for, as he believed in the Lord and his prophet, so he knew that all that was predicted would certainly come to pass; and that the city, with the king, his nobles, and the inhabitants of it, would fall into the hands of the Chaldeans; he might tremble at the righteous judgments of God, and fear that he himself would become a prey unto them; but here he is assured of the contrary.

Ver. 18. *For I will surely deliver thee*, etc.] Or, in “delivering will deliver thee”^{f737}; this is a repetition and confirmation of what is promised in (^{2B97}Jeremiah 39:17), and more fully explains it:

and thou shall not fall by the sword: by the sword of the Chaldeans, when the city should be taken, as he feared he should:

but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: shall be safe; be like a prey taken out of the hand of the mighty, and be enjoyed beyond expectation, having been given up for lost; and therefore matter of the greater joy, such as is expressed at the taking of spoils:

because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. The Targum is, “in my word”; what he had done in serving the prophet, and other good actions, sprung from a principle of faith and confidence in the Lord; and this the Lord had a respect unto; without which works are not right; and without which it is impossible to please God with them; and which faith may be, and be true, where fears are.

CHAPTER 40

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 40

This chapter treats of the release of Jeremiah, and the care taken of him; of the gathering of the princes and people of the Jews to Gedaliah, appointed their governor, dispersed about Judea, and other countries; and of a conspiracy against him, of which information was given him. The release of Jeremiah, where, and by whom, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:1-4); the liberty granted him to go to Babylon, or stay in Judea, as he thought fit; and, if he chose the latter, is advised to go to Gedaliah, appointed governor, or where he would; and is dismissed with food, and a reward, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:4-6); upon which he went and dwelt with Gedaliah, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:7); to whom also the captains of the dispersed forces joined themselves, to whom he swore, and bid them be of good cheer; and exhorted them to serve the Chaldeans, which he urged from the profit of it to them, and by his own example, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:8-10); and to whom also gathered the Jews in other countries, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:11,12); by the captains he is informed of a conspiracy against his life, and one of them offers to destroy the conspirator, which Gedaliah would not agree to, disbelieving the information, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:13-16).

Ver. 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord*, etc.] The word of prophecy, as the Targum; but there being no prophecy in this and the following chapter, only a narration of facts, this is generally referred to what came ten days after, and which begins (^{240B}Jeremiah 42:7); so Jarchi and Kimchi; all between being included in a parenthesis, or a relation of facts preparatory, to lead on to it; though Abarbinel takes it to be a general title to all histories and prophecies in this book, from henceforward to the end of it. Jarchi and Kimchi make mention of a Midrash, which refers it to the special word of the Lord to Jeremiah to go to Gedaliah, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:5); interpreting that passage as the words of the Lord, and not of Nebuzaradan; but Abarbinel's sense seems best. The time of this prophecy was

after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah; which was a city in the land of Benjamin near Gibeon, seven miles

from Jerusalem, as Jerom^{f738} says; here Nebuzaradan had his rendezvous, whither he brought his captives as they fell into his hands, among whom were Jeremiah:

when he had taken him; out of the court of the prison, and out of Jerusalem, and brought him to Ramah:

being bound in chains among all them that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, that were carried away captive unto Babylon; how it came to pass is not certain, but so it was; that, though by the orders of Nebuzaradan and the princes, agreeably to the command of the king of Babylon, Jeremiah was taken out of the court of the prison, yet was not set free; but without the knowledge of Nebuzaradan, and through the inadvertency of inferior officers, he was taken and bound, and with other prisoners brought to Ramah, in order to be transported to Babylon, which lay in the way to it; for Ramah was to the north of Jerusalem, as Babylon was: these chains were for the hands, or what we call handcuffs, as Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Ben Melech observe, and as appears from (~~2404~~Jeremiah 40:4).

Ver. 2. *And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah*, etc.] When he mustered his prisoners, to his great surprise he found the prophet among them, whom he took out from them, and set him free; though, before he dismissed him, he had the following conversation with him:

and said unto him, the Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil on this place; the city of Jerusalem; from whence the prophet and the rest of the captives were just brought, and which now lay in ruins; the houses burnt; the walls broken down; and the inhabitants spoiled and carried captive. This was the evil which the Lord, he says, had “decreed”, as the Targum renders it; had purposed to bring upon it; and which he had declared and pronounced by the mouth of Jeremiah, whose Lord God he was, being his prophet, and a worshipper of him: this Nebuzaradan was apprized of by the Jews that deserted to the Chaldeans; and particularly, as is probable, by Gedaliah.

Ver. 3. *Now the Lord hath brought [it], and done according as he hath said*, etc.] As he purposed, so it came to pass; as he foretold by his prophet, so it was brought about by his providence. This Heathen captain acknowledges the hand of the Lord in all this; and suggests, that his master, the king of Babylon, himself, and the rest of the generals, were

only instruments the Lord made use of; which is very piously as well as wisely said; and more is here acknowledged by him than by the Jews themselves; who were not willing to believe that God had determined evil against them, or would bring it on them; at least, this they did not care to believe and own before, whatever they did now; he goes on to observe the cause of all this:

because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you; meaning not Jeremiah particularly, but his countrymen; and perhaps he might turn himself to, and address, the captives that were before him. Here he vindicates the justice of God; and ascribes the ruin of this people, not to the valour of Nebuchadnezzar and his captains; nor to the strength, and courage, and skilfulness of his army; or to any righteousness and merits of the king of Babylon; or to the justness of his cause; but to the sins of the people.

Ver. 4. *And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which [were] upon thine hands,* etc.] Or rather are; for, when he said these words, it is highly probable they were on him, though now ordered to be taken off; these were not what were put upon him by the Jews, when in the court of the prison; for rather his legs, than his hands, would have had fetters on them there; but what were put upon him by the Chaldeans, when he fell into their hands; though inadvertently done by the inferior officers, and without the knowledge of the princes, or of this captain, who loosed them; with these he came manacled to Ramah, with the rest of the captives, but now were loosed in the sight of them:

if it seem good unto thee to come with me unto Babylon, come, and one will look well unto thee; or, “I will set mine eyes upon thee”^{f739}; as the king of Babylon had ordered him to do, (²⁴⁹¹²Jeremiah 39:12); would favour him, protect him, provide for him, and use him in the most kind and generous manner:

but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me to Babylon, forbear; if it was not agreeable to him to leave his native country, and to go into Babylon, he would not urge it, but leave him to his liberty; yea, would advise him to continue where he was, and not take one step out of it:

behold, all the land [is] before thee; the land of Judea, which was at the disposal of the king of Babylon; and Jeremiah has a grant from him, by his officer, to settle where he pleased:

whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go; he left him to take his own way, and do as he thought fit; and this agrees with his master's orders to him, (²⁴⁹¹²Jeremiah 39:12).

Ver. 5. *Now while he was not yet gone back, [he said], go back also to Gedaliah, etc.]* These words, by different versions, are made difficult to be understood, both, whose words they are, and of whom they are spoken. Jarchi makes them to be words of God, and the sense this,

“and by all this he (Jeremiah) had no mind to return; and God said to him, go back to Gedaliah.”

According to the Targum, they are the words of Nebuzaradan, which paraphrases them thus;

“if thou wilt not return (that is, with him to Babylon, or rather to Jerusalem, or best to his own native place), or if thou wilt not dwell (that is, in this place), go back to Gedaliah.”

But of whom they are spoken interpreters differ. Some say of Zedekiah, as Cocceius; while he (Zedekiah) does not return, that is, to Jerusalem; which possibly he might, though as yet not determined by the king of Babylon; in the mean while is bid to go to Gedaliah, appointed governor. Others of Gedaliah, thus, while he (Gedaliah) does not return, but stays at Mizpah, go to him thither. Though it seems best to understand it of Jeremiah, who, having had leave from the captain, did not immediately set out anywhere; but, seething to be at a loss which way to go, Nebuzaradan gives him his advice; that seeing he did not care to go to Babylon, that he would go to Gedaliah

the son of, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over all the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people; this was one of the princes of Judah, who, during the siege, went over to the Chaldeans, and who was in great esteem with them; and being, no doubt, recommended to the king of Babylon by his generals, he made him governor of the land under him:

or go wherever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go; though he gave him his advice, he did not press it, but left him at full liberty to take his own way, and go into what part of the land he pleased, and settle in it:

so the captain of the guard gave him victuals, and a reward, and let him go; the prophet was just come out of prison, and destitute of the necessaries of life, and the land was laid waste by the enemy; and therefore he could not have subsisted without a supply, which was liberally given by the captain; not only food for present refreshment, and sufficient for his journey, which way soever he took, but a present of money or clothes, or both; which was very kind usage of a prophet by a Heathen officer.

Ver. 6. *Then went Jeremiah to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah,* etc.] A city in the tribe of Benjamin, not far from Ramathon; which, as Josephus says, was about five miles from Jerusalem. Jeremiah took the captain's advice, though it might have been better with him had he gone along with him to Babylon; but he chose rather to dwell in his own land, and suffer affliction with the people of God, than to dwell at ease in a foreign and idolatrous land:

and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land; among the poor people that Nebuzaradan left, who dwelt either at Mizpah or at Anathoth, and lived as they did.

Ver. 7. *Now when all the captains of the forces which [were] in the fields,* etc.] Not the captains of the king of Babylon's forces, but the captains of the king of Judah's forces; who either during the siege had lurked in the fields and villages, not daring to fall upon the Chaldean army, or attempt to raise the siege; or rather who fled with Zedekiah from Jerusalem, when the city was taken, and who deserted him, when he was apprehended, and shifted for themselves, and were dispersed about in the country, where they continued for some little time: but when

they and their men; their servants, or rather the common soldiers that were under them:

heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land; his viceroy or deputy governor in the land of Judea; being a prince of considerable note among the Jews, and in high favour with the king of Babylon:

and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive unto Babylon; even as many men, women, children, and poor, as were left in the land, and not carried captive; these were all committed to the care of this prince, to rule over and govern them; to keep them in subjection to the

king of Babylon; to employ them in cultivating the land, from whence some profit might arise to the conqueror and new proprietor of it.

Ver. 8. *Then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah*, etc.] Having heard that the Chaldean army was gone, and so were in no fear of that; and also that Gedaliah was made deputy governor, one of their own nation, a pious, prudent, good man, a man of ingenuity, mildness, and integrity; under whose government they might expect to live comfortably; and which was much preferable to captivity in a foreign country, though tributary to Babylon:

even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah; who was of the seed royal, (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 41:1);

and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah; two brothers, but who they were, or their father, is not known, no mention being made of them but in this story:

and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth; who he was is also uncertain:

and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite; so called from Netophah, a city of the tribe of Judah near Bethlehem, and are mentioned together, (^{<1872>}Ezra 2:22 ^{<1072>}Nehemiah 7:26); the Netophathites inhabited several villages, (^{<1396>}1 Chronicles 9:16); mention is made in the Misnic^{f740} writings of artichokes and olives this place was famous for:

and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite; a family so called from Maacah, Caleb's concubine, (^{<1388>}1 Chronicles 2:48);

they and their men; these generals, and the forces under their command.

Ver. 9. *And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan aware unto them and to their men*, etc.] They might express their fears, that should they continue with Gedaliah, as they were inclined to do, could they be safe; that seeing they had encouraged Zedekiah to hold out the siege to the last against the Chaldeans, and they should hear where they were, would demand them, and they, should be taken and delivered up into their hands; upon which Gedaliah not only promises them safety, but swears to them that they should live safely with him, and never be delivered up to the Chaldeans, and that he would undertake to indemnify them, and preserve them:

saying, fear not to serve the Chaldeans; as if it was an evil to do it; or as if their yoke was hard and intolerable; or as if it would be unprofitable, and turn to no account; or they should be always in danger of their lives:

dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you; settle in the land, and do not rove about from place to place like fugitives; nor go out of the land through fear of the king of Babylon, but continue in it, and live in subjection to him, and depend upon it you will live comfortably and safely.

Ver. 10. *As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans that come unto us*, etc.] Here he urges his own example, as before their welfare, to engage them to dwell in the land, and serve the Chaldeans; this was what he had determined to do, and had fixed upon Mizpah, a frontier town, and in the way to Babylon, as a proper seat of residence for him, as a governor under the king of Babylon: “to serve the Chaldeans”; or “to stand before them”^{f741}; that should come to him as messengers from the king of Babylon, to receive tribute or bring orders to him; all which he would take care of, as well as be an advocate for the Jews, and plead on their behalf, for favours to be bestowed on them; and particularly for these generals and their forces, that they might be pardoned, and dwell safely in the land: he suggests, that they need not trouble themselves about these things; all affairs of this kind he would take upon himself to transact; so that they would have nothing to fear, nor anything to do, but as follows:

but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil; that is, grapes to make wine of, and olives to make oil of, and summer fruits, such as figs and apples. The Targum interprets it lumps of figs; and so Jarchi; for fruits of trees are meant, and not fruits of the earth, as corn and wheat; for both barley and wheat harvests were over before this time; the city being taken in July, and, a month after that, Nebuzaradan came and carried off the captives, and left the poor with Gedaliah, appointed governor. It may be rendered, “autumnal fruits”^{f742}; for the word signifies autumn as well as summer;

and put [them] in your vessels; casks, bottles, and such like vessels, suitable to the things mentioned, and which were in common use, in order to be laid up for winter; and as they used to do in times of peace, not fearing any enemy to come and take them from them:

and dwell in your cities which ye have taken; not by force of arms, or as they pleased; but which they had held in possession formerly as the inheritances of their families, and which they had lately reassumed, or might however enter upon the quiet possession of.

Ver. 11. *Likewise, when all the Jews that [were] in Moab*, etc.] Who had fled thither, and to the places after mentioned, when the king of Babylon first invaded the land, and where they had continued unto this time:

and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that [were] in all the countries; in all other neighbouring countries, besides Moab, Ammon, and Edom; some fleeing one way, and some another, which lay nearest to their borders, or where they thought themselves safest: when they

heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah; a few of their brethren, to cultivate the land, and repopulated it:

and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan; whom they knew to be a wise and good man; these were engaging motives to them to return to their own land, being more desirable to live in than any other, could they enjoy peace and safety; and to dwell with their brethren, their own countrymen, and of the same religion with them, was more eligible than to dwell in foreign idolatrous countries; and especially since there was a government established to protect and defend them, and that in the hands of so worthy a prince as Gedaliah.

Ver. 12. *Even all the Jews returned from all places whither they were driven*, etc.] Through fear of the Chaldean army; they came all of them from the several countries before mentioned; so that here was like to be a happy settlement and a flourishing commonwealth again; here being princes and generals, soldiers and common people, in large numbers, that were returned and coalesced under the government of Gedaliah:

and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah; they came out of the several countries where they had been for some time, and entered the land of Judah; but did not take up their abode anywhere, till they had presented themselves to the governor, and put themselves under his protection; promising, no doubt, to regard him as such, and to be tributary to the Chaldeans; being assured by him, as the generals and their forces before, that all would be well with them, giving them free liberty to settle in the cities and villages to which they belonged; and accordingly they set out from Mizpah, and went to their respective habitations they had abandoned:

and gathered wine and summer fruits very much; (see Gill on “²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 40:10”); the people of the land being carried captive; and the Chaldean army not having ravaged these parts, or however had left an abundance of fruits, which these people, at their return, found and gathered.

Ver. 13. *Moreover, Johanan the son of Kareah*, etc.] Who seems to be the principal captain next to Ishmael, against whom an information is brought, and so not present; this captain is here only mentioned by name, and before next to Ishmael:

and all the captains of the forces that [were] in the fields; or that had been in the fields, and probably might be there again; (see ²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 40:7); that is, the rest of them, besides Johanan mentioned, and Ishmael the conspirator: these

came to Gedaliah to Mizpah; they had been with him before, and being satisfied by him of the safety they would be in, in the service of the Chaldeans, under him, either returned to the fields from whence they came, or went to those cities and villages he directed them to; but, like honest and faithful men, knowing there was a conspiracy against his life, came in a body to inform him of it, for the greater certainty of it; as judging he would be more ready to give heed unto it, than if only a single person had informed him of it, as well as to show their affection and loyalty to him.

Ver. 14. *And said unto him, dost thou certainly know*, etc.] Not that they thought he did know, or that the thing was so flagrant that he must know it; but that he might be assured of the truth of it, from the information they were now about to give him: or, “dost thou [not] in knowing know?”¹⁷⁴³ it is most certainly true; and thou mayest depend upon it that it is real matter of fact:

that Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to slay thee? very probably Ishmael, with the forces under him, fled to the king of the Ammonites upon the taking of Jerusalem; who, out of ill will to the Jews, always bore them by the Ammonites, envying their reestablishment under Gedaliah, and hoping to make a prey of them if their governor was removed, moved it to this young prince to dispatch him; and who might be forward enough to undertake it, being displeased that Gedaliah should be governor, which he might think was an office he had a better right to, being of the seed royal; and therefore readily agreed to be sent on this bloody errand, to take away the governor’s life: or, “to smite

[him] in the soul”; or “to smite his soul”^{f744}; that is, to give him a mortal blow, his death’s wound, to separate soul and body:

but Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not; being a good man, and knowing he had done nothing to disoblige him, could not believe a person of such birth and dignity would ever be guilty of such an action: very likely Ishmael had behaved in a very princely complaisant manner, and had expressed a great affection for the governor, and had been very familiar with him; and being of the seed royal, it is highly probable Gedaliah had shown a distinguished regard to him, which he might think was the reason of this charge being brought against him, out of envy to him; however, since it came from such a body of men, though he was not over credulous, yet he ought to have inquired into it, and provided for his own safety, and the public good, against the worst that might happen.

Ver. 15. *Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly*, etc.] Partly that he might, as he thought, more easily prevail upon him, and persuade him to believe the information given; and partly for the sake of the proposal he had to make to him, which it was not proper should be publicly made:

saying, let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know [it]; that he had slain him, or that Gedaliah had given him leave to do it:

wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews that are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish? suggesting, that it was not barely his losing his own life, which is, and ought to be, precious to every man, and should be carefully preserved, but it would be a public loss; the people, being without a governor, would disperse here and there, fearing their own lives and property would not be safe under a murderer; and that the Chaldeans would be so incensed by such an action, as to come and revenge his death on them; and thus being scattered about, some one way, and some another, would be no more under any form of government as a body politic, and so perish as such, at least; and thus all their hopes, which began to revive, of their beings commonwealth again, would be lost: with this argument Johanan hoped to prevail on Gedaliah to give him leave to slay the conspirator.

Ver. 16. *But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah*, etc.] In answer to his request, and the motion made by him:

thou shalt not do this thing; or, “do not do this thing”,^{f745}; dissuading him from it, as being unlawful to take away a man’s life in such a secret manner, without any legal process against him; though it seems to carry more in it, that he laid his commands upon him not to do it, and threatened him if he did:

for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael; or “a lie”,^{f746}; a falsehood, a mere calumny; which was not using Johanan well, neither kindly nor genteelly, who had expressed such a concern for him, and for the public good. The event related in the following chapter shows that the information was good, and that it was no lie or calumny that was told; and it would have been well for Gedaliah, and the people of the Jews, had he given credit to it; but the time was not come for the Jewish commonwealth to be restored; and things were thus suffered to be, for the further punishment of the sins of that people.

CHAPTER 41

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 41

This chapter relates the event of the conspiracy against Gedaliah Johanan and the princes had informed him of, to which he gave no credit; but it proved true. An account is given of the murder of Gedaliah, and of the Jews and Chaldeans with him; and of the perpetrators of it, (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 41:1-3); and of the chief of them, Ishmael's treacherous dealing with fourscore men that came from several parts to the house of God to offer sacrifice, who all perished by his hands, excepting ten, (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 41:4-9); and of the rest of the people at Mizpah being carried away, in order to be captives among the Ammonites, (^{<2410>}Jeremiah 41:10); and of Johanan, and the rest of the captives, hearing of all this, and coming out to fight with Ishmael; upon which the people deserted him, and he fled to the Ammonites, (^{<2411>}Jeremiah 41:11-15); and of Johanan and the people settling in the way to Egypt, to flee there on occasion, should the Chaldeans fall on them for what was done to the governor, which they feared, (^{<2416>}Jeremiah 41:16-18).

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass in the seventh month*, etc.] The month Tisri, which answers to part of our September, and part of October; according to the Jewish^{f747} chronicle, it was on the third day of this month, fifty two days after the destruction of the temple, that Gedaliah was slain; on which day a fast was kept by the Jews, after their return from captivity, on this occasion, called the fast of the seventh month, (^{<3015>}Zechariah 7:5 8:19); though, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, this event happened on the first day of the month, the beginning of the new year; but the fast was kept the day following, because the first day was a festival. Josephus^{f748} says it was thirty days after Johanan had departed from Gedaliah, having given him information of the conspiracy against him:

[that] Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal: not the son of King Zedekiah, but one of the remoter branches of the family; whether Elishama his father was the same with Elishama the scribe is not certain, (^{<2412>}Jeremiah 36:12,20); the Jews have a tradition that he descended from Jerahmeel, whose wife, Atarah, was the daughter of a

Heathen king, and was a proselyte, which Kimchi on the place relates; (see ~~1~~ 1 Chronicles 2:26,41); this circumstance, of his being akin to the royal family, is mentioned, to show that he envied the governor, and bore him a grudge for the honour he had, thinking that he had a better title to it, as being of the seed royal:

and the princes of the king, even ten men with him; some of the nobles of Zedekiah, who fled with him from Jerusalem, and deserted him when he was pursued and taken, and ever since had remained in the land; even ten of these joined with Ishmael in the conspiracy against Gedaliah, whom they bore an ill will to, for going over to the Chaldeans, and envying the power he was now possessed of. Some think these were ten ruffians, besides the princes of the king, since it may be rendered, “and the princes of the king, and ten men with him”; whom Ishmael and the princes took with them, as fit persons to assassinate the governor; and, besides, it is thought that eleven men were not sufficient to slay the Jews and the Chaldeans, as afterwards related; though it may be observed, that Ishmael, and these ten princes, did not come alone, as it can hardly be imagined they should, but with a number of servants and soldiers with them: these

came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah: they had been with him before, to whom he had sworn, and given them assurance of security; and they departed from him to their respective cities, seemingly satisfied; and now return, to pay him a friendly visit, as they pretended:

and there they did eat bread together at Mizpah; had a feast, and kept holiday together, it being a new moon, the first day of the month, and the beginning of the new year too; so that it was a high festival: and perhaps this season was fixed upon the rather, to cover their design, and to perpetrate it; pretending they came to keep the festival with him, and who, no doubt, liberally provided for them; for bread here is put for all provisions and accommodations.

Ver. 2. *Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him*, etc.] After they had eat and drank well, they rose up from their seats at table:

and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him; they all drew their swords and thrust at him, and were assisting in the murder of him; though it is probable that it was Ishmael that gave him the mortal wound, since the phrase, “and slew him”, is singular.

Josephus^{f749} says that Gedaliah prepared a splendid table, and made a sumptuous entertainment for them, and being drunk himself, which they observed, took the opportunity and slew him, and all at table with him:

whom the king Babylon had made governor over the land; which mentioned; both to aggravate the crime they were guilty of, and to observe the reason of it, and what it was that prompted them to it; for so the words may be rendered, “because the king of Babylon had made him governor over the land”^{f750}.

Ver. 3. *Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, [even] with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, etc.*] Not only those that were at table, but that were in the city also. Josephus^{f751} says, that having slain those that were at the feast with him, he went out in the night, and slew all the Jews in the city, and the soldiers that were left by the Babylonians in it; but this cannot be understood of all the individuals there, or of the main body of the people, for they were carried captive by him, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 41:9); but of those that opposed him, or were able to avenge the death of their governor, and he might suspect would do it:

and the Chaldeans that were found there, [and] the men of war; or, “even the men of war”^{f752}; this describes more particularly who they were that were slain, those of the Jews, and especially the Chaldeans, who were in military service; either the bodyguards of the governor, or the city guards, or both, whom Ishmael thought it advisable to cut off, lest they should fall upon him, and revenge the death of Gedaliah, and prevent his further designs.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, etc.*] That is, the day following, for it was in the night, as Josephus relates, as before observed, the murder was committed:

and no man knew [it]; not any out of the city, or in remote parts; for those that were in the city must be sensible of it; but as yet the report of it had not reached the neighbourhood, and much less distant parts; this is observed on account of the following story, and to show how easily the persons after mentioned were drawn in by Ishmael.

Ver. 5. *That there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, etc.*] Places in the ten tribes, and which belonged to the kingdom of Israel; so that it seems even at this distance of time, though the body of the ten tribes had been many years ago carried captive, yet there were still

some religious persons sons remaining, and who had a great regard to the temple worship at Jerusalem:

[even] fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves; as mourners for the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people. The two first of these rites, shaving the beard, and rending of clothes, were agreeably to the law; but that of cutting themselves, their flesh with their nails, or knives, was forbidden by it, (^{
}Leviticus 19:28 ^{
}Deuteronomy 14:1); so that these people seemed to have retained some of the Heathenish customs of the places where they lived; for the king of Assyria had placed colonies of Heathens in Samaria, and the cities of it, (^{
}2 Kings 17:24,30,31); these came

with offerings and incense in their hands: a meat offering made of fine flour, as the word signifies; and incense, or frankincense, which used to be put upon such an offering, (^{
}Leviticus 2:1);

to bring [them] to the house of the Lord; but the temple was now destroyed; wherefore either they thought there was a tabernacle or sanctuary erected at Mizpah for divine service and sacrifice; or they intended to offer these offerings on the spot where the temple of Jerusalem stood; and where they hoped to find an altar, if only of earth, and priests to sacrifice; though the Jewish commentators, Jarchi and Kimchi, observe, that when they first set out, they had not heard of the destruction of the temple, but heard of it in the way; and therefore came in a mourning habit; but before knew nothing of it; and therefore brought offerings with them, according to the former; but, according to the latter, they had heard before they set out of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people; but not of the burning of the temple, until they were on their journey.

Ver. 6. *And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth to Mizpah to meet them,* etc.] Hearing there was such a number of men upon the road to Jerusalem, in such a habit, and upon such a design, he thought it advisable to go out and meet them, and stop them, and decoy them into the city, and there destroy them; lest, if they should have got any hint of what had been done by him, they should spread it, and raise the country upon him, before he had executed his whole design:

weeping all along as he went; pretending equal concern for the destruction of the land, city, and temple, as they had:

and it came to pass, as he met them; when he came up to them, and some discourse had passed between them:

he said unto them, come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam; as if he was alive, and for whom he had a great respect, and whose character was well known to these men; and thought that this would be an inducement to come along with him: this he said either to try them, whether they had heard anything upon the road of the death of him; or as an argument to come into the city, suggesting the governor would gladly receive, and liberally entertain them. This looks as if their design was not to come to Mizpah, but to go on their way to Jerusalem, had they not been met with by him, and had he not thus solicited them.

Ver. 7. *And it was [so], when they came into the midst of the city,* etc.] Where Gedaliah's house was, to which he invited them; and as they went in, he shut up the court, as Josephus^{f753} says, and slew them, as it here follows:

that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, [and cast them] into the midst of the pit; when he had slain them, the fourscore men he had enticed into the city, except ten of them, he cast their dead bodies into a pit near at hand:

he, and the men that [were] with him; Ishmael and the ten princes, with what servants they brought with them; these were all concerned in the death of these men.

Ver. 8. *But ten men were found among them, that said unto Ishmael, slay us not,* etc.] They begged for their lives, using what follows as an argument to prevail upon him:

for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey; not that they had then a stock upon the ground at this time; for this being the seventh month, not only the barley and wheat harvests had been over long ago, but the rest of the fruits of the earth were gathered in: but this either means storehouses of such things in the field; or else that these things were hid in cells under ground, the land having been invaded, to secure them from the enemy, as is common to do in time of war; and so Josephus says^{f754}, they promised to deliver to him things hid in the fields, household goods, clothes, and corn:

so he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren; but saved them, and kept and carried them with him, in order to take these hidden treasures, which lay in his way to Ammon; for between Gibeon, where he was found, (^{2411D}Jeremiah 41:12); and Ammon, lay Samaria, Sichem, and Shiloh; at least it was not far out of his way to take that course; and thus he appears to be a covetous man, as well as a cruel one.

Ver. 9. *Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies*, etc.] Not only of those seventy men of Samaria, etc. but

of the men whom he had slain because of Gedaliah; because of their attachment to him: or, “by the hand of Gedaliah”^{f755}; not by him, as an instrument; unless, as Jarchi observes, because he rejected the advice of Johanan, and provided not for his safety, and his people, it was as if they were slain by him^{f756}; rather the sense is, that they were slain by the side of him, or in the, place where he was, or along with him^{f757}; see a like phrase in (^{2480D}Jeremiah 38:10); now both the one and the other were cast into one pit: and this

[was] that which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel; which was either a ditch that was cast up against the wall that went round the city; or a large pit or well in the midst of it, to hold water in it; and this was made by King Asa, either when he built and fortified Mizpah, (^{4115D}1 Kings 15:22); or, as the Targum here, when Baasha king of Israel besieged it; which he made that he might be provided for with water during the siege; or to hide himself in it; or stop the enemy from proceeding any further, should he enter:

[and] Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with [them that were] slain; which shows it rather to be a pit or well within the city than a ditch about it; since it was filled with the slain, with those that were slain with Gedaliah, and those seventy other persons; and by which he made the well useless to the inhabitants hereafter.

Ver. 10. *Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that [were] in Mizpah*, etc.] All that were not slain by him, that remained after the slaughter he had made, chiefly the unarmed people; they being men of war who fell by his sword:

[even] the king’s daughters; whether they were the daughters of Zedekiah, Jehoiakim, or Jehoiakim, says Kimchi, we know not; but it is most likely that they were the daughters of Zedekiah the last king, and who was just

taken and carried captive; and so Josephus^{f758} expressly calls them; these the king of Babylon regarded not, because they could neither fight, nor claim the kingdom; only the sons of the king, whom he slew before his eyes; though it may be these were not his daughters by his lawful wife, but by his concubines, and so were not properly of the royal family, and less regarded:

and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam; that were not slain, or carried captive by the Chaldeans; but were left at Mizpah, under the care and government of Gedaliah:

and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive: so that those who escaped one captivity fell into another, and even by the hand of one of their own countrymen:

and departed to go over to the Ammonites; he went from Mizpah with these captives, in order to carry them to the king of Ammon, and make them his slaves; who had put him upon this enterprise out of hatred to the Jews, and to enrich himself with their spoils. Some render it, “to go over with the Ammonites”^{f759}; which they suppose the ten men to be that came along with him and the princes, to commit the barbarities they did.

Ver. 11. *But when Johanan the son of Kareah, etc.]* The same that is mentioned (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 40:8,13,15); and who had informed Gedaliah of Ishmael’s designs against him, but he would not believe him:

and all the captains of the forces that [were] with him; his brother Jonathan, Seraiah, the sons of Ephai, and Jezaniah, (²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 40:8);

heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done; in murdering Gedaliah, and those that were with him, destroying seventy other persons he had decoyed, and carrying captive the rest of the people at Mizpah; for though Ishmael kept all this a secret as much as he could, for fear of these forces, and that he might get off clear to Ammon; yet, by some means or another, these captains came to hear of it, who, probably, were not at a great distance from Mizpah.

Ver. 12. *Then they took all the men, etc.]* All the soldiers that were under their command; this they did at once, believing the report to be true, as they had reason to do; since they knew of Ishmael’s designs, and had given

notice and warning of them to Gedaliah, though he would not listen to them:

and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah: resolving to give him battle, and to revenge the innocent blood he had shed, and rescue the captives out of his hands he was carrying to the Ammonites:

and found him by the great waters that [are] in Gibeon; taking this road to the country of Ammon, though it was not quite the direct road; either to avoid the forces of Johanan; or rather for the sake of the hid treasure at Shechem, or Shiloh, or Samaria, the ten men had promised him for their lives. These great waters were the same with the pool at Gibeon, where the servants of Ishbosheth and the servants of David met, and sat one on one side, and the other on the other; and where twelve young men on each side slew one another, and from thence called Helkathhazzurim, (~~1012~~ 2 Samuel 2:12-16); and the Targum calls it

“the pool of many waters, which were in Gibeon.”

Josephus^{f760} calls it a fountain in Hebron; which perhaps should be read Gibeon.

Ver. 13. *Now it came to pass, [that], when all the people which [were] with Ishmael,* etc.] That is, those which he had brought captives from Mizpah; not those that came with him thither:

saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that [were] with him, they were glad; looking upon them as their deliverers; hoping by their means to be preserved from being carried captives to the king of Ammon.

Ver. 14. *So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about,* etc.] Or turned about, and wheeled off from Ishmael, and deserted him at once; not at all regarding his authority, nor fearing his menaces or his power; being in sight of the captains and their forces, they were determined to join, and put themselves under their protection, knowing them to be their friends, and that they, came to deliver them:

and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah; turned their backs on Ishmael, and marched directly to Johanan, and the captains of the forces under them.

Ver. 15. *But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men*, etc.] Of the ten he brought with him, (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 41:1); two of them being slain in this skirmish, or taken by Johanan, or they fled another way:

and went to the Ammonites; who had put him upon, or however encouraged and assisted him in, his wicked attempts; though he returned to them not according to their wishes, nor with that honour and glory he thought to have done.

Ver. 16. *Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that [were] with him*, etc.] After Ishmael had made his escape, whom they did not think fit to pursue, and the people had committed themselves to their care and protection; and having brought them to Mizpah again, they took them from thence, as follows:

all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah from Mizpah, after [that] he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: those whom he had rescued from Ishmael, and had returned to Mizpah, be persuaded to go with him from thence; who are more particularly described, as follows:

[even] mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon; or “men, [even] men of war”¹⁷⁶¹; warlike men, soldiers; by which it appears that Ishmael must have more than ten men with him when he came to Mizpah, as well to do what he did there, as likewise to carry away such a number of captives, among which were mighty men, men of war, some of whom he had slain, besides women and children, to which are added eunuchs, not mentioned before, such as the king of Judah had in his court; (see ²⁴³⁷Jeremiah 38:7); but these were of no account with the Chaldeans; and therefore they left them behind with the poor of the land; perhaps Ebedmelech might be among them, whose safety and protection is promised, because of his kindness to Jeremiah, (²⁴⁹⁵Jeremiah 39:15-18). The Targum calls them princes: these were brought back by Johanan from Gibeon, where he met with Ishmael, to Mizpah; from whence they had been carried, and whom he took from thence again.

Ver. 17. *And they departed*, etc.] From Mizpah, Johanan, and the captains of the forces, and all the people rescued from Ishmael:

and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which is by Bethlehem: so called perhaps from Chimham, the son of Barzillai the Gileadite, to whom David or Solomon might give this place to dwell in, (^{<1087>}2 Samuel 19:37) (^{<1107>}1 Kings 2:7). The Targum is express for the former, calling it

“the habitation which David gave to Chimham, the son of Barzillai the Gileadite;”

and as it was near Bethlehem, it might be a part of the patrimony which belonged to David, as a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite; which he might give to Chimham, out of respect to his father Barzillai, who showed kindness to him when he was obliged to flee from Absalom; which, though it returned to David’s family in the year of jubilee, as all inheritances did, yet might continue to be called after the name of Chimham, in commemoration of the royal grant of it to him. Josephus¹⁷⁶² calls the name of the place Mandra. The reason why Johanan and those with him pitched on this place was, because it lay in the way

to go to enter into Egypt; where they had an inclination to go; having still a friendly regard to that people, and a confidence in them, as appears by some following chapters; and that they might be ready and at hand to flee thither, should the Chaldeans come against them, which they feared.

Ver. 18. *Because of the Chaldeans*, etc.] Which clause some think should have been joined to (^{<2417>}Jeremiah 41:17). This is a reason given why they departed from Mizpah, and dwelt at the habitation of Chimham in the way to Egypt; and which is explained in the next words:

for they were afraid of them; at least this they pretended, that the Chaldeans would come upon them, and cut them off, and revenge themselves on them:

because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land; no doubt it was provoking to them to hear that the viceroy or deputy governor of the king of Babylon was slain in this manner; and still more so, as there were many Chaldeans slain with him; but there was no reason to believe that the king of Babylon would carry his resentment against the Jews with Johanan, or take vengeance on them, who had so bravely appeared against the murderers, and had rescued the captives out of their hands: this seems only a pretence for their going into Egypt; for though they were promised safety

in Judah by the Prophet Jeremiah, yet they were still for going into Egypt, as the following chapters show.

CHAPTER 42

This chapter contains a request of the Jews to Jeremiah, to pray to the Lord for them to direct them, and the Lord's answer to it. The request is made by the captains and all the people, (²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 42:1-3); which Jeremiah undertook to present to the Lord, (²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 42:4); they promising to go according to the direction that should be given, (²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 42:5,6). After ten days an answer is returned, and the prophet calls the captains and people together to hear it, (²⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 42:7,8); the purport of which was, that if they continued in the land of Judah, it would be well with them, and they would be safe, (²⁴⁰⁸Jeremiah 42:9-12); but if they went into Egypt, they should die by the sword, famine, and pestilence, and be a curse and reproach, and never see their own land more, (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 42:13-18); they are charged with dissimulation and disobedience, (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 42:19-21); and the chapter is concluded with an assurance of their perishing by the above judgments in the place they were desirous of dwelling in, (²⁴⁰⁹Jeremiah 42:22).

Ver. 1. *Then all the captains of the forces*, etc.] Having taken up their residence at the habitation of Chimham, in their way to Egypt, where they were desirous of going, and being afraid of the Chaldeans, as they pretended:

and Johanan the son of Kareah; or, “even Johanan”^{f763}; especially and particularly he, the principal captain and chief spokesman in this affair:

and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah; said to be the son of a Maachathite, (²⁴¹⁰Jeremiah 40:8);

and all the people from the least even unto the greatest: a phrase expressive of the universality of them in the strongest terms:

came near; that is, to Jeremiah; who either was at Mizpah when Gedaliah was slain, but preserved by the Lord; and though carried captive by Ishmael with the rest, was rescued by Johanan; and now along with him: or rather after he had been with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and made a short stay there, he went to Anathoth, and there abode till now; and when Johanan took those that were left at Mizpah, he gathered together all the rest of the Jews in different places to him, in order to go to Egypt, and among the rest

the Prophet Jeremiah; for it can hardly be thought, had he been at Mizpah when Ishmael was there, he would have escaped without a miracle.

Ver. 2. *And said unto Jeremiah the prophet*, etc.] That is, some one of them, as the mouth of the whole body, very probably Johanan:

let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee; they treat the prophet with great respect, and are very humble and submissive, as if they were very hearty and sincere in their request:

and pray for us unto the Lord thy God; as if they were conscious of their own inability to pray for themselves, and of their unworthiness to call God their God; and as if they had a high opinion of, he prophet, as having an interest in God, and great power with him in prayer, whom he could not well deny anything:

[even] for all this remnant; this poor remnant, this handful of people, left of the sword, famine, and pestilence, left in the land by the Chaldeans, and who had escaped the cruelty of Ishmael; and for whom it might be hoped the Lord would still have a regard, since he had so mercifully and wonderfully preserved them:

for we are left [but] a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us; the number of the people had been very large, but by the judgments of the sword, famine, and pestilence, and captivity, they were greatly reduced; here was their whole number before the prophet; his eyes beheld them, and the condition they were in: this they said to move his compassion, and very likely to suggest to him how improbable it was that they should ever be able to continue in their own land; but that it would be better to put themselves under the protection of a neighbouring nation, Egypt, whither they were inclined to go; and hoped to have a word from the Lord by the prophet, to direct them thither.

Ver. 3. *That the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk*, etc.] Not the way of their duty as to religious worship, or their moral conversation, which was the way of God's commandments, and had been shown them, and they knew it; but which way they should steer their course for their safety; they had departed from Mizpah of themselves, and had taken up their dwelling at Geruthchimham, in the way to Egypt; whither they had set their faces, and where their hearts were, only they wanted the Lord's sanction for it, pretending they would be directed by him:

and the thing that we should do; the steps they should take in order to proceed; and what they should do before they left their own country, and went into another.

Ver. 4. *Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard [you],* etc.] He took notice of what they said to him, and found himself disposed to comply with their request, and readily granted it:

behold, I will pray unto the Lord your God, according to your words; be an intercessor for them; use his interest with his God, and their God; and, on account of relation, might expect to be heard; whom he would humbly entreat to direct what they should do, as they desired:

and it shall come to pass, [that] whatsoever thing the Lord shall answer you, I will declare [it] unto you; I will keep nothing back from you; but faithfully make known the whole mind and will of God, just as it is delivered, be it in what way soever: and though it is not expressed, he might suggest that he had some doubt on his mind whether they would obey it or not; and that he expected they would be open and free in declaring themselves on that point; since he had so readily complied with their request, and was determined to act the faithful part to them; hence the following reply:

Ver. 5. *Then they said to Jeremiah, the Lord be a true and faithful witness between us,* etc.] Which is the form of an oath; a solemn appeal to God, as a witness to what they were about to say, and to the sincerity of their hearts in it; who is true to his word, and faithful to his promises and threatenings; and who bears a true and faithful testimony, and will do what is just and right; and yet these people never intended to perform what they promised; which is a most shocking piece of atheism in a professing people; and who, at this very time, could not but observe the judgments of God upon their nation, city, and temple:

if we do not even according to all things for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us; they promise to do everything the Lord should signify by the prophet as his will; and, if they did not, wish the severest judgments of God might fall upon them.

Ver. 6. *Whether [it be] good, or whether [it be] evil,* etc.] Not morally good, or evil; for nothing but what is good, and not evil, in this sense, can come from God; but whether pleasantly or profitably good or evil; whether agreeable or disagreeable, pleasing or displeasing, advantageous or not;

whether it seemed to them good or evil, be it what it would in their opinion and esteem:

we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee; this was well spoken, had they been sincere in it; and had they implored and depended on the grace of God to have enabled them to obey; but they spoke not in the uprightness of their hearts; and, did they, it was with too much confidence of their own strength, and the power of their free will:

that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God; they spoke as if they knew their own interest; for so it was, that it was well or ill with those people, as they obeyed or disobeyed the voice of the Lord; and yet they acted not according to it; and, what was worse still, did not intend it. What a wretched scene of hypocrisy is here!

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah.*] Abarbinel thinks it was on the tenth day of the seventh month, the day of atonement, that the answer was returned; but it is clear, from the context, that it was ten days from the time the Jews applied to the prophet to inquire of the Lord for them, and he promised to do it, that this word came from the Lord to him; not that he was praying all this while, as some think; but, having spread the case before the Lord, he waited for an answer; which was deferred, that it might have the greater weight with it when it came; and that it might appear that it was not of the prophet himself, a device of his own; and chiefly this was to mortify these people, who were impatient of an answer; and whose hypocrisy the Lord knew; and whose disobedience he foresaw; and therefore did not think fit to give the answer directly, but keep them in suspense awhile.

Ver. 8. *Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah,* etc.] That is, Jeremiah, as soon as he had received the answer from the Lord, called to Johanan; who, after the death of Gedaliah, was a person of the greatest authority, and had the command of the people, to come unto him, and hear what it was: he either called to him vocally and by name; or he sent a proper messenger to him, to meet him at some convenient place, to receive it; and not him only, but

all the captains of the forces which [were] with him, and all the people, from the least even unto the greatest; they were all convened together, as it was proper they should, to hear the word of the Lord; and the rather, since they all joined in a request to the prophet, (²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 42:1).

Ver. 9. *And said unto them, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel,* etc.] That had chosen Israel; had a favour for that people, and bestowed many blessings on them, and continued in a covenant relation to them; and therefore what he said should be regarded by them. This preface is made by the prophet, to show that what he was about to say was not of himself, and in his own name; but was from the Lord, and who bore a good will to them; and therefore whatever he said should be taken in good part, and as what was best for them:

unto whom ye sent me, to present your supplication before him; or, “to cause your supplication to fall before him”¹⁷⁶⁴; to make it in the most humble and submissive manner; and which carries in it other arguments to engage them to obey the word of the Lord he brought to them; both because they had sent him to the Lord on this errand, to get a word from him; and by him had entreated him for it, in the most suppliant manner. The word from the Lord follows:

Ver. 10. *If ye will still abide in this land,* etc.] In the land of Judea, their native country, where they had always lived, and where they continued when their brethren were carried captive; and yet they thought of going out of it, which the Lord knew; and therefore to encourage them to abide in it, and not think of departing into Egypt; that if they would take up their residence in it, and determine to continue there, he thus promises them:

then will I build you, and not pull [you] down: and I will plant you, and not pluck [you] up; that is, they should be firm and stable, happy and prosperous; and abound with all kind of blessings, and increase in numbers, wealth, and riches. The metaphors are taken from building houses, and planting fields and vineyards:

for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you; not that he had done any unjust thing to them; or that he changed his mind concerning them; but that he had compassion on them, and would change his way and course of providence towards them, according to his unchangeable will.

Ver. 11. *Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid,* etc.] Lest he should revenge the death of Gedaliah upon them, which was a groundless fear; (see ²⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 41:18); or that they should be dealt hardly with by him, and be cruelly oppressed, and not able to live in subjection to him; (see ²⁴¹⁹Jeremiah 40:9);

be not afraid of him, saith the Lord: who, being omniscient, knew they were; and, being omnipotent, a greater King than the king of Babylon, the King of king?, they had no reason to fear anything from him, since they were under his protection:

for I [am] with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand; from his avenging and oppressing hand; though they were not to be delivered as yet from subjection to him, or being tributaries to him; which they might be, and yet dwell in peace and safety.

Ver. 12. *And I will show mercies unto you,* etc.] Bestow blessings of goodness upon them, out of pure mercy and compassion to them, and not according to their merits; or I will cause others to show mercy to them, even the king of Babylon, as follows: God shows mercy to men when he stirs up the compassion of others towards them:

that he may have mercy upon you; and not avenge the death of Gedaliah, or any way cruelly oppress them, but show them all the favour they could wish for or expect under such a government, and in such circumstances; giving them vineyards and fields, and allowing them to gather the fruits of them, and enjoy them:

and cause you to return to your own land: this is said, not of the captives in Babylon, as Kimchi and Abarbanel, since these were not to return till seventy years were ended; and when they did, it was not by the order and direction of the king of Babylon, but of the king of Persia: this is said of those who, from the time that Jerusalem had been besieged, had deserted their houses and fields, but should have liberty to return to them; or of those who more lately had been carried captive by Ishmael, from the places where they had settled, but should be returned to them again, and live peaceably and comfortably there under the government and protection of the king of Babylon.

Ver. 13. *But if ye say, we will not dwell in this land,* etc.] Or continue any longer in it, but go into Egypt;

neither obey the voice of the Lord your God; or, “so as not to hearken to” or “obey”, etc.^{f765}; for they did not say in so many words that they would not obey the voice of the Lord; they had promised they would; but resolving, against his declared will, that they would not abide in the land, but go into Egypt, was interpretatively saying they would not obey his voice.

Ver. 14. *Saying, no, but we will go into the land of Egypt,* etc.] It was all one as if they had said, no, we will not obey the voice of the Lord to continue in our own land; we are determined to go into Egypt, induced by the following reasons:

where we shall see no war; either internal, or with a foreign enemy; as both of late in their own land, and which they feared would be again; but promised themselves exemption from both in the land of Egypt, and therefore coveted to dwell there:

nor hear the sound of the trumpet; neither hear of wars nor rumours of wars; not the sound of the trumpet in the armies of the enemy, or among themselves, to gather together and prepare for battle; or, as Jarchi thinks, the sound of the trumpet blown by the watchman, giving notice to the people of the approach of an enemy:

nor have hunger of bread; as they had had while Judea was invaded and Jerusalem besieged, and a foreign army in the land; and though they had no reason to fear this now, yet they thought they should be more out of the danger of it in Egypt, a fruitful country, overflowed by the Nile:

and there will we dwell; in peace, prosperity, and safety: this was their resolution, to go and abide there; and this their confidence, that such would be their happy state.

Ver. 15. *And now therefore hear the word of the Lord, ye remnant of Judah,* etc.] A small remnant indeed, a few that were left in the land; who ought therefore to have admired the distinguishing goodness of Providence in preserving them in it; where they should have continued and made use of their privilege, to the glory of God and their mutual good:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; the Lord of armies above and below, the Lord God omnipotent, and so able to protect them in their land; and who had a peculiar favour to Israel, and stood in a particular relation to them, and therefore would do it, of which they had no reason to doubt; but, disobliging him, what judgments might they not expect?

if you wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt: are resolved upon it, and are actually engaged in it; turning their faces from Judea towards Egypt, and obstinately pursuing it, nor can be reclaimed from it: the phrase expresses their resolution, impudence, and obstinacy:

and go to sojourn there: to be sojourners and strangers there, as their fathers had been before; the remembrance of which was enough to set them against going into Egypt any more.

Ver. 16. *Then it shall come to pass,* etc.] That the various judgments following should come upon them:

[that] the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; that is, the sword; of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, which they feared they should fall by in Judea; this should come after them in Egypt, and there overtake them, as it did; Egypt being destroyed by the king of Babylon, as it was foretold it should, (^{<24625>}Jeremiah 46:25,26);

and the famine, whereof you were afraid, shalt follow close after you there in Egypt; the famine they were afraid would come upon them in Judea, should pursue them, overtake them, seize on them, and cleave unto them, in Egypt; thus the evils they thought to escape, by moving from one place, should befall them in another; there is no fleeing from the presence, power, and hand of God:

and there ye shall die; either by the sword, or by famine, or by pestilence, as in the (^{<2407>}Jeremiah 42:17).

Ver. 17. *So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there,* etc.] Not all that went into Egypt, but all that were resolutely set upon it; that were obstinately bent to go there, and did go, contrary to the express command of God; for otherwise there were some that were forced to go against their wills, as Jeremiah, Baruch, and no doubt others:

they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; three of the Lord's sore judgments; some should die by one, and some by another, and some by a third; all should die by one or the other:

and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them; that is, none of those who wilfully, and of their own accord, went down to Egypt; they all perished there, none could escape the hand of God, or the evil he determined to bring upon them; which is to be understood of the above judgments.

Ver. 18. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] (See Gill on ^{<24215>}Jeremiah 42:15");

as mine anger and my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; like a large hasty shower of rain; or rather like melted metal, which suddenly and swiftly runs, and spreads itself, and burns and consumes with a violent heat; such was the wrath of God on Jerusalem, in the destruction of it by the Chaldeans:

so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt; as soon as they had well got there, quickly after they were settled there; for it was in the time of the then present king of Egypt, Pharaohhophra, and by the then present king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, that the destruction of Egypt was, in which these Jews suffered:

and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; men should be astonished at the hand of God upon them, reproach them for their sins; and when they made any imprecation on themselves, it would be in this form, if it be so, let the same calamities come upon me as upon the Jews in Egypt:

and ye shall see this place no more; and so their case would be worse than their brethren in Babylon; who, after a term of years were expired, would return to their own land, which these would never see any more.

Ver. 19. *The Lord hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah*, etc.] Or, “unto you”^{f766}; by the mouth of the prophet; or, “against you”^{f767}; that which was contrary to their inclination and will, as follows:

go ye not into Egypt: this was the express command of God:

know certainly that I have admonished you this day; not to go into Egypt: or, “have testified unto you”^{f768}; the will of God concerning this matter; and therefore they could not plead ignorance.

Ver. 20. *For ye dissembled in your hearts*, etc.] Did not honestly and faithfully declare their intentions; they said one thing with their mouths, and meant another in their minds; they pretended they would act according to the will of God, as it should be made known to them by him, when they were determined to take their own way. Some render it, “ye have deceived [me] in your hearts”^{f769}; the prophet, so Kimchi; by that which was in their hearts, not declaring what was their real intention and design: or, “ye have deceived your souls”^{f770}; you have deceived yourselves and one another; I have not deceived you, nor the Lord, but you have put a cheat upon your

own souls: or, “you have used deceit against your souls”^{f771}; to the hurt of them, to your present ruin and everlasting destruction:

when ye sent me unto the Lord your God; the prophet did not go of himself, they desired him to go:

saying, pray for us unto the Lord our God; to be directed in the way they should go; so that the prophet did nothing but what they desired him to do:

and according to all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do [it]; they pressed him to a faithful declaration of the will of God to them, and promised they would act according to it. Now he had done all this; he had been wire God, prayed unto him as they requested, and had brought them his mind and will, and made a faithful relation of it, and yet they did not attend to it; so that the deceit was not in him, but in them, as follows:

Ver. 21. *And [now] I have this day declared [it] unto you*, etc.] The whole will of God, and had not kept back anything from them:

but ye have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God; or, “ye will not obey”^{f772}; the prophet knew they would not obey the command of the Lord not to go into Egypt, either by his conversation with them during the ten days the answer of the Lord was deferred, by which he plainly saw they were determined to go into Egypt; or by their countenances and behaviour, while he was delivering the Lord’s message to them; by what he observed in them, he knew what was said was not agreeable to them, and that their mind was to go into Egypt: or he had this, as others think, by divine revelation; though without that he knew the cast of this people, and what a rebellious and disobedient people they were, and had been, never obeying the voice of the Lord:

nor any [thing] for which he hath sent me unto you: not anyone particular thing respecting this present affair; nor indeed any of his prophecies had they regarded, with which he had been sent to them before.

Ver. 22. *Now therefore know certainly*, etc.] Or, “in knowing know”^{f773}; they might assure themselves of this, that it would certainly come to pass, and most justly and deservedly; since it was at their own request the prophet sought the mind of the Lord for them, and had faithfully related it to them, and they had promised to observe it; wherefore, should they go

into Egypt, as their inclination scented to be entirely that way, they must expect what follows:

that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; by one or other of these, or all of them; some by one, and some by another, as before threatened; evils they thought to escape by going thither, but which should surely follow them, and overtake them:

in the place whither ye desire to go [and] to sojourn; that is, in Egypt, to which they had a strong inclination, where they greatly desired to be, pleased themselves with the thoughts of, and which they chose of their own will and pleasure for their habitation.

CHAPTER 43

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 43

This chapter contains the answer of the princes and people to the prophet's message; a relation of their going into Egypt; and a prophecy of the destruction of that land. The persons that gave the answer are described, some by name, and all by their character; and the time of their giving it is mentioned, in which they charge the prophet with a falsehood; impute the whole to an instigation of Baruch, and an ill design of his, and so were disobedient to the command of God, (^{<2481>}Jeremiah 43:1-4); and went into Egypt, and carried all with them, of every rank, age, and sex, and even Baruch, and the prophet too, and came to Tahpanhes, the seat of the kings of Egypt, (^{<2485>}Jeremiah 43:5-7); upon this a prophecy is delivered out, concerning the destruction of that country, which is signified by a symbol explained; the person, the instrument of it, is mentioned by name, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; the devastation he should make is expressed by slaying with the sword, and carrying into captivity; by burning the temples of their gods, and breaking their images in pieces, (^{<2488>}Jeremiah 43:8-13).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, [that] when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people,* etc.] The princes and the people, the whole body of them, who had desired the prophet to seek the Lord for them, and whom he called together to relate his answer, and declare his will; (see ^{<2481>}Jeremiah 42:1,8); they heard him out, and that was as much as they did; for as soon as he had done, they rose up and contradicted him: however, he faithfully declared

all the words of the Lord their God, for which the Lord their God sent him to them, [even] all the words; which are related in the preceding chapter, which were the words of the Lord, and so ought to have been regarded; and the rather, as they were the words of their God, whom they professed, and which he had sent his prophet to declare unto them; and who had kept back nothing, but had made known the whole; he had told the truth, and nothing but the truth, and all the truth.

Ver. 2. *Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah*, etc.] Perhaps the same with Jezaniah, or a brother of his, (^{240B}Jeremiah 42:1); he is mentioned first, it may be, because he was the contriver of this scheme to go into Egypt, advised unto it, and was most for it it. The Septuagint and Arabic versions call him the son of Maaseiah;

and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men; the great men among them, who are commonly proud of their greatness; of their descent, family and blood; of their wealth and riches, and posts of honour; perhaps the captains of the forces are meant, who elsewhere are mentioned along with Johanan, (^{240B}Jeremiah 40:13 41:11,13,16 42:1,8); these were men full of themselves, had a high opinion of their own wisdom, and were prudent in their own eyes; and could not bear to be contradicted or advised by the prophet, nor even by the Lord himself; and are justly, by the Targum, called wicked men; and so the Syriac version renders it; their pride was the cause of their rebellion against God, and disobedience to him, and of their ungentle and insolent behaviour to the prophet

saying unto Jeremiah, thou speakest falsely: or, “a lie”^{f774}; it being contrary to their minds: so the prophets of the Lord, the ministers of the word, and even the word of God itself, are charged with falsehoods, when contrary to men’s sentiments and lusts;

the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, go not into Egypt to sojourn there; they did not care to own it was the word of the Lord, Whatever convictions of it they had in their minds; because they would not openly appear to be fighters against God, whom they professed to be their God; but deny that the prophet was sent by him with any such message to them; when they had all the reason to believe by former prophecies, which had had their fulfilment, that Jeremiah was a true prophet of the Lord, and that he had acted a very faithful part in the present affair: they themselves had sent him to the Lord to pray for them; he had done so, and the Lord had returned an answer by him; of which they had no reason to doubt, but their pride would not allow them to receive it.

Ver. 3. *But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us*, etc.] First they charge the prophet with a lie, and deny his mission from the Lord; and now to lessen the prophet’s crime they charged him with, they lay the blame on Baruch, as if he, out of ill will to them, had instigated the prophet to deliver such a message; which is not at all likely, that he should be prevailed upon by a younger person, and his secretary, to take such a step:

nor can it be thought that Baruch should have any interest to serve by it; and, besides, both he and the prophet were too good men, the one to instigate, and the other to be instigated, to declare a falsehood in the name of the Lord. The end proposed, they suggest, was

for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon; either that he or the prophet might deliver them into the hands of the Chaldeans, to be put to death by them, or be carried captive; which is not at all probable, it being inconsistent with that piety and humanity which were conspicuous in them both, and with their conduct, who chose rather to abide in their own land, with this small and despicable handful of people, than to go and live in the court of Babylon, where good care would have been taken of them.

Ver. 4. *So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people,* etc.] The generality of them, at least, all agreed together, were of the same mind, and in the same sentiment and practice: and so

obeyed not the voice of the Lord, to dwell in the land of Judah; it was the command of the Lord they should dwell there, and not go into Egypt; but they would not believe this was the voice of the Lord, only a scheme concerted between the prophet and Baruch; or which the former was instigated to deliver as the word of the Lord by the latter, and therefore would not give heed unto it; though the truth of the matter was, it was contrary to their inclination and resolution, and therefore, though they had reason to believe it was the will of God they should abide in their own land, yet they were determined they would not, but go into Egypt, as they, did.

Ver. 5. *But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces,* etc.] Who were united in their resolution to go into Egypt, contrary to the declared will of God:

took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; both such who were left in the land, when the rest were carried captive into Babylon, more particularly mentioned in (²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 43:6); and those, who upon the invasion of the land, and siege of Jerusalem, had fled to other countries, but now were returned from thence, in order to settle in it; having heard that a governor from among the Jews was appointed over it; as from Moab, Ammon, Edom, and other countries; (see ²⁴⁰¹Jeremiah 40:11,12);

these, some of their own accord, others through persuasion, and others by force, went along with, or were taken and carried by the above captains into Egypt.

Ver. 6. [*Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters,* etc.] This, according to the supplement of our version, explains who they were that were taken and had into Egypt, persons of every sex, age, and rank; though rather these words design and describe persons distinct from the former, that came out of other countries; (see ^{<2410>}Jeremiah 41:10);

and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan: even the poor of the land to till it; and to whom he gave fields and vineyards, and committed them to the care and government of Gedaliah, when the rest were carried captive to Babylon; and now these, in some sort, may be said to be carried captive by their own brethren into Egypt:

and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah; whom they forced with them, partly to punish them, and partly to give countenance to their conduct; but not without the will of God, who so ordered it in his providence, that they might have the prophet with them, to reprove them for their sins, and warn them of their danger and ruin, and so leave them inexcusable.

Ver. 7. *So they came into the land of Egypt,* etc.] They set out from the habitation of Chimham, where they were, (^{<2417>}Jeremiah 41:17); and proceeded on their journey, till they entered the land of Egypt:

for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord; to continue in Judea, and not to go into Egypt; and though the prophet of the Lord, who was with them, might, as they went along, advise them to go back, they regarded him not, but still went on:

thus came they [even] to Tahpanhes; the same with Hanes, (^{<2304>}Isaiah 30:4); and might be so called, as here, from a queen of Egypt of this name, (^{<3119>}1 Kings 11:19,20). The Septuagint version, and others after that, call it Taphnas. It is thought to be the Daphnae Pelusiae of Herodotus^{f775} It was a seat of the king of Egypt, as appears from (^{<2439>}Jeremiah 43:9); and no less a place would these proud men stop at, or take up with, but where the king's palace was. Tyrius^{f776} calls it Tapium, and says it was in his time a very small town.

Ver. 8. *Then came the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, at Tahpanhes, etc.]* Where he was with the rest the captains carried thither with them; and as soon as he and they had got here, the word of the Lord came unto him, declaring the destruction of this place, and of the whole land. Here Jerom says the prophet was stoned to death;

saying; as follows:

Ver. 9. *Take great stones in thine hand, etc.]* In both his hands, as big as he could carry:

and hide them in the clay in the brick kiln; there was much clay in Egypt, through the overflowing of the Nile, and particularly at this place Tahpanhes, which had its name of Pelusiae from hence; and here was a brick kiln; not a place where bricks were burnt, but where they were forged; and so here was the clay of which they were made, and in which these stones were to be hid:

which [is] at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes; this brick kiln stood not directly at the entrance into the king's palace, but at the door of a wall of a park or garden, which belonged to the palace, from whence there was an open way to it; here the stones were to be laid. Since a brick kiln so near a king's palace seems not agreeable, Gussetius^{f777} thinks *^bl m* signifies a poplar walk, from *hnb l*, a poplar tree, whose shade is very grateful, (²⁰⁴³Hosea 4:13); to which the courtiers betook themselves at certain times, and walked in for pleasure;

in the sight of the men of Judah; not in the sight of the Egyptians, who would not understand the design of it, nor were they to be instructed by it; but in the sight of the Jews, who would at once imagine that something was intended, being used to such symbols, and would inquire the meaning of it; and which is explained in (²⁴¹⁰Jeremiah 43:10).

Ver. 10. *And say unto them, etc.]* The men of Judah, now in Egypt:

thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; (see Gill on "²⁴¹⁵Jeremiah 42:15");

behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; as all men are by creation, and as he was in a very eminent sense, being an instrument in his hand of executing his designs, both on the Jews and other nations; him he would send for, and take to perform his counsel;

secretly work upon and dispose his mind to such an undertaking, and lay a train of providences, and, by a concourse of them, bring him to Egypt to do his will:

and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; which he had ordered the prophet to hide, and which he did by him; signifying, that the king at Babylon should come with his army against this city, and should take it, and set up his throne, and keep his court here:

and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them; his tent; he shall place here his beautiful one, as the word^{f778} signifies; this should be set up where these stones were laid, as if they were designed for the foundation of it, though they were only a symbol of it; and would be a token to the Jews, when accomplished, of the certainty of the divine prescience, and of prophecy, with respect to future events, even those the most minute and contingent.

Ver. 11. *And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt*, etc.] Here is a various reading: the “Cetib”, or textual writing, is, “when it cometh, it shall smite”; which Kimchi rightly interprets of the camp or army of Nebuchadnezzar; and the “Keri”, or marginal reading, which we follow, is, “when he cometh, he shall smite”; that is, the king of Babylon; both are to be received: when Nebuchadnezzar should come with his army to Tahpanhes, he would not only take that, but go through the land of Egypt, and subdue and destroy the inhabitants of it, all that dwelt in it, sojourners as well as natives; and so the Jews that were come hither to dwell, against the express command of God, to whom this prophecy was delivered, and to whom it has a particular respect:

[and deliver] such [as are] for death to death; who are appointed to death, either by pestilence or famine; that is, he shall oblige them to flee to, or block them up in, places where they shall perish by one or other of these:

and such [as are] for captivity to captivity: such as are designed to be carried captive, these shall be taken by him, and carried captive into Babylon, and the provinces of it:

and such [as are] for the sword to the sword; who are destined to fall by the sword, these should be slain by the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, and his soldiers; so that, what by one way or another, a general destruction should be made.

Ver. 12. *And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt,* etc.] Not only men should not be spared, but their gods also, and their temples should be burnt, as was usually done when cities were taken and destroyed: this is ascribed to God, to his wrath and vengeance; idolatry being a sin highly displeasing to him; though the Chaldeans were the instruments of it, yet it being done by the order, direction, and providence of God, it is rightly attributed to him:

and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives; that is, Nebuchadnezzar shall do this; he shall burn their temples, and carry away their idols of gold and silver; so Kimchi, who adds, or the sense is, he shall carry captive their worshippers; but rather the meaning is, he shall burn their idols, such as are made of wood, or any base matter, not worth saving; and he shall carry away with him their idols, such as are made of gold and silver, or any precious matter:

and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment. The Targum is,

“he shall spoil the land of Egypt.”

The meaning is, that he shall load and cover himself and his army with the spoil of the land of Egypt, as a shepherd covers himself with his garment; and he shall do it as easily as a shepherd puts on his coat; and as completely he shall roll up all the spoil, wealth, and riches of the land, and carry it off, even as a shepherd rolls up the covering of his tent; and, as Kimchi’s father observes, as well as puts on his garment, and leaves nothing behind him, when he removes from place to place; and as he is unmindful of his clothes, or what he wears in the heat of the day; but at night, when he returns home from keeping his sheep, puts on his clothes, the best he has; so should the king of Babylon and his army return richly laden with the spoil of Egypt, when he should leave it. Or the sense rather is, he shall cover the land of Egypt with his forces, as a shepherd is covered and wrapped up in his garment against the inclemency of the weather; or else, as Bochart^{f779} suggests, the destruction of Egypt may be compared to an old worn out garment, or such a mean and sordid garment as shepherds wear:

and he shall go forth from thence in peace: there shall be none to molest and disturb him, to stop him and take away the spoil from him, or hinder

his return to his own country; whither he should go in safety, and with great booty.

Ver. 13. *He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that [is] in the land of Egypt,* etc.] Or, “of Heliopolis”, as the Septuagint; the “city of the sun”; and so “Bethshemesh” here signifies the “house of the sun”; either it designs the temple of the sun, or the city where it was worshipped; as Heliopolis was famous for the worship of the sun, and for a magnificent temple in it, built for that purpose, and where abundance of persons resorted on that account, as Herodotus^{f780} observes; here were many images of the sun; and these now should be broke to pieces, when this city should become the city of destruction, as is foretold it should by Isaiah, (^{<23198>}Isaiah 19:18); where the Targum expressly calls it the city Bethshemesh, that is to be destroyed; (see Gill on “^{<23198>}Isaiah 19:18”). This is the same city that was formerly called On, and had a priest in Joseph’s time, (^{<0445>}Genesis 41:45);

and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire; which is repeated, that it might be taken notice of, and for the confirmation of it; though the words may be rendered, so as to remove the tautology, “and with the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn [it] with fire”^{f781}; that is, Bethshemesh, or “the house of the sun”, that shall not escape, being a principal temple. The gods they worshipped were Mnevis and Apis, which were oxen consecrated to the sun and moon^{f782}. So says Porphyry^{f783}, speaking of the Egyptians,

“they consecrate oxen to the sun and moon: that which is sacred to the sun at Heliopolis is called Mnevis, and is the greatest of them: it is very black, because much sun makes human bodies black; and the hairs of its tail, and of its whole body, contrary to other oxen, turn upwards, as the sun makes its course contrary to the pole; its testicles are the largest, because by the heat of the sun venereal desires are excited; hence the sun is said to make nature fruitful. To the moon they dedicate Taurus (or the bull), which they call Apis, and is blacker than others, bearing the signs of the sun and moon, because the light of the moon is from the sun; and the sign of the sun is the blackness of its body, and also the beetle that is under its tongue;”

and these were the images and gods of Bethshemesh or Heliopolis, that were to be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Of his expedition into Egypt,

whereby this prophecy was fulfilled, not only Josephus makes mention, but some Heathen writers gave plain hints of it. The Jewish historian says^{f784}, that Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, led his army into Coelesyria, and took it; and made war with the Ammonites and Moabites; and, having subdued these nations, made a push into Egypt, in order to destroy that, and slew the king of it: and Berosus says^{f785}, that

“Nebuchadnezzar having settled his affairs in Egypt, and other countries; and having committed to his friends the captives of the Jews, Phoenicians, Syrians, and the nations about Egypt, went to Babylon:”

and Megasthenes^{f786} relates, that

“he conquered the greatest part of Lybia (or Africa) and Iberia;”

or, as it is elsewhere^{f787} expressed,

“he led his army into Lybia and Iberia; and, having subdued these, carried colonies of them to the right of Pontus.”

CHAPTER 44

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 44

This chapter contains a sermon of Jeremiah's to the Jews in Egypt, reproving them for their idolatry there; their answer to it, expressing their resolution to continue in their idolatrous practices; and a denunciation of judgments upon them, of which a sign is given. The sermon begins with observing to them the destruction of Jerusalem, and the causes of it, idolatry and contempt of the prophets, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 44:1-6); then follows an expostulation with the present Jews for doing the same things, and exposing themselves and their posterity to the same punishment, (²⁴⁴⁷Jeremiah 44:7-10); upon which they are threatened with the sore judgments of God that should come upon them, and cut them off in general, (²⁴⁴¹Jeremiah 44:11-14); yet such were the impudence and obstinacy of this people, that they declared they would not hearken to the prophet, but persist in their idolatry; it having been better with them when they practised it than when they left it, (²⁴⁴⁵Jeremiah 44:15-19); to which the prophet replies by observing, that for the idolatry of their fathers their land was become a desolation and a curse, as at this day, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 44:20-23); and assures them that destruction would come from the Lord upon them, which he had sworn to, (²⁴⁴⁶Jeremiah 44:24-28); and a sign of it is given; the delivery of the king of Egypt into the hand of the king of Babylon, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 44:29,30).

Ver. 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, etc.*] Or, "unto all the Jews"^{f788}; the word came to him, that it might be delivered to them; or, "against all the Jews"^{f789}; they having gone into Egypt contrary to the will of God, and committing idolatry; and the word or sermon is full of threatenings and judgments denounced upon them:

which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros: this prophecy was delivered after the Jews were come to Tahpanhes, or Daphne; (see ²⁴³⁷Jeremiah 43:7); and had divided themselves, and were settled in different parts of the kingdom: some continued at Tahpanhes, where were the king's court and palace: others

went to Migdol, a place near the Red sea, just at the entrance into Egypt, from the land of Canaan, (¹²⁴²Exodus 14:2); called, by Herodotus, Magdulus^{f790}; and by Adrichomius^{f791} said to be distant about a mile and a quarter from Pelusium, or Sin, the strength of Egypt, (³⁷⁰⁵Ezekiel 30:15); others took up their residence at Noph, generally thought to be the city of Memphis. The Targum calls it Mappas; the same which is now called Grand Cairo; or, however, this city is near the place where Memphis stood: others dwelt in the country of Pathros, which perhaps had its name from Pathrusim, a son of Mizraim, (⁰¹⁰³Genesis 10:13,14). It is thought by Bochart and others to be the country of Thebais in Egypt, the same with the Nomos Phanturites, or Phaturites, of Pliny^{f792}; and in this country Jeremiah seems to have been when this word came to him, (²⁴⁴⁵Jeremiah 44:15); and from hence sent or carried it to the other places: saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] In which manner the prophecies of this book are frequently prefaced; (see ²⁴²⁵Jeremiah 42:15,18 43:10);

ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; they saw it with their bodily eyes; they could not but serve it in their minds; nay, had an experimental knowledge of it; they suffered it in part themselves, and must be convicted in their own consciences that it was from the hand of the Lord:

and, behold, this day they [are] a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein; lie waste, at this very time; the walls are broken down the houses are demolished; the goods in them carried off; no inhabitants left, or very few, to rebuild the cities, till the land, and dwell therein.

Ver. 3. *Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger,* etc.] The cause of this desolation was the wickedness they were guilty of; whereby they provoked the anger of God to bring this destruction on them. Sin is always provoking unto God; and though it may not be done on purpose to provoke him, which it sometimes seems to be; yet it eventually does, and is always the cause of punishment: God never punishes man without a cause, or for anything but sin:

in that they went to burn incense, [and] to serve other gods: the particular wickedness they were guilty of, and which was the cause of their ruin, was burning incense to idols, and worshipping them, than which nothing is

more provoking to God: and it was an aggravation of their sin, that they were gods

whom they knew not, [neither] they, you, nor your fathers; what they were; from whence they were; their original, and perhaps not their names; however, did not know that they were gods; nor could they prove them to be such; nay, might know that they were not: and now, since this was the sin which brought on the destruction they were eyewitnesses of, it should have been a caution to them that they went not into the same idolatrous practices, which yet they did not avoid; taking no warning from such awful instances of the divine displeasure.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, I sent unto you all my servants the prophets,* etc.] As many as he raised up, and employed in the work and service of prophesying; and these were many; and as many as they were, he sent them to them, one after another, to warn them of their sin and danger; but all to no purpose; which was a further aggravation of their wickedness: nay, though he was

rising early, and sending [them]; was very early in his messages to them; gave them timely warning, and let slip no opportunity of admonishing them; and this he did constantly; (see ^{247B}Jeremiah 7:13, 25);

saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate; all sin is abominable in itself, and hateful to God, especially idolatry; and therefore should not be done; it should be abominable to men, and hateful to them, because it is so to God; and after such a remonstrance as this, to commit it must be very aggravating and provoking.

Ver. 5. *But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear,* etc.] To the prophets sent unto them; to God by the prophets; to the words of his mouth, particularly to the above pathetic expostulation with them; at least, if they heard the words said, they did not attend unto them; they had not such an effect upon them, nor were they wrought upon by them, so as

to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense to other gods; to turn from their sins in general, and from their idolatry in particular; one instance of which is given, and which is put for the whole of idolatrous worship.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth,* etc.] Like melted metal, scalding lead, liquefied pitch, or anything of a bituminous

and sulphurous nature, which spreads, is consuming, and very intolerable; (see ^{242B}Jeremiah 42:18);

and was kindled in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; which, like a fire, burnt up and destroyed these cities, and particularly the large and spacious city of Jerusalem:

and they are wasted [and] desolate, as at this day; now lie in ruins, as may be seen by everyone; the thing is notorious; this is their present case; they are become desolate, and so continue.

Ver. 7. *Therefore now thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] The same epithets as before, (^{244D}Jeremiah 44:2); with an addition, that his words might carry more weight with them:

wherefore commit ye [this] great evil against your souls; the sin of idolatry, which is a great evil; a sin against God; a giving the glory to another, that belongs to him and not only so, but is against the souls of men; pernicious and ruinous to them, which brings destruction, even eternal wrath and damnation, on them; and this is an interesting argument why it should not be committed; nay, it was not only against God, and against themselves, but against their families, and the interest of them:

to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; not that they did this great evil or committed idolatry with this intention, to ruin their families and posterity; but so it was eventually; hereby they provoked the Lord to anger, to cut off the men that offered incense to idols; and the women their wives, whom they allowed so to do; and their children, who were brought up in the same practices; so that they would have none to succeed them, to bear their name, and inherit their land; unless God should be merciful, and not deal according to their deserts; for such was the nature of their crime, as to deserve an utter extirpation of them.

Ver. 8. *In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands,* etc.] Their sinful actions, particularly their idolatry, by worshipping images, the works of men's hands; and though it was the queen of heaven they worshipped, which their hands made not, yet it was before images they did that; besides, the things they did to her were the worlds of their hands, as sacrificing, pouring out drink offerings, and as follows:

burning incense; which they did, not only to her, but

to other gods in the land of Egypt; where they were very numerous:

whither ye be gone to dwell; against the express will and command of God:

that ye might cut yourselves off; as from the worship of God, so from being his people, and from being under his care and protection, and from all privileges temporal and spiritual:

and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? not that this was their view, end, and design, but this was the event so it was, that they were looked upon as an accursed people of God and man, and their names were taken up for a proverb and a reproach everywhere.

Ver. 9. *Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers*, etc.] And what judgments it brought upon them; meaning not their more remote ancestors in the wilderness, and the idolatry they committed, and the punishment inflicted upon them for it; but more near, such who lived a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, and whose sins had brought on that; and therefore could not be easily forgotten by them; or, if they were forgotten, it argued great stupidity:

and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives; by whom they were drawn into idolatry, particularly Solomon; and it is in the original text, “the wickedness of his wives”^{f793}; and Dr. Lightfoot thinks respect is had to Solomon’s wives; but it may be understood distributively of everyone of their wives, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it^{f794}:

and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which you have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? where they had built altars, and worshipped strange gods, they, and their wives, as well as those who were carried captive; and which were the cause of all those evils that came upon them; these, being recent things, could not be forgotten by them; or however should have been remembered, and that so as to have deterred them from going into such practices again, as they now did in Egypt.

Ver. 10. *They are not humbled [even] unto this day*, etc.] Not contrite under a sense of their sins, nor truly penitent for them; not humbled before God nor man, so as to acknowledge them, mourn over them, and forsake them. The Targum is,

“they cease not unto this day;”

that is, from committing the same things; which shows they had no true humiliation and contrition for them. This is to be understood, not of the Jews in Babylon only, but chiefly of those in Egypt; there being a change of person from you to they; the Lord not vouchsafing to speak to them who were so obdurate and impenitent, but of them, and to some other, as the prophet, concerning them:

neither have they feared; the Lord; neither his goodness nor his judgments; or served and worshipped him with reverence and godly fear, as became them:

nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you, and before your fathers; a full proof this that they neither had true repentance for their sins, nor the fear of God in their hearts; for, had they, these would have led them to obedience to the divine will.

Ver. 11. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] Because of these sins of idolatry, impenitence, and disobedience:

I will set my face against you for evil; to bring the evil of punishment upon them, for the evil of sin committed by them: this the Lord determined with himself, and resolved to do; which the phrase, “setting [his] face against [them]”, is expressive of, by way of retaliation for their setting their faces to go down to Egypt, as well as of his wrath and indignation against them:

and to cut off all Judah; not the whole tribe of Judah; not those that were in Babylon, which were by far the greatest number of that tribe; but those that were in Egypt.

Ver. 12. *And I will take the remnant of Judah,* etc.] Such as remained of that tribe in the land of Judea after the captivity: and not all of them, but such

that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there: who were bent upon going thither, notwithstanding all the remonstrances made to them to the contrary; and were gone thither, and were now actually sojourners there: this describes such persons who wilfully, and of their own accord, went thither; and excepts those who were over-persuaded or over-powered to go along with them:

and they shall all be consumed, [and] fall in the land of Egypt; not by natural death, one after another; but by the judgments of God, as follows:

they shall [even] be consumed by the sword [and] by the famine; by the sword of the king of Babylon; and by famine, occasioned by a foreign army and sieges:

they shall die; from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and to express the universality of the destruction; that it should reach to persons of every age, state and condition, rank and degree, young and old, high and low, rich and poor:

and they shall be an execration, [and] an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; (see Gill on “²⁴²¹⁸Jeremiah 42:18”).

Ver. 13. *For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt,* etc.] Or “visit”; in a way of wrath and vengeance; meaning not the native inhabitants of Egypt; though these should be punished, and in whose punishment the Jews would be involved; but here it means the Jews that dwelt in Egypt, who went thither contrary to the will of God, and there settled:

as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; signifying that the same punishment that came upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and other cities of Judea, should come upon these Jews in Egypt, and as sure as they came upon them; even those which they thought to have escaped, by leaving Judea, and going to Egypt.

Ver. 14. *So that none of the remnant of Judah,* etc.] Which were left in the land of Judea after the captivity:

which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain; escape either the sword, or the famine, or the pestilence, or remain in the land of Egypt, or in the land of the living; so general should be the destruction:

that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return there; or, “have lift up their souls¹⁷⁹⁵ to return there”: most earnestly desire it, and have raised hopes and expectations of it; for it seems that those Jews that went into Egypt did not go with a design to settle there for ever; but to return to their own land, when there should be

better times, and more safety and security there; particularly when they thought the affair of the death of Gedaliah would be no further inquired into:

for none shall return but such as shall escape; out of the hands of Johanan, and the rest of the captains; and should get out of the land of Egypt before the Chaldeans came into it. Some understand this of those that should escape out of Babylon; that none should return to Judea but those of that captivity, who should be released by the proclamation of Cyrus. Jarchi interprets it of Jeremiah and Baruch, whom Nebuchadnezzar removed to Babylon, when Egypt fell into his hands, in the twenty seventh year of his reign, as is related in the Jewish chronicles^{f796}.

Ver. 15. *Then all the men which knew that their wives had burnt incense unto other gods*, etc.] Which was a rite God appointed to be used in his worship; and is here put for the whole of religious worship, which was given to idols by the Jewish women; this their husbands knew of, and winked at, and did not restrain them from it, as they should; they seem to be themselves irreligious persons, a sort of atheists, who had no regard for the true God, nor any other gods, and cared not who were worshipped:

and all the women that stood by; the wives of the men that stood by their husbands, and other women that stood and heard Jeremiah's sermon, and were conscious to themselves of being guilty of what they were charged with by him:

a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros; in that part of Egypt so called, which was Thebais: here it seems Jeremiah was with that part of the people that took up their residence there; and by this it appears there was a large number of them, men and women, and who were all become idolaters, or connivers at, and encouragers of, such as were: these

answered Jeremiah, saying, one in the name of the rest made a reply, as follows:

Ver. 16. *[As for] the word that thou has, spoken unto us in the name of the Lord*, etc.] Which they did not believe that it came from the Lord, but was a device of the prophet's, and a lie, as in (^{24RD}Jeremiah 43:2); and if it did come from the Lord, their impudence was risen to such a pitch, that they were determined not to regard it:

we will not hearken unto thee: to thy words; neither to thy exhortations, reproofs, or menaces, even though thou comest and speakest in the name of the Lord. This, and what follows, is an unparalleled instance of the pride, obstinacy, enmity, and rebellion of the carnal mind against God.

Ver. 17. *But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth*, etc.] And not what went out of the mouth of God, or his prophet: but whoever they had resolved on within themselves to do, and had declared with their mouths they would, or had vowed with their lips; so Abarbinel interprets it of a vow; this they were determined to perform, let God and his prophet say what they would:

to burn incense unto the queen of heaven; which, according to Abarbinel, was the moon, which is the queen of heaven, as the sun is king; it was called by the Heathens Coelestis and Urania: but there are some that think that some great star in heaven, that is king over the rest, is meant; so the Targum renders it, the star of heaven; which they understand of the sun, as Kimchi observes; the sun being much worshipped in Egypt; but Kimchi himself derives the word for “queen”, here used, not from the root which signifies “to reign”; but from another, which signifies “to work”; and so renders it, “the work”, or “frame of heaven”; the sun, moon, and stars; and so the Syriac version is “the host of heaven”; (see Gill on “²⁴⁷⁸Jeremiah 7:18”); and to this deity, be it what it will, they burned incense; and they were determined to continue it, and all other idolatrous rites and practices particularly:

and to pour out drink offerings unto her; which was another part of ceremonial worship, which the true God required of the people of Israel; but were here resolved to give it to another god:

as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; they plead custom and prescription, antiquity and authority; the examples of ancestors and kings; the general practice of their nation, both in the metropolis of it, and in its several cities, where it not only universally obtained, but was visibly and openly done; and, more, they plead the temporal advantage of it:

for [then] had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil: had fulness of bread, and of all provisions; health, peace, and safety; and no judgment was upon them, seen or felt by them; the sword, famine, or pestilence. The goddess Coelestis, or the moon, which seems to be here

meant, was, as Tertullian^{f797} says “pluviarum pollicitatrix”, “the promiser of rains” and so of all good things: or, “were merry”^{f798}, as the Heathens were at their new moons, when they indulged to their cups, and lived jovially; hence that of Horace^{f799}.

Ver. 18. *But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven*, etc.] Or were restrained from it, as the Targum, through the force of the prophet’s sermons, or by the authority of their governors: this Abarbinel thinks was in the times of Jehoiakim, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah; but perhaps it only regards some space of time in the latter part of Zedekiah’s reign, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, when they refrained from their idolatry; fearing the wrath of God, and what was coming upon them; though Kimchi is of opinion that they never ceased; but they would say, when any evil came upon them, it was because they ceased to burn incense to the queen of heaven, of were not so ready to it as at first:

and to pour out drink offerings to her: another part of worship they performed to her but for a while left off: and from that time they say,

we have wanted all [things], and have been consumed by the sword, and by the famine; wanted all the necessaries of life, meat and drink, and clothing and a habitation to dwell in; and multitudes were destroyed by the sword of the king of Babylon; and others perished with famine during the siege; these evils they imputed to their cessation from idolatry, when it was the very thing that brought them on them.

Ver. 19. *And when we burnt incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her*, etc.] Which they owned they did, and which they were not ashamed of, and were determined to go on with; and were only sorry that they had at any time omitted such service:

did we make cakes to worship her; or, “to make her glad”^{f800}, as Kimchi; interpreting the word by an antiphrasis; it having a contrary signification, to grieve or to make sorrowful; and from hence idols have their name sometimes, because in the issue they bring grief and trouble to their worshippers; hence some render it, “to make her an idol”^{f801}; or them, the cakes, an idol; these had, as Jarchi says, the likeness of the idol impressed upon them:

and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men? they own they did these things but not without the knowledge and consent at least, if not with the presence, of their husbands; hence these words seem to be the words of

the women. Some indeed think they speak all along, from (²⁴⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 44:16); or one in the name of the rest; it may be one of Zedekiah's daughters; but however, if the men spoke what is said in the preceding verses, the women, being provoked, could hold their peace no longer, but broke in, and uttered these words; though some render the last clause, "without our principal men"^{f802}; and so take them to be the words of the people in general; who urge, in their own defence, that what they did they did with the direction, approbation, and leading example of their kings and governors.

Ver. 20. *Then Jeremiah said unto all the people*, etc.] Immediately, being influenced, directed, and assisted by the Spirit of God; though what he says, in (²⁴⁴²¹Jeremiah 44:21-23); he does not declare as coming from the Lord; but what was upon his mind, and was a full refutation of all that had been said: and which he delivered

to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him [that] answer; in which they all agreed, though delivered by one; and to which he made a reply:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 21. *That incense that ye burnt in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem*, etc.] To false gods, to the queen of heaven, to the host thereof:

ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land; on which account they pleaded antiquity, authority, and the general consent of the people, as on their side, which the prophet allows; but it all signified nothing:

did not the Lord remember them, and came it [not] into his mind? either the incense they offered up to strange gods, or the persons that did it? did he take no notice of these idolatrous practices, and of these idolaters? he did; he laid up these things in his mind; he showed a proper resentment of them, and in due time punished for them.

Ver. 22. *So that the Lord could no longer forbear*, etc.] He did forbear a long time, and did not stir up all his wrath, but waited to see if these people would repent of their sins, and turn from them; during which time of his forbearance, things might be well with them, as they had said, and they enjoyed peace and plenty; but persisting in their sins, and growing worse

and worse, he could bear with them no longer, but brought down his judgments upon them. The reason is expressed,

because of the evil of your doings, [and] because of the abominations which ye have committed; the incense they had burnt; the drink offerings they had poured out to idols; and such like idolatrous practices, which were evil in themselves, contrary to the law and will of God, and abominable unto him:

therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day; the land of Israel, wasted by the Chaldeans, and left uncultivated, was like a barren wilderness, to the astonishment of all that passed through it, who had known what a fruitful country it had been; the curse of God being apparently on it, and scarce an inhabitant left in it; which was the case at this present instant, as the Jews, to whom the prophet directs his discourse, well knew; and to whom he appeals for the truth of it: now all this was for the sins, particularly the idolatry, they had been guilty of; as is further explained in (²⁴⁴²³Jeremiah 44:23).

Ver. 23. *And because ye have burnt incense*, etc.] Not to Jehovah, but to the queen of heaven; which they owned they did, and determined they would; asserting it was better with them when they did it than when they omitted it; for which reason the prophet particularly mentions it, and assigns it as the cause of the present ruin and destruction of their land, city, and temple:

and because ye have sinned against the Lord; by worshipping idols; all sin is against the Lord, but especially idolatry:

and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord; by his prophets, who cautioned them against idolatry, reproved them for it, and told them what would be the consequence of it; but this they hearkened not unto, which was an aggravation of their sin:

nor walked in his law; the moral law, according to it; which is a rule of walk and conversation:

nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; as not in the moral law, so neither in the ceremonial law, and the rites of that; nor in the judicial law, and the testifications of the will of God in either of them:

therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day: that is, the desolation on their land, as in (²⁴²³Jeremiah 44:23).

Ver. 24. *Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women,* etc.] To all the people in general, and to the women in particular, who had a principal concern in these idolatrous practices:

hear the word of the Lord, all Judah that [are] in the land of Egypt; all of the tribe of Judah that were in Egypt; not in Pathros only, but in other parts of Egypt; this distinguishes them from those of Judah that were in Babylon, and in other provinces; and tacitly points at their sin in going to Egypt, which was the leading step to then fresh acts of idolatry they had been guilty of; these are called upon to hear the word of the Lord: what the prophet had said before was what was upon his mind without immediate inspiration, or as a direct message from the Lord; but what follows is.

Ver. 25. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] Which is an usual preface to prophecies coming from him:

saying; as follows:

ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand; they had said they would burn incense to the queen of heaven, and they had done it; they had been as good as their word, true to it, though in a bad thing: their words and works agreed, and so did the men and their wives: the women had before said they did not perform worship to the queen of heaven without their men; this is acknowledged by the Lord, and their confession is improved against them:

saying, we will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her; they thought, because they made a vow that they would do it, that it was therefore obligatory upon them, and this would be sufficient to justify them before God, and excuse it to him; whereas nothing that is sinful ought to be vowed or performed; and to vow and perform in such a case is doubly criminal: a vow cannot make that lawful which is unlawful; and the performance of it can never be a laudable action:

ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows; they were resolutely set upon it, and nothing would hinder their performance of it; this shows the obstinacy and firmness of their minds: though some think these words are spoken ironically.

Ver. 26. *Therefore hear ye the word of the Lord, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt,* etc.] (See Gill on “^{244b}Jeremiah 44:24”); since you have made your vows, and will perform them, I will take an oath, and abide by it:

behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord; by his name Jehovah, which is incommunicable, and expressive of his eternity and immutability; or by himself, his name being himself, and than which he can swear by no greater, (^{363b}Hebrews 6:13);

that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, the Lord God liveth: this cannot be understood of the name of the Lord being called upon them, or of their being called by his name, and reckoned his people, which is the sense of Abarbinel; since this respects not a name by which they should be named, but which they should name; and intends their use of the divine name in an oath, of which this is a form, “the Lord God liveth”: or as sure as the Lord lives, or by the living God, it is so and so; and especially as used in their vows to burn incense to the queen of heaven, they vowing by the living God that they would do so, which must be very abominable to him; and therefore he solemnly swears there should not be a Jew in all Egypt that should use it; the reason is, because everyone of them that did should be cut off, as follows:

Ver. 27. *Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good,* etc.] To bring the evil of punishment upon them, the particulars of which are after mentioned, and not the blessings of goodness, as formerly; and this he would be as careful and diligent to bring about, as one that watches all opportunities to do hurt to another; and it must be dreadful to be under the vigilant avenging eye of God:

and all the men of Judah that [are] in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword, and by the famine, until there be an end of them; that is, the greatest part of them, excepting a few that shall escape, hereafter mentioned, particularly Jeremiah and Baruch; but as for the main body of such, who went of their own accord to Egypt, and settled, and fell: into the idolatry of the country; these should all perish one after another, till there were none of them left; either by the sword of the king of Babylon; or by famine, which his army and sieges would produce; or by pestilence, though not here mentioned, yet is in (^{244c}Jeremiah 44:13).

Ver. 28. *Yet a small number that shall escape the sword*, etc.] The sword of the king of Babylon, and the other judgments, and which would be but very few; “men of number”^{f803}, as in the Hebrew text, which might easily be numbered; Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah, and some few righteous persons among them, as Kimchi and Abarbinel observe:

shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah; they shall make their escape out of the land of Egypt, whither they did not go willingly; and, by one providence or another, shall come back to their native country, the land of Judea, When the rest will not; which must be a distinguishing your to them:

and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know what words shall stand, mine or theirs; those that are left of the sword, famine, and pestilence, shall know experimentally, by facts laid down, whose words have their effect and accomplishment, stand firm and sure; whether theirs, that promised impunity and safety, peace and prosperity, in their idolatrous practices; or the Lord’s, which threatened with ruin and destruction. The Lord is true, and every man a liar; whatever devices are in a man’s heart, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.

Ver. 29. *And this [shall be] a sign unto you, saith the Lord, that I will punish you in this place*, etc.] In Egypt, as before threatened; and what follows is a confirming sign that so it would be; and which, when observed by some, gave the hint to them to make their escape; though others, being hardened in their idolatry, impenitence, and unbelief, continued, and perished:

that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil; which sign, when they should see, they might assure themselves that the threatenings of evil to them would certainly be accomplished, as sure as they saw the sign given, which is as follows:

Ver. 30. *Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will give Pharaohhophra king of Egypt*, etc.] Pharaoh was a common name of the kings of Egypt, who usually had some surname, by which they were distinguished; and the surname of the then present king of Egypt was Hophra; whom the Septuagint and others call Vaphres; and, Herodotus^{f804} Apries. The Targum renders it Pharaoh the broken; and the Syriac version Pharaoh the

lame: now it is here predicted as a sign of the destruction of the Jews in Egypt, which should follow after, that God would deliver this king

into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; either into the hands of his rebellious subjects, headed by Amasis, by whom he was kept alive for a while after taken, and then put to death, as Herodotus reports; or rather into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar; for Josephus says^{f805}, that he, in the twenty third year of his reign, which was four or five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, having subdued the Syrians, Ammonites, and Moabites, entered Egypt in a hostile manner, and slew the then remaining king, and set up another; and this is confirmed by what follows:

as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and that sought his life; in like manner, and as sure as he had done the one, he would do the other; and he puts the Jews in mind of what he had done by him, and which they had full and certain knowledge of; and might from hence conclude that this also would be accomplished, here given as a sign of their own ruin; and which, when they saw come to pass, might know that it was at hand; and, indeed, the king of Egypt, in whom they trusted, being taken by his enemies, and his country wasted, they must in course fall a prey to the conqueror.

CHAPTER 45

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 45

This chapter contains a prophecy, delivered to Baruch for his personal use. The time of it is expressed, (^{245D}Jeremiah 45:1); a reproof is given him for his immoderate grief and sorrow, (^{245D}Jeremiah 45:2,3); the destruction of the land of Judea is prophesied of; and therefore it was wrong in him to seek great things for himself at such a time; however, he is assured of his own safety, (^{245D}Jeremiah 45:4,5).

Ver. 1. *The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah*, etc.] Who was his amanuensis or scribe; and this word he spake not to him of himself, but in the name of the Lord, as coming from him; so the Targum calls it,

“the word of prophecy which Jeremiah the prophet prophesied concerning Baruch the son of Neriah:”

when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah; not what immediately precede, concerning the destruction of the Jews in Egypt; which were delivered out many years after the writing of the roll by Baruch here referred to; and which was done, as here said,

in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; which was eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem; so that this prophecy does not stand in order, which would more properly have followed the thirty sixth chapter; where we have an account of what Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah in a roll, and read to the people, and after that to the princes; which exposed him to danger, and caused the grief expressed by him in this chapter; but it being written to a private person, is postponed to this place:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch.*] Whom he knew by name, had a great regard for, and honours with this prophecy; and, being an Israelite, both in a literal and spiritual sense, he

addresses him as the God of Israel, and as being his covenant God; in whom he should put his trust, and from whom he might expect safety and protection in the worst of times; and to whose sovereign will, in all the dispensations of his providence, he ought to have humbly and patiently submitted.

Ver. 3. *Thou didst say, woe is me now!* etc.] What will become of me? I am ruined and undone; this he said in his heart, if not with his lips, perhaps both ways; and when the king gave orders for the apprehending of him and the prophet, being provoked at the roll which he had wrote and read, (^{f805}Jeremiah 36:26);

for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow; caused him grief upon grief, sorrow upon sorrow, an abundance of it; for there was a variety of things which occasioned grief and sorrow; the trouble of his office, as secretary to the prophet; the reproach east upon him by the people for it; the grievous things contained in the prophecies he transcribed, concerning the ruin of his people and nation; the king's displeasure at the roll, and his burning it; to which was added the danger he was exposed unto for writing it; and especially, as he might apprehend, for writing it over again, after it was burnt; to which were annexed new threatenings, and such as personally concerned the king;

I fainted in my sighing; or "with" it; he sighed and groaned at what he saw coming upon his country, and particularly upon himself; it quite overcame his spirits; he sunk and swooned away: or "I laboured in my sighing"^{f806}; amidst his sighs and groans, he prayed to the Lord, and laboured in prayer, that he might be delivered from the evils he feared were coming upon him:

and I find no rest; from his grief, sorrow, and sighing; no cessation of that; no serenity and composure of mind; no answer of prayer from God. The Targum is,

"and I found not prophecy."

And the Jewish commentators, as Jarchi, Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Abendana, from the ancient Midrashes, interpret this grief of Baruch to be on account of his not having the gift of prophecy bestowed on him, which he expected by being a servant of the prophet^{f807}; and represent him as saying, Joshua ministered to Moses, and the Holy Spirit dwelled upon him; Elisha ministered to Elijah, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him; how different am I from all the disciples of the prophets! "woe is me now!" etc.

Ver. 4. *Thus shalt thou say unto him,* etc.] This is spoken to Jeremiah, and is an order from the Lord to him, what he should say in his name to Baruch:

the Lord saith thus, behold, [that] which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up; the Jewish nation, both as to church and state; which the Lord had built up as a spacious and beautiful house to dwell in, and had planted as a vineyard, and set it with pleasant plants; but now would demolish this building, and destroy this plantation:

even this whole land; not a few cities only, or only Jerusalem the metropolis, but the whole land of Judea; no part of it but what should be left desolate. So the Targum,

“even the whole land of Israel, which is mine.”

Ver. 5. *Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek [them] not,* etc.] Riches and wealth honour and esteem, peace and prosperity; these were not to be sought after and expected, when the whole nation would be involved in such a general calamity. Baruch perhaps expected that his reading the roll to princes would have been a means of preferring him at court, of advancing him to some post or office, in which he might have acquired wealth, and got applause, and lived in peace and plenty all his days; but this was not to be looked for; when, if he observed, the very roll he wrote and read contained in it prophecies of the general ruin of the nation. The Jews restrain this to the gift of prophecy they suppose Baruch sought after, which was not to be enjoyed out of the land of Canaan:

for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh; not upon every individual person in the world; but upon all the inhabitants of Judea, who should either die by the sword or by famine, or by pestilence, or be carried captive, or be in some distress or another:

but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest; suggesting that he should be obliged to quit his native place and country, and go from place to place; as he did, after the destruction of Jerusalem, along with the prophet; and even into Egypt with the Jews that went there; where his life would be in danger, and yet should be preserved; he should be snatched as a brand out of the burning, when Jerusalem was taken; and in other places, when exposed, though he should lose everything, yet not his life; which should be as dear to him as a rich spoil taken by the soldier, being a distinguishing mercy.

CHAPTER 46

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 46

This chapter contains two prophecies relating to Egypt; one concerning the overthrow of Pharaohnecho, king of it, which was quickly accomplished; and the other concerning the destruction of the land, fulfilled many years after, and both by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and the chapter is concluded with a word of comfort to the people of Israel. It begins with a general title to prophecies in this and the five following chapters, (^{<2441>}Jeremiah 46:1); then follows a particular prophecy of the route of Pharaoh's army; of the place where, and time when, (^{<2442>}Jeremiah 46:2); the preparations of the Egyptians for the battle, with a variety of warlike instruments, (^{<2443>}Jeremiah 46:3,4); the consternation, flight, and destruction of them, (^{<2445>}Jeremiah 46:5,6); notwithstanding their confidence of getting the victory, (^{<2447>}Jeremiah 46:7-9); the reason of it, because it was the day of the Lord's vengeance on them, and therefore their ruin was inevitable, (^{<2450>}Jeremiah 46:10,11); the consequence of which was shame and confusion, (^{<2452>}Jeremiah 46:12); next follows another prophecy of the destruction of the land itself by Nebuchadnezzar, (^{<2453>}Jeremiah 46:13); the places that should be destroyed, (^{<2454>}Jeremiah 46:14,19,25); the multitude that should be slain, (^{<2455>}Jeremiah 46:15-17); a description of the calamity; the instrument, manner, and consequence of it, (^{<2456>}Jeremiah 46:20-24); the certainty of it, (^{<2458>}Jeremiah 46:18,25,26); and the whole is closed with a promise of the return of the Jews, and of their salvation; though they should not be without divine corrections, (^{<2457>}Jeremiah 46:27,28).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles.*] Or "nations"; distinguished from the Jews; not all the nations of the world, but some hereafter mentioned, as the Egyptians, Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Syrians, Arabians, Persians, and Chaldeans: or "concerning the nations"¹⁸⁰⁸; the above mentioned; though the prophecies delivered out concerning them are all against them, and not in their favour. Mention is made of Jeremiah's prophesying against all the nations in (^{<2453>}Jeremiah 25:13); after which follow the several prophecies

contained in the next chapters in the Septuagint and Arabic versions, as they stand in the Polyglot Bible.

Ver. 2. *Against Egypt*, etc.] This is the title of the first prophecy against Egypt; which is the first mentioned, because first accomplished; and because the Jews placed great confidence in and much relied on the Egyptians for help:

against the army of Pharaohnecho king of Egypt; who is by Herodotus^{f809} called Necos; he was the son and successor of Psammitichus, and was succeeded by his son Psammis; and he by Apries, the same with Pharaohhophra, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 44:30); the Targum calls this king Pharaoh the lame:

which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish; of which place (see Gill on ²³⁰⁰Isaiah 10:9"); this being in the land of the king of Assyria, as appears from the same place. Pharaohnecho, in Josiah's time, came up against him, in order to take it from him; but whether he did or no is not certain; (see ¹²⁷³2 Kings 23:29 ¹⁴⁵¹2 Chronicles 35:20); however, he appeared at the same place a second time, against the king of Babylon, into whose hands it was now very probably fallen, with the whole Assyrian monarchy; and here, in this second battle, his army was routed, as follows:

which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; when he took away from the king of Egypt all that belonged to him between the Nile and Euphrates, so that he came no more out of his land, (¹²⁴⁰2 Kings 24:7). Kimchi and Abarbanel think there was but one expedition of Pharaohnecho; and that the siege of Carchemish continued to the fourth year of Jehoiakim; when he met with an entire overthrow from the king of Babylon, which God suffered as a judgment on him for killing Josiah. This, according to Bishop Usher, was in the year of the world 3397, and before Christ 607; and, according to the Universal History, in the year of the world 3396, and before Christ 608.

Ver. 3. *Order ye the buckler and shield*, etc.] Both signify one and the same sort of armour, only of a different form, the one being lesser and lighter than the other. Jarchi makes the difference to be, that the former was made of skin, the latter of wood; they were both used to defend the body in war. To order them is not only to prepare them, and get them ready; but to fit them to the body, and to put them on, that they might be in

a readiness to engage in battle. The exhortation is made either to the Chaldean army, to prepare to fight against the Egyptians; or to the army of Pharaohnecho, to defend themselves against the king of Babylon, who was coming against them, as Kimchi and Abarbinel, who seem to be in doubt which it should be; but the latter is most probable: and it is either a direction of Pharaoh to his army, to be in readiness; or rather of God, speaking ironically to them, suggesting, that let them do what they would, and make ever such preparations for battle, all would come to nothing, victory would be on the other side;

and draw near to battle; engage the enemy briskly, and with the greatest courage, and use all your military skill; and, when ye have done, it will all be in vain.

Ver. 4. *Harness the horses*, etc.] Put on their bridles and saddles and gird them: or, “bind the horses”^{f810}; that is, to the chariots; put them to, as we commonly express it: Egypt abounded in horses, and so no doubt brought a large cavalry, and a multitude of chariots, into the field of battle:

and get up, ye horsemen; upon the horses, or into the chariots, and so be ready to receive the enemy, or to attack him:

and stand forth with [your] helmets; present themselves on horseback, or in their chariots, with their helmets on their heads, to cover them in the day of battle:

furbish the spears; that they may be sharp and piercing, and look bright and glittering, and strike terror in the enemy:

[and] put on the brigandines; coats of mail, to cover the whole body, which were made of iron, consisting of rings, as Kimchi observes.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore have I seen them dismayed [and] turned away back?* etc.] The Egyptians, after all this preparation for war, and seeming ardent to engage in battle; and yet, when they came to it, were seized with a panic, and thrown into the utmost consternation, and turned their backs upon their enemy: these are either the words of the prophet, who had a view by a spirit of prophecy, of the consternation, confusion, and flight of the Egyptian army; or of the Lord, who foresaw all this, and represents it as if it was done because of the certainty of it; upbraiding the Egyptians with their pusillanimity and cowardice:

and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back; or, “their mighty ones are broken”^{f811}; their valiant soldiers and officers, their best troops were broken to pieces, their ranks and files, and thrown into the utmost disorder; and therefore made all the haste they could to escape the fury of the enemy, and fled with the utmost precipitation, and never stopped to look back upon their pursuers; so great their fear:

[for] fear [was] round about, saith the Lord; from whence it came; it was he that put it into them, took away their courage, and made them a “magormissabib”, or “fear round about”, the word here used; (see ~~20:3~~ Jeremiah 20:3). The Targum is,

“they looked not back to resist them that slay with the sword, who are gathered against them round about, saith the Lord;”

their enemies surrounded them, and that was the reason fear was round about them, and both were from the Lord; or as he had said, determined, and foretold it should be.

Ver. 6. *Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty men escape*, etc.] Those that were swift of foot, like Asahel, or carried but light armour, let not such trust to their swiftness or light carriage; nor let the mighty man think to escape by reason of his great strength, to make his way through the enemy, and get out of his hands. Or this may be rendered as future, “the swift shall not flee away”, etc.^{f812} so the Targum; neither the one nor the other shall escape by the nimbleness of their heels, or the stoutness of their hearts:

they shall stumble and fall toward the north, by the river Euphrates; which lay north of Judea, where the prophet was, to whom this word came; and also was to the north of Egypt, whose destruction is here threatened: the place where this route and slaughter would be made was Carchemish, which was situated by that river; on the north side of which city, according to Abarbinel, the battle was; and which sense is mentioned by Kimchi, which the other follows.

Ver. 7. *Who [is] this [that] cometh up as a flood*, etc.] These are either the words of the prophet, who having a vision in prophecy of the march of the Egyptian army from the south to the north, which he compares to a flood; in allusion to the river Nile, which used to overflow its banks, and spread itself over the land; because of the vast numbers of which it

consisted; because of the noise it made, and, because of its rapidity and force, threatening to bear all down before it; as wondering, asks, who it was, whose army it was, and to whom it belonged? or they are the words of God, who puts this question, in order to, give an answer to it, and thereby upbraid the Egyptians with their arrogance, pride, and vanity; which would all come to nothing:

whose waters are moved as the rivers? whose numerous armies came with a great noise and force, like the openings of the Nile, the seven gates of it; which were very boisterous, especially in hard gales of wind: it is no unusual thing for large armies to be compared to floods and rivers, which move forcibly and swiftly, and make a large spread; (see ²⁸⁸⁷Isaiah 8:7,8 ²⁸⁸⁸Ezekiel 26:3,19). The Targum is,

“who is this that comes up with his army as a cloud, and covers the earth, and as a fountain of water, whose waters are moved?”

Ver. 8. *Egypt riseth up as a flood, and [his] waters are moved like the rivers,* etc.] This is the answer to the above question; that it was Egypt that was seen; the king of Egypt, as the Syriac version; he with his army, as the Targum; and which was so numerous, that it seemed as if the whole country of Egypt, all the inhabitants of it, were come along with him; these rose up like the Nile, and moved like the several sluices of it, with great velocity and force, as if they would carry all before them:

and he saith, I will go up; Pharaohnecho king of Egypt said, I will go up from my own land to the north, to meet the king of Babylon:

[and] will cover the earth; with his army: even all, the north country, the whole Babylonish empire; which he affected to be master of, grasping at, universal monarchy:

I will destroy the city, and the inhabitants thereof; which Abarbinel restrains to the city Carchemish, where his army was smitten: but it is better to interpret, the singular by the plural, as the Targum does, “I will destroy cities”; since it was not a single city he came up to take, nor would this satisfy his ambitious temper.

Ver. 9. *Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots,* etc.] These are either the words of Pharaoh, giving orders to his cavalry and charioteers to make haste and come up to battle, not doubting of victory: or rather of the Lord by the prophet, ironically calling upon the horsemen in the Egyptian army

to come on and engage with the enemy, and behave gallantly; and those in the chariots to drive, Jehu like, (⁴¹⁰⁰2 Kings 9:20), with great swiftness, force, and fury, to make their chariots rattle again, and run about here and there like madmen, as the word^{f813} signifies, to throw the enemy into confusion and disorder if they could:

and let the mighty men come forth: out of the land of Egypt, as Abarbanel; or let them come forth, and appear in the field of battle with courage and greatness of mind, and do all their might and skill can furnish them with, or enable them to do:

the Ethiopians and the Lybians, that handle the shield; or Cush and Phut, both sons of Ham, and brethren of Mizraim, from whence Egypt had its name, (⁰¹⁰⁶Genesis 10:6); the posterity of these are meant. The Cushites or Ethiopians were near neighbours of the Egyptians, and their allies and confederates. The Lybians or Phuteans, as the Targum, were the posterity of Phut, who dwelt to the westward of Egypt, and were the auxiliaries of that nation, and with the Ethiopians and Lydians are mentioned as such in (²³⁰⁴Ezekiel 30:4,5); as here. The shield was a weapon they much used in war, and were famous for their skill in it, and are described by it. The Egyptians were remarkable for their shields: Xenophon^{f814} describes them as having shields reaching down to their feet; and which covered their bodies more than the breast plates and targets of the Persians did; which helped them to push forward, having them on their shoulders, so that the enemy could not withstand them:

and the Lydians, that handle [and] bend the bow; these were the posterity of Ludim the son of Mizraim, (⁰¹⁰³Genesis 10:13); and were the Lydians in Africa, and not in Asia, who sprung from Lud the son of Shem, (⁰¹⁰²Genesis 10:22); they were famous for their skilfulness in the use of bows and arrows; (see ²³⁶⁹Isaiah 66:19); now these are called together to use their military skill, and show all the courage they were masters of; and yet all would be in vain. Bochart^{f815} endeavours to prove, by various arguments, that these Lydians were Ethiopians; and, among the rest, because they are here, and in (²³⁶⁹Isaiah 66:19); described as expert in handling, bending, and drawing the bow; which he proves, by the testimonies of several writers, the Ethiopians were famous for; that bows were their armour; and that theirs were larger than others, even than the Persians, being four cubits long; that they were very dexterous in shooting their arrows; took sure aim, and seldom missed.

Ver. 10. *For this [is] the day of the Lord God of hosts,* etc.] Or, “but this is the day”^{f816}, etc. notwithstanding this great apparatus for war, and those many auxiliaries the Egyptians would have, yet it would not be their day, in which they should get the better of their enemies; but the Lord’s day; the day he had appointed; who is the Lord God of all armies, above and below; and who would bring his own armies together when he pleased, and give them victory:

a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his enemies: the enemies of his people, as the Targum; the Egyptians, who had been of old the implacable enemies of his people Israel; though now, contrary to his will, they too much trusted to them, and relied on them; according to Kimchi, this vengeance was taken on them for killing Josiah:

and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood; that is, the sword of the Chaldeans shall destroy the Egyptians in such vast numbers, that there shall be no more to be slain; or there shall be no desire in the enemy to slay any more; they shall be glutted with their blood. All the phrases are designed to show the carnage that should be made; the vast destruction of the people; the large numbers that should be slain:

for the Lord God of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates; near Carchemish, situated by the river Euphrates, which lay north of Egypt; (see ²⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 46:6). Here is an allusion to the sacrifices of great persons, which are many; the Lord of hosts had a sacrifice, or a great slaughter of men, his enemies; inflicted punishment on them, wherein his power, justice, and holiness, were displayed; (see ²³¹⁶Isaiah 34:6).

Ver. 11. *Go up into Gilead,* etc.] Still the irony or sarcasm is continued Gilead was a place in the land of Israel famous for balm or balsam, used in curing wounds; (see ²⁴⁸²Jeremiah 8:22); hence it follows:

and take balm, O virgin, daughter of Egypt; the kingdom of Egypt, as the Targum; so called because of its glory and excellency; and because as yet it had not been conquered and brought under the power of another: now the inhabitants of it are bid to take balm or balsam, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; but this grew not in Gilead beyond Jordan, but near Jericho on this side Jordan, as Bochart^{f817} has proved from various authors; particularly Strabo^{f818} says of Jericho, that there is the paradise of balsam, an aromatic plant, and of great esteem; for there only it is produced: and so Diodorus

Siculus^{f819}, speaking of places near Jericho, says, about these places, in a certain valley, grows what is called balsam, from which much profit arises; nor is the plant to be found in any other part of the world: and Justin^{f820} observes the same; that much riches accrue to the nation from the tax on balsam, which is only produced in this country, in Jericho, and the valley near it; yea, Kimchi himself elsewhere^{f821} says, that the balsam is not any where in the whole world but in Jericho. The word therefore should be rendered rosin, as also in (~~2482~~Jeremiah 8:22); as it is by some^{f822}; and which is used in cleansing, healing, and contracting wounds, and dispersing humours, as Pliny^{f823} relates; and this here is ordered to be taken, either literally, to cure the vast number of their wounded by the Chaldeans; or rather, figuratively, they are called upon to make use of all means to recover their loss sustained; by recruiting their army, fortifying their cities, and getting fresh allies and auxiliaries; all which would yet be to no purpose:

in vain shalt thou use many medicines; [for] thou shall not be cured; notwithstanding all means made use of to repair its losses; though it should not utterly be destroyed yet should never recover its former glory.

Ver. 12. *The nations have heard of thy shame,* etc.] Their shameful defeat and overthrow by the Chaldean army; so, after the manner of prophecy, the thing is related as done; the battle fought, and the victory obtained; and the rumour and fame of it spread among the nations, to the great mortification of this proud people:

and thy cry hath filled the land; the shrieks of the wounded; the cry of the pursued and taken; the lamentation of friends and relations for their dead; with one thing or another of this kind the whole land of Egypt was filled; yea, all the countries round about them, in confederacy with them, were filled with distress for the loss of their own; the calamity was large and spreading, and the rumour of it:

for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, [and] they are fallen both together; either the mighty Egyptians against the mighty Chaldeans; and though the latter were the conquerors, yet lost abundance of men; so that there were mighty ones fell on both sides: or rather, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, the mighty Egyptians in their flight fell, and other mighty ones of them following, stumbled at them, and fell upon them, and so both became a prey to the pursuers; or in their flight the mighty Egyptians stumbled against their mighty auxiliaries before mentioned,

(^{244B}Jeremiah 46:9); and so both came into the hands of their enemies. The Targum is, both were slain.

Ver. 13. *The word that the Lord spake to Jeremiah the prophet*, etc.] This is a new and distinct prophecy from the former, though concerning Egypt as that; but in this they differ; the former prophecy respects only the overthrow of the Egyptian army at a certain place; this latter the general destruction of the land; and was fulfilled some years after the other; Jarchi says, according to their chronicles^{f824}, in the twenty seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign:

how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come; or, “concerning the coming^{f825} of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon”,

to smite the land of Egypt; who was to come, and did come, out of his country, into the land of Egypt, to smite the inhabitants of it with the sword, take their cities, plunder them of their substance, and make them tributary to him.

Ver. 14. *Declare ye in Egypt*, etc.] The coming of the king of Babylon, and his intention to invade the land, and subdue it:

and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph, and in Tahpanhes; of these places (see Gill on “^{244B}Jeremiah 44:1”); these were principal ones in the land of Egypt, where the enemy should come, and which he should lay waste; and therefore the above things are to be published for their warning; and particularly these were places where the Jews that went into Egypt contrary to the will of God resided; and therefore for their sakes also this publication must be made, to let them see and know that they would not be safe there, but would be involved in the general calamity of the nation:

say ye, stand fast, and prepare thee; O Egypt, and the several cities mentioned, and all others; prepare for war, and to meet the enemy, resist and repel him; present yourselves on the frontiers of your country; put yourselves in proper places, and keep your ground:

for the sword shall devour round about thee; the sword of the Chaldeans, into whose hands fell Palestine, Judea, Syria, and other neighbouring countries; and therefore it was high time for them to bestir themselves, and provide for their defence and safety.

Ver. 15. *Why are thy valiant [men] swept away?* etc.] As with a mighty torrent, or a sweeping rain; so the word is used in (^{218B}Proverbs 28:3); to which the Chaldean army may be compared; which came with such irresistible force as to drive the Egyptians from their posts, so that they could not stand their ground. The Septuagint renders it,

“why does Apis flee from thee? thy choice ox does not continue.”

Which was the god of the Egyptians, they worshipped in the form of an ox; this could not protect them, though thought by them to be very mighty and powerful; so Aelianus^{f826} says Apis with the Egyptians is believed to be a most powerful deity; yet could not save them; but the word signifies their nobles, their mighty men of war, their generals and officers, at least their valiant soldiers; who yet were not able to stand the tide of power that came against them. The reason was,

because the Lord did drive them; by means of the Chaldeans; he dispirited them; he put them into a panic, and they fled from their posts; there is no standing against the Lord.

Ver. 16. *He made many to fall,* etc.] That is, the Lord, by the hand of the Chaldeans, by whose sword multitudes fell in battle:

yea, one fell upon another; they fell in heaps, denoting the multitude of the slain; or rather they fell in flight one upon another; one fell, and then another upon him, as usually they do, when men are frightened and flee precipitantly, as in (^{246D}Jeremiah 46:12);

and they said, arise: not those that fell, which may seem at first sight; but either the strangers in the land of Egypt, as Kimchi, such as the Jews were; who, perceiving the destruction that was coming on Egypt, exhort one another to arise, and get out of it; or rather the auxiliaries of the Egyptians, as the Ethiopians, Lybians, and Lydians, (^{246D}Jeremiah 46:9); who finding the enemy too strong for them, and they themselves deserted or unsupported by Pharaoh's army, advise one another to quit his service, and provide for their own safety:

and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity; their own country, where they were born, and their friends and relations lived; that so they might be safe

from the oppressing sword; the sword of the Chaldeans. The Septuagint version is a very bad one, followed by the Arabic, which renders it, “from the Grecian sword”; and so is the Vulgate Latin version, “from the face of the dove”; to countenance which it is said, that the Chaldeans and Assyrians had a dove in their ensigns; (see Gill on “²⁵³⁸Jeremiah 25:38”); and so a most ancient Saxon translation in the library of Christ’s Church in Oxford, “from the face of the sword of the culver”^{f827}, or “dove”; that is, from their sword, who display their banners in the field with the ensign of a dove; meaning the Chaldeans. The Targum is,

“from the sword of the enemy, which is as wine inebriating;”

which sense is followed by Jarchi.

Ver. 17. *They did cry there*, etc.] Not the Chaldeans, deriding Pharaoh and his army, and mocking them, saying the following words, as some; nor the Egyptians in Egypt, as Kimchi, complaining of their king; much less in Carchemish, as others; since this prophecy refers to another event, time, and place; but the auxiliaries of Egypt in the field of battle; these did cry out aloud, as follows:

Pharaoh king of Egypt [is but] a noise; he boasted and bragged of great things he would do, and does nothing; he promised to bring a large army into the field, and talked big of attacking the enemy with great ardour and fury, and hectoring and blustering as if he feared him not, and was sure of victory; but when it came to the push, his courage failed him; and it may be said of him what the man said of his nightingale, “*vox et praeterea nihil*”, a voice, and nothing else. This was not Pharaohnecho, as the Septuagint have wrongly inserted, but Pharaohhophra, (²⁴⁴⁰Jeremiah 44:30); or it may be supplied thus, “Pharaoh king of Egypt [is a king of] noise”^{f828}; a noisy, big, and blustering king in words, but in deeds nothing:

he hath passed the time appointed; to join his auxiliaries, in order to give the enemy battle; and so left them in the lurch, of which they complain; or through his dilatoriness lost the proper opportunity of attacking him. Some indeed understand it, not of the king of Egypt, but of the king of Babylon; as if the sense was this, the Egyptians cried aloud, and encouraged themselves and their allies against the king of Babylon; saying, what Jeremiah the prophet said concerning Pharaoh king of Egypt and his destruction is all mere noise; there is nothing in it; for the time set by him for that event is passed and over: others, because the word has sometimes

the signification of a solemn meeting or festival, take the meaning to be, that Pharaoh king of Egypt being brought to utter destruction, as the word for noise may signify, or being a noisy tumultuous prince, who brought ruin on himself and others, has thereby caused the solemn feasts to pass away^{f829}, or the festivals to cease; whether in a civil or a religious way; but the first sense seems best.

Ver. 18. [*As I live, saith the King, whose name [is] the Lord of hosts,* etc.] A greater King than either Nebuchadnezzar or Pharaoh; the Lord of the armies of heaven and earth; and who has them all at his command and service; swears by his life, by himself, because he can swear by no greater, to the truth of what follows; for this is the form of an oath:

surely, as Tabor [is] among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, [so] shall he come. Tabor is commonly said to be the mountain on which our Lord was transfigured; but that there is any just foundation for it is not certain. It was a mountain in Galilee, situated on the borders of the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun, (^{<f892>}Joshua 19:12,22); it was two leagues from Nazareth eastward^{f830}; three miles from the lake of Gennesaret; ten miles from Diocæsarea to the east; and two days' journey from Jerusalem^{f831}. Adrichomius^{f832} says it was a most beautiful mountain, situated in the midst of the plain of Galilee, remarkable for its roundness, and was about four miles or thirty furlongs high, abounding with vines, olives, and fruit trees, with which it was set all over; and gave to those at sea a most delightful sight at a considerable distance. Our countryman, Mr. Maundrell^{f833}, who travelled up it, gives this account of it; that it

“stands by itself in the plain of Esdraelon (the same the Scripture calls the valley of Jezreel); after a very laborious ascent (says he), which took up near an hour, we reached the highest part of the mountain: it has a plain area at top, most fertile and delicious; of an oval figure, extended about one furlong in breadth, and two in length: this area is enclosed with trees on all parts, except towards the south.”

It is called by the Septuagint, Josephus, and other writers, Itabyrium. Carmel is with great propriety called “Carmel by the sea”; it was situated on the border of the tribe of Asher; and near to it was the river Kishon, (^{<f826>}Joshua 19:26 ^{<1184>}1 Kings 18:40,43). So Mr. Maundrell^{f834} says,

“we arrived in two hours at that ancient river, the river Kishon, which cuts his way down the middle of the plain of Esdraelon; and then, continuing his course close by the side of Mount Carmel, falls into the sea at a place called Caypha;”

by which it appears that the mount was near the sea; and Pliny^{f835} calls it a promontory, and places it on the Phoenician shore; on which he says were the promontory Carmel, and a town upon the mountain of the same name, formerly called Ecbatana. Adrichomius^{f836} gives it the name of “Carmel of the sea”; and says it was a very high mountain, and woody, abounding with most noble vines, olives, fruit trees, and odoriferous herbs. So Josephus^{f837} makes mention of Carmel and the sea together; he says, the Zebulonites obtained land as far as the lake of Genezareth, contiguous to Carmel and the sea; and their being near to each other appears from a passage in the Jerusalem Talmud^{f838}; says

“R. Samuel Bar Chain Bar Judah, in the name of R. Chanina, when the orb of the sun begins to set, a man standing on Mount Carmel, and goes down and dips in the great sea (the Mediterranean sea), and goes up again, and eats his “teruma” (or offering), it is a presumption that he dipped in the daytime;”

and which is also evident from the passage in (~~1182~~1 Kings 18:42,43); where Elijah and his servant are said to be on the top of Mount Carmel, and from thence he bid his servant look towards the sea: now these mountains so situated are taken notice of, either to show the manner of the king of Babylon’s coming against Egypt; that as Tabor and Carmel were high mountains in the land of Israel, so should Nebuchadnezzar lift up his head on high, and come with great pride and haughtiness of spirit against the Egyptians; or rather the certainty of his coming, that he should come as sure as those mountains were in the places they were; or, best of all, the certainty of the destruction of the Egyptians, and the truth of this prophecy concerning it; though the Egyptians were as firm, and might think themselves as secure and as immovable, as the above mountains, yet should certainly come to ruin, and the word of God concerning it should stand as firm as they. To this sense agrees the Targum,

“as this word stands firm, that Tabor is among the mountains, and Carmel in the sea, so shall his destruction come.”

The words, according to the accents, may be better rendered, “as Tabor among the mountains, [and Carmel also], he shall come into the sea”^{f839}; that is, Pharaoh, though he lift up his head as high as Tabor and Carmel, he shall be brought low into the depths of the sea; into a most forlorn and deplorable condition, into a very low estate; and perhaps there may be an allusion to the ancient Pharaoh being drowned in the sea; and with this agrees the Syriac version, “Pharaoh shall fall as the fragment of a mountain, and as Carmel, into the midst of the sea”; compare with this (⁴¹²³Matthew 11:23).

Ver. 19. *O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt*, etc.] That is, O ye inhabitants of Egypt, that have long dwelt there, in great security, enjoying great plenty, and who promised themselves a long continuance:

furnish thyself to go into captivity; or, “make”, or “prepare for thyself vessels of captivity”^{f840}; or such things as are proper for captives, as suitable clothes to travel in, shoes to walk in, scrip and staff, and the like; expect captivity, and prepare for it:

for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant; the city Memphis, as the Targum, and all the versions: this is particularly mentioned, because it was a royal city, as Kimchi observes; and, though a very populous one, its destruction should be so general, that not an inhabitant should be left in it: the devastation of this city is put for that of all the rest, and as a sure token of it and the whole nation going into captivity.

Ver. 20. *Egypt [is like] a very fair heifer*, etc.] Like a heifer that has never been under a yoke, it having never been conquered, and brought under the power of another; and like a beautiful, fat, and well fed one, abounding in wealth and riches, in pleasures and delights, in wantonness and luxury, and fit for slaughter, and ready for it. The Targum is,

“Egypt was a beautiful kingdom.”

Some think there is an illusion to the gods of Egypt, Apis and Mnevis, which were heifers or oxen, very beautiful, that had fine spots and marks upon them. Apis was worshipped at Memphis, or Noph, before mentioned, as to be wasted; and Mnevis at Heliopolis, the city of the sun, the same with Bethshemesh, whose destruction is prophesied of; (see Gill on ⁴⁴⁶³Jeremiah 43:13’); and both these were of various colours, as Ovid^{f841} says, particularly of one of them, and is true of both. Pomponius Mela^{f842}

observes of Apis, the god of all the people of Egypt, that it was a black ox, remarkable for certain spots; and unlike to others in its tongue and tail. And Solinus^{f843} says, it is famous for a white spot on its right side, in the form of a new moon: with whom Pliny^{f844} agrees, that it has a white spot on the right side, like the horns of the moon, when it begins to increase; and that it has a knot under the tongue, which they call a beetle. And so Herodotus^{f845} says, it is very black, and has a white square spot on the forehead; on the back, the effigies of an eagle; two hairs in the tail, and a beetle on the tongue, To which may be added what Strabo^{f846} reports, that at Memphis, the royal city of Egypt, is the temple of Apis, the same with Osiris; where the ox of Apis is fed in an enclosure, and reckoned to be a god; it is white in its forehead, and in some small parts of the body, and the rest black; by which marks and signs it is always judged what is proper to be put in its place when dead. In the Table of Iris^{f847}, published by Pignorius, it is otherwise painted and described; its head, neck, horns, buttocks, and tail, black, and the rest white; and, on the right side, a corniculated streak. Aelianus^{f848} says, these marks were in number twenty nine, and, according to the Egyptians, were symbols of things; some, of the nature of the stars; some, of the overflowing of the Nile; some, of the darkness of the world before the light, and of other things: and all agree, that the ox looked fair and beautiful, to which the allusion is; and there may be in the words an ironical sarcasm, flout, and jeer, at the gods they worshipped, which could not save them from the destruction coming upon them, as follows:

[but] destruction cometh, it cometh from the north; that is, the destruction of Egypt, which should come from Chaldea, which lay north of Egypt; and the coming of it is repeated, to denote the quickness and certainty of it: the word used signifies a cutting off, or a cutting up; in allusion to the cutting off the necks of heifers, which used to be done when slain, (^{f849}Deuteronomy 21:4); or to the cutting of them up, as is done by butchers: and the abstract being put for the concrete, it may be rendered, the “cutter up”^{f849}; or cutter off; men, like butchers, shall come out of Babylon, and slay and cut up, this heifer. So the Targum,

“people, that are slayers shall come out of the north against her, to spoil her”^{f850};

that is, the Chaldean army, agreeably to the Syriac version,

“an army shall come out of the north against her.”

Ver. 21. *All her hired men [are] in the midst of her like fatted bullocks,* etc.] Or, “bullocks of the stall”^{f851}; soldiers of other countries, that were hired into the service of Egypt, and lived so deliciously there, that they were unfit for war, and were like fatted beasts prepared for the slaughter. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it, her princes^{f852}; who had the care of this heifer, and of the feeding of it; these themselves were like that, nourished for the day of slaughter:

for they also are turned back, [and] are fled away together; they turned their backs upon the enemy in battle, and fled in great confusion and precipitancy; (see ^{<2465}Jeremiah 46:15,16);

they did not stand; and face the enemy, and light him, but fell or fled before him:

because the day of their calamity was come upon them, [and] the time of their visitation; the time appointed by the Lord to visit and punish them, and bring destruction on them for their sins.

Ver. 22. *The voice thereof shall go like a serpent,* etc.] That is, the voice of Egypt, before compared to a heifer, when in its glory; but now it shall not bellow like a heifer in fat pasture, but hiss like a serpent, when drove out of its hole, and pursued; signifying, that their voice should be low and submissive, and should not speak one big or murmuring word to their conquerors. The voice of the serpent is, by Aristotle^{f853} said to be small and weak; so Aelianus^{f854}. Though Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, understand it of the voice of serpents heard afar off; and so it may respect the dreadful lamentation the Egyptians should make, when they should see the Chaldeans come upon them to destroy them; just as serpents in woods make a horrible noise, when they are set on fire, or are cut down, to which there is an allusion in some following clauses. The Targum seems to interpret this of the Chaldean army thus,

“the voice of the clashing of their arms as serpents creeping;”

and of them the following words are certainly meant:

for they shall march with an army; the Targum adds, against you; the meaning is, that the Chaldeans should come with a great army, and march against the Egyptians with great strength, force, and fury:

and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood; with battle axes, as if they came to cut down trees; nor would they spare the Egyptians any more than such hewers do the trees; nor would they be able any more to resist them than trees can resist hewers of wood.

Ver. 23. *They shall cut down her forest, saith the Lord*, etc.] The land of Egypt, compared to a forest, for the multitude of its cities and towns, and the inhabitants of them; which should be destroyed by the Chaldeans, as a forest is cut down by hewers of wood; the metaphor is here continued. The Targum interprets this of the princes of Egypt, and the destruction of them;

though it cannot be searched; either the forest of Egypt, which was so thick of trees; that is, the land was so full of towns and cities, that they could not be searched and numbered; and though the way through it seemed impassable, yet was made passable by the hewers of wood: or its destruction would be so general, “that it cannot be searched”^{f855}; or found out, where this forest was, where those trees grew, not one of them standing: or else this is to be understood of the Chaldean army, which was so great, that it could not be numbered:

because they are more than the grasshoppers, and [are] innumerable; which creatures come in large numbers, and eat up every green tree and herb; and so the Chaldean army, being alike numerous, would easily cut down the trees of this forest, though they were so many.

Ver. 24. *The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded*, etc.] Brought to shame before all the nations of the earth, being conquered by the Chaldeans; that is, the kingdom of Egypt, as the Targum; or the inhabitants of it, being subdued and carried captive:

she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north; the Chaldeans, who dwelt northward of Egypt, as is manifest from what follows.

Ver. 25. *The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saith*, etc.] These titles are often given to the Lord, and set before prophecies that come from him; and, according to Kimchi, the reason why he is here spoken of as the God of Israel was, because the vengeance threatened to the Egyptians should come upon them, as a punishment for using Israel ill; as Shishak king of Egypt, and Pharaohnecho, who slew Josiah:

behold, I will punish the multitude of No; the inhabitants of it, which were many, called “populous No”, (Na 3:8); a famous city in Egypt. Some take it to be Diospolis or Thebes; and others^{f856} the same that is now called Alexandria; and so the Targum renders it; and which is followed by the Vulgate Latin version: and Jarchi calls it the seignory or government of Alexandria; and takes Amon, the word for “multitude”, to signify the prince of this place; and so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it, king of a city called No: rather Jupiter Ammon^{f857} is meant, an idol of the Egyptians, which had a temple in Thebes, and was worshipped in it; and who had his name from Ham, the son of Noah. Hillerus^{f858}, by various arguments, endeavours to prove that No is the same city with Memphis, and that No Amon signifies “the habitation of the nourished”; that is, of Apis, which was nourished here. But be he who he will, or the place what it will, he or that would certainly be punished;

and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; Pharaoh, the present king of Egypt, who was Pharaohhophra, and all the land of Egypt; and all their numerous idols, which were many indeed; and the several governors of the nomes or provinces into which the land was distributed; these should be punished, and suffer in the general calamity;

even Pharaoh, and [all] them that trust in him; the Jews that dwelt in Egypt, and who thought themselves safe under his protection; such who went along with Johanan thither, contrary to the will of God; these should not escape punishment, but be involved in the same destruction.

Ver. 26. *And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives*, etc.] Into the hands of the Chaldeans; that is, the king of Egypt, and all his people, and those that trusted in him:

and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants; his general officers, that commanded in his army under him. Berosus^{f859}, the Chaldean, makes mention of Nebuchadnezzar’s carrying the Egyptians captive into Babylon;

and afterwards it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the Lord; after forty years, as Ezekiel prophesied, (^{29:13}Jeremiah 29:13,14); not that it should rise to the same glory and dignity as before, for it would be but a base kingdom; but whereas it was desolate and uninhabited after this destruction, it should now be inhabited again.

Ver. 27. *But fear thou not, O my servant Jacob; and be not dismayed, O Israel,* etc.] The same things are said in (²⁸⁰⁰Jeremiah 30:10); (see Gill on “²⁸⁰⁰Jeremiah 30:10”);

for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land their captivity; Grotius thinks the Jews carried into Egypt by Pharaohnecho, along with Jehoahaz, are meant; but it does not appear that any were carried captive along with him, (¹²³³2 Kings 23:33,34). Jarchi supposes these to be the righteous in Egypt, who were carried thither by Johanan against their will; but though they may be included, even that small remnant that should escape, (²⁴⁴³Jeremiah 44:28); yet the Jews in Babylon, and other provinces, are chiefly designed; and the words are intended to comfort them in their captivity, with a promise of their return, lest they should be discouraged, in hearing that the Egyptians should inhabit their own land again, and they not theirs:

and Jacob shall return, and be in rest, and at ease, and none shall make [him] afraid: this will have its full accomplishment hereafter in the latter day; when the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, and never be disturbed more, as they have been, ever since their return from the Babylonish captivity. So Kimchi says this passage respects time to come.

Ver. 28. *Fear thou not, O Jacob, my servant, saith the Lord, for I [am] with thee,* etc.] Though afar off, in foreign lands, and in captivity: this exhortation is repeated, to strengthen their consolation, and them, against their fears of being cast off by the Lord:

for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; the Babylonians and Chaldeans are no more:

but I will not make a full end of thee; the Jews to this day remain a people, and distinct from others, though scattered about in the world:

but correct thee in measure; with judgment, and in mercy:

yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished; (see Gill on “²⁸⁰¹Jeremiah 30:11”).

CHAPTER 47

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 47

This chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of the Philistines chiefly; and also of the Tyrians and Zidonians. The title of the prophecy, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:1); the instruments of this destruction, who are compared to overflowing waters; which would cause great lamentation in the inhabitants of the places where they should come, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:2); the noise of their horses and chariots would be so terrible, as to make parents flee and leave their own children, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:3); at the same time Tyre and Zidon would fall into the hands of the enemy, and have no helper, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:4); particular places in Palestine are mentioned, that should be destroyed, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:5); and all this owing to a commission the Lord gave to the sword, and which therefore would continue to ravage, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:6,7).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines*, etc.] As the former prophecies were against the Egyptians, the friends and allies of the Jews, in whom they trusted; this is against the Philistines, the near neighbours of the Jews, and their implacable enemies: the time of this prophecy was,

before Pharaoh smote Gaza; one of the five cities of the Philistines, a very strong and fortified place, as its name signifies; (see Gill on “^{<485>}Acts 8:26”). The Jews, in their chronicle, say^{f860} this was fulfilled in the eighth year of Zedekiah, when Pharaoh came out of Egypt, while the Chaldeans were besieging Jerusalem; which they hearing of, broke up the siege, and went forth to meet him; upon which he went to Gaza, and destroyed that, and returned to Egypt again. Both Jarchi and Kimchi make mention of this, but say it was in the tenth year of Zedekiah; and which, no doubt, is the truest reading, since the Chaldean army did not come up against Jerusalem until the ninth year of his reign. But it is more likely that this Pharaoh was Pharaohnecho, and that he fell upon Gaza, and smote it, either when he came to Carchemish, or when he returned from thence, after he had slain Josiah. Now this prophecy was delivered out before anything of this kind happened, and when the Philistines were in the utmost peace, and in no

fear or expectation of destruction; and the smiting of this single city by the king of Egypt is foretold, as the forerunner and pledge of a greater destruction of the land by the king of Babylon, next mentioned.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, behold, waters rise up out of the north*, etc.] Meaning an army of men, which should come in great numbers, and with great force and rapidity, like an overflowing flood. So the Targum,

“behold, people shall come from the north;”

that is, from Chaldea, which lay north of Palestine:

and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and all that is therein; or, “the fulness of it”^{f861}; the land of the Philistines, and carry off the men and cattle, and all the riches thereof;

the city, and them that dwell therein; not any particular or single city, as Gaza; but the several cities of Palestine, and the inhabitants of them:

then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl; not being able to do anything else; not to defend themselves, their families, and property; and seeing nothing but ruin and destruction before their eyes.

Ver. 3. *At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong [horses]*, etc.] The noise of the cavalry of Nebuchadnezzar’s army, as they came marching on towards the country of the Philistines; who, being mounted on strong prancing horses, made a great noise as they came along, and were heard at a distance:

at the rushing of his chariots, [and at] the rumbling, of his wheels; the rattling and clatter the chariot wheels made; in which rode the chief officers and generals, with other mighty men: chariots were much used in war in those times:

the fathers shall not look back to [their] children for feebleness of hands; they should be so frightened at the approach of the enemy, and flee with much precipitancy to provide for their own safety, that they should not think of their children, or stay to deliver and save them, the most near and dear unto them; being so terrified as not to be able to lift up their hands to defend themselves, and protect their children. The Targum is,

“the fathers shall not look back to have mercy on [their] children;”

in their fright should forget their natural affection to them, and not so much as look back with an eye of pity and compassion on them; so intent upon their own deliverance and safety.

Ver. 4. *Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines,* etc.] The time appointed by the Lord for their destruction, which should be universal:

[and] to cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth; these were cities in Phoenicia, which bordered on the country of the Philistines, who were their auxiliaries in time of distress; but now, being wasted themselves, could give them no help when Nebuchadnezzar attacked them; as he did Tyre particularly, which he besieged thirteen years, and at last destroyed it, and Zidon with it:

for the Lord will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Caphtor; these last are not put by way of apposition, as if they were the same with the Philistines, though they were near of kin to them, coming from Casluhim; who were the posterity of Mizraim, as well as Caphtorim, (⁴⁰⁰³Genesis 10:13,14); indeed the Philistines are said to be brought from Caphtor, (⁴⁰⁰⁷Amos 9:7); being very probably taken captive by them, but rescued from them; and now in confederacy with them, and like to share the same fate as they. The Targum renders it,

“the remnant of the island of the Cappadocians;”

and so the Vulgate Latin version. Some think the Colchi, others that the Cretians, are meant. R. Saadiah by Caphtor understands Damiata, a city in Egypt; which is the same with Pelusium or Sin, the strength of Egypt, (⁴³⁰⁵Ezekiel 30:15); and it is usual with the Jews^{f862} to call this place Caphutkia, the same with Caphtor, they say; and, in Arabic, Damiata.

Ver. 5. *Baldness is come upon Gaza,* etc.] The Targum is,

“vengeance is come to the inhabitants of Gaza.”

It is become like a man whose hair is fallen from his head, or is clean shaved off; its houses were demolished; its inhabitants slain, and their wealth plundered; a pillaged and depopulated place. Some understand this of shaving or tearing off the hair for grief, and mourning because of their calamities; which agrees with the latter clause of the verse:

Ashkelon is cut off [with] the remnant of their valley; this was one of the live cities of the Philistines; it lay north of Gaza. Herodotus^{f863} calls Ashkelon a city of Syria, in which was the temple of Urania Venus, destroyed by the Scythians; said to be built by Lydus Ascalus, and called so after his name^{f864}. Of this city was Herod the king, and therefore called an Ashkelonite; it was now destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, but afterwards rebuilt and inhabited; and with it were destroyed the remainder of the cities, towns, and villages, in the valley, adjoining to that and Gaza; or Ashkelon and Gaza, now destroyed, were all that remained of the cities of the valley, and shared the same fate with them. The Targum is,

“the remnant of their strength;”

so Kimchi, who interprets it of the multitude of their wealth and power;

how long wilt thou cut thyself? their faces, arms, and other parts of their body, mourning and lamenting their sad condition; the words of the prophet signifying hereby the dreadfulness of it, and its long continuance.

Ver. 6. *O thou sword of the Lord*, etc.] For though it was the sword of the Chaldeans, yet being appointed and sent by the Lord, and having a commission from him, and being ordered and directed in his providence to do his will, it is called his sword:

how long [will it be] ere thou be quiet? and cease from destroying men; wilt thou not cease till thou hast no more to destroy?

put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still; and make no more havoc among the people: these are either the words of the Philistines, entreating a stop might be put to the ravages of the sword, and that the war might cease, and the desolations of it; or rather of the prophet, commiserating their state as a man, though they had been the avowed enemies of his people; to which the following words of him are an answer, either to the Philistines, showing why their request could not be granted, or as correcting himself.

Ver. 7. *How can it be quiet*, etc.] There is no reason to believe it will, nor can it be expected that it should; to stop it is impossible, and to request that it might be stopped is in vain:

seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the seashore? for it had a commission from the Lord to destroy the inhabitants

of Ashkelon, and other places, which lay still more towards the sea, as Joppa and Jamne; and indeed all Palestine lay on the coast of the Mediterranean sea:

there hath he appointed it; by an irreversible decree of his, in righteousness to punish the inhabitants of these places for their sins.

CHAPTER 48

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 48

This chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of Moab, and of the mourning that should be for it; and not only its destruction in general is predicted, but particular places are mentioned, on which it should fall, (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 48:1-5); the causes of which were their confidence in their works and riches, their carnal ease and security, and their idolatry, they should now be ashamed of, (²⁴⁸⁶Jeremiah 48:6-13); and this destruction is represented both as certain and as near, notwithstanding their mighty warriors and choice young men, (²⁴⁸⁴Jeremiah 48:14-17); and then other cities are particularly named, that should share in the calamity, (²⁴⁸⁸Jeremiah 48:18-25); and all this because of their insolence to the Lord; their contempt of his people; their pride, arrogance, and haughtiness; their wrath, and their lies, (²⁴⁸³Jeremiah 48:26-30); and this destruction is further exaggerated by the lamentation of the prophet over Moab in general, and over several particular cities; and by the lamentation of the inhabitants of them, because of the spoiling of their vines, their fruits, and their riches, (²⁴⁸⁵Jeremiah 48:31-39); and this is confirmed by the Lord, as to the swiftness of the enemy that should destroy them; the consternation and fear that should seize them; the flight they should be put to; and the consumption and captivity of them, (²⁴⁸⁴Jeremiah 48:40-46); and the chapter is concluded with a promise of the return of their captivity in the latter day, (²⁴⁸⁷Jeremiah 48:47).

Ver. 1. *Against Moab thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,* etc.] The prophecy concerning Moab is introduced with these epithets of God, partly to observe that the God of Israel was the only true God, in opposition to the gods of Moab, and other nations; and partly to point out his omnipotence, being able to perform what he here predicts and threatens; as also to suggest, that for the enmity of the Moabites to his people Israel, and their contempt of them, which is taken notice of in this chapter, and the ill treatment of them, the Lord would now take vengeance on them. Some render it, “concerning Moab”¹⁸⁶⁵; because every thing that is here said is not against it; the chapter concludes in favour of it; though

the far greater part, and ever, all but the last verse, is against it. This prophecy, according to Josephus^{f866}, had its fulfilment about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem;

woe unto Nebo, for it is spoiled; its walls broken down; its houses demolished; its inhabitants destroyed, and plundered of their riches; this, in prophetic language, is represented as done, because of the certainty of it. Of this city (see Gill on “^{-2318D}Isaiah 15:2”); It is thought to be an oracular one, where was a temple of their idol; and from whence their priests gave out oracles, promising peace, and prosperity and safety, to Moab; and therefore the desolation of that is first prophesied of, to show that no dependence was to be had on those lying oracles;

Kirjathaim is confounded [and] taken; a city in the tribe of Reuben, which afterwards came into the hands of the Moabites, (^{-1639D}Joshua 13:19). The word is of the dual form; and it might be a double city, like Jerusalem, consisting of a lower and upper city; or it might be divided by a river; or, as Kimchi and Ben Melech think, it was so called because it had two towers in it. It seems to be the same with Kir of Moab, Kirhareth, and Kirhareth, (^{-2318D}Isaiah 15:1 16:7,11); when it was taken by the Chaldeans, the inhabitants were confounded, as having looked upon the place, and boasted of it, as impregnable;

Misgab is confounded and dismayed; so called from its being built on a high place, and well fortified; though some think that this is not the proper name of a place; but only signifies a high and fortified place both by nature and art; a place of refuge, where persons thought themselves safe; and so the Targum renders it,

“the house of their confidence;”

this, when besieged and taken by the Babylonians, threw the inhabitants into the utmost consternation and confusion. Some take it to be the same with Bamoth, a name of much the same signification, (^{-1637D}Joshua 13:17); (see ^{-2318D}Isaiah 15:2).

Ver. 2. [*There shall be no more praise of Moab*, etc.] It shall be no more commended for a rich, populous, and fruitful country, being now laid waste; though the next phrase,

in Heshbon, or “concerning Heshbon”^{f867}, should be read in connection with this; and then the sense is, there shall be none any more in Heshbon to

praise the country of Moab, what a fine and fertile country it is, since that city will be destroyed also; or there will be no more a Moabite to boast of his being an inhabitant in Heshbon, such an utter destruction will be made of it; or there will be no more boasting of Moab, or of any Moabite concerning Heshbon, what a famous, opulent, or strong city that is, since it is no more. Of this city (see Gill on “⁻²³⁵⁴Isaiah 15:4”);

they have devised evil against it; that is, the Chaldeans devised evil against Heshbon, to besiege it, take and destroy it: there is in the expression a beautiful allusion to the name of the city of Heshbon, which has its name from a word that signifies to devise and consult^{f868};

come, and let us cut it off from [being] a nation: this is what the Babylonians consulted together against Heshbon; and not only against that, a principal city; but against the whole country of Moab, to make such an entire desolation of it, that it should be no more a nation: that which the Moabites with others devised against the people of Israel is now devised against them; a just retaliation this; (see ⁻¹⁸³⁴Psalms 83:4-6);

also thou shalt be cut down, O Madmen; or utterly destroyed: it may be rendered, “shall become silent”^{f869}; the voice of man shall not be heard in it, especially the voice of praise, of boasting, and rejoicing: there is in this clause also an elegant allusion to the name of the place, which comes from a root that signifies to “cut down”, or “be silent”^{f870}. This is thought by Grotius to be the Madiama of Ptolemy^{f871}:

the sword shall pursue thee; after it has destroyed other cities, it should come in great haste and with great force to Madmen; or it should pursue after the inhabitants, of it, that should make their escape, or attempt to do so. The Targum is,

“after thee shall go out those that slay with the sword.”

Ver. 3. *A voice of crying [shall be] from Horonaim*, etc.] Another city of Moab. The word is of the dual number; and, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, there were two Horons, the upper and the lower; of this place (see Gill on “⁻²³⁵⁵Isaiah 15:5”); this also should be destroyed; and so a cry of the inhabitants of it should be heard out of it:

spoiling, and great destruction; because the city was spoiled, and a great destruction made in the inhabitants and riches of it.

Ver. 4. *Moab is destroyed*, etc.] Either the whole nation in general; so the Targum,

“the kingdom of Moab is broken;”

and so Abarbanel; or a city so called, which some take to be the city Areopolis. Jerom^{f872} says, that Moab is a city of Arabia, now called Areopolis; and which also has the name of Rabbathmoab, or “grand Moab”;

her little ones have caused a cry to be heard; seeing their parents killed, and they left desolate, and in the hands of the enemy; and not only so, but just going to be dashed in pieces by them. The Targum interprets it, her governors; and so Jarchi, who thinks they are so called, because they are lesser than kings. Kimchi and Ben Melech suggest, that these are called so by way of contempt. The word “tzeir” signifies both “little” and “great”, as the learned Pocock^{f873} has abundantly proved.

Ver. 5. *For in the going up of Luhith continual weeping shall go up*, etc.]

This is another city, which was built on a high hill, which had a considerable ascent to it, whither those that escaped from Horonaim might flee for safety; but as they went up the hill would weep bitterly, and all the way they went, because of the loss of friends and sustenance, and the danger they themselves were still in. Of this place (see Gill on “⁻²³¹⁵Isaiah 15:5”);

for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction; a place before mentioned, which lay low, in the descent of which, the enemies, the Chaldeans, heard the cries of those that fled from Horonaim, and went up from thence to Luhith, which cry was as follows:

Ver. 6. *Flee, save your lives*, etc.] These are either the words of the Moabites, their cry of destruction mentioned in the latter part of (⁻²⁴⁸⁵Jeremiah 48:5); who, seeing nothing but ruin before their eyes, advise one another to flee in all haste, and save their lives if possible, since nothing else could be saved: or else they are the words of the prophet, giving counsel to the Moabites to betake themselves to flight for the safety of their lives, these being in great danger; so Abarbanel; with whom others agree, only think they are spoken ironically; suggesting, that when they had endeavoured by flight to save their lives, it would be to no purpose; they should not escape the hands of their enemies; which seems to be the truest sense:

and be like the heath in the wilderness; which is called “erice”, or “ling”, which grows in waste places. Kimchi and Menachem in Jarchi interpret it of a tree that grows in dry and desert places; a low, naked, barren, fruitless shrub; signifying, that, when they were fled from their habitations, they should be as solitary and stripped of all their good things as such a bare and naked shrub in a desert. Kimchi’s note is, that when they had left their cities and fled, their cities would be as the heath in the wilderness. The Targum is,

“and be ye as the tower of Aroer, “as they” who dwell in tents in the wilderness.”

Jarchi observes that the tower of Aroer was built in the wilderness, and there was no inhabitant round it but those that dwelt in tents; and, the tower standing where there was no inhabitant, it looked like a waste. The Septuagint version is very foreign, “as a wild ass in the wilderness”; which is followed by the Arabic version.

Ver. 7. *For because thou hast trusted in thy works*, etc.] The strong works and fortifications they had made about their cities, and so thought themselves safe in them; which is the sense of the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and those that follow them. Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of their cattle and other possessions, as the word is rendered in (~~1021D~~1 Samuel 25:2); which they observe. It may very well be understood of their idols, the works of their hands, in which they placed their confidence; and therefore their chief God after mentioned is threatened to be taken and carried away:

and in thy treasures: their gold and silver, and other riches they had heaped together:

thou shalt be taken: some particular city seems to be meant, the city Moab, or Ar of Moab, (~~2480A~~Jeremiah 48:4); or Horonaim, (~~2485B~~Jeremiah 48:5);

and Chemosh shall go forth in captivity, [with] his priests and his princes together; this was the god of the Ammonites, (~~0712A~~Judges 11:24); and of the Moabites, (~~11110B~~1 Kings 11:7,33 ~~1223B~~2 Kings 23:13); hence the Moabites are called the people of Chemosh, (~~0923A~~Numbers 21:29); which Philo the Jew^{f874} explains thus; that is, thy people and power are found blind, and deprived of sight; and says that Chemosh is interpreted “as groping”, or feeling, which is the property of one that cannot see. “Mosh” in Hebrew signifies to grope or feel; and “caph” is a servile letter, and a note of

similitude; and by another Jewish writer^{f875} Chemosh is called the god of the blind. Jerom^{f876} takes it to be the same idol with Baalpeor, thought by some the Priapus of the Heathens. Camus, the god of festivals and merriment, seems to have had his name from hence; very probably the sun was worshipped by the Moabites under this name, which may be so called from its swiftness; for the Arabic word <Arabic>, “camash”, signifies swift and hastening^{f877}; as the sun is to run its race. The Moabites put their trust in this their deity; and to let them see that he would be of no avail unto them, in this time of their distress, he himself should be taken away by the enemy out of his temple, for the sake of the gold or silver that was upon him, and with him the priests that attended his service; or his worshippers, as the Targum; and the princes of the nation that served him, and supported the worship of him, and defrayed the expenses of it.

Ver. 8. *And the spoiler shall come upon every city*, etc.] That is, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and his army. The Targum is, the spoilers, who came against and took every city of Moab, and wasted them. Josephus^{f878} makes particular mention of Nebuchadnezzar subduing the Ammonites and Moabites:

and no city shall escape; the spoiler, and destruction by him:

the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken; not only the cities, and the inhabitants of them; but the inhabitants of the valleys and plains, as the Targum paraphrases it, should be destroyed; and also the corn that grew upon them, and the flocks and herds that grazed there, exactly as the Lord had foretold.

Ver. 9. *Give wings unto Moab that it may flee and get away*, etc.] That is, give wings to the inhabitants of Moab; signifying that they were in great danger, and there was no probability of escaping it, unless they had the wings of a swift bird, or were as swift as such, and even that would not do; though perhaps their fleeing, and passing away with wings, may signify not their fleeing from danger, and their attempt to escape; but their swift and sudden destruction, compared to the swift flight of a bird; for the last clause may be rendered, “for in flying it shall fly away”^{f879}. Some render the first clause, “give a flower to Moab”, as the Vulgate Latin version; and so the word sometimes signifies, (^{2300b} Isaiah 40:7); and the sense may be, hold up a flower to Moab, or a feather, such as is light, as the down of a thistle, as an emblem of its destruction; which shall pass away as easily and swiftly

as so light a thing before the wind; but Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the word as we do, a wing. The Targum is,

“take away the crown from Moab, for going it shall go away into captivity.”

The word is used of the plate of gold on the high priest’s mitre, (⁴²⁸⁵Exodus 28:36);

for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein; which expresses the utter destruction of them.

Ver. 10. *Cursed [be] he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully,* etc.] Which is said with respect to the Chaldeans, who were enjoined to destroy the Moabites; which is called the work of the Lord, because he had given them a commission to do it; and which was to be done by them, not by halves, or in a remiss and negligent manner, but fully and faithfully; they were not to spare them, as Saul did the Amalekites, and Ahab Benhadad. This is a general rule, which may be applied to all divine work and service; every man has work to do for God; some in a more public, others in a more private way; all should be done in uprightness and sincerity, with all faithfulness and integrity: it is done deceitfully when men play the hypocrite; and negligently when they are backward to it, lukewarm in it, and infrequent in the performance of it; which brings upon them the curse of God; and which is not a curse causeless, but a legal one; and is no other than the wrath of God in strict justice:

and cursed [be] he that keepeth back his sword from blood; from shedding the blood of the Moabites, when God had given command to do it. The curse is repeated, as Kimchi observes, to confirm the matter, that it might be most assuredly expected; since it would certainly come, if the Lord’s work was not done aright.

Ver. 11. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth,* etc.] Lived in great peace and prosperity from the time they became a kingdom; being very little disturbed with wars by their neighbours, or very rarely; so that they were in very prosperous and flourishing circumstances, which occasioned that pride and haughtiness they were notorious for. This is an emblem of unregenerate men; who, though sinners from their birth, and liable to the curse of the law, subject to the stroke of death, and must come to judgment; yet stupid and quite at ease, having no sight of sin, nor feeling of the burden of its guilt, nor grief or trouble for it; no sense of danger, or

fear of hell; but in the utmost security: all which arise from ignorance, hardness of heart, profaneness, and infidelity; thoughtlessness about their immortal souls; putting the evil day far from them; and being under the influence of Satan, who keeps his goods in peace:

and he hath settled on his lees; a metaphor taken from wine; which, the longer it remains on the lees, the better body it has, and the richer and stronger it is; and denotes the great tranquillity of the Moabites; the riches they were possessed of, and in which they trusted. The Targum renders it,

“quiet in their substance;”

herein they were an emblem of unconverted sinners, who are settled and hardened in the corruptions of their nature; and not at all disturbed at the evil of sin; the wrath of God; his judgments on men; the last and awful judgment; or at the terrors of hell; and likewise of such who trust in their own righteousness, and depend upon that for salvation:

and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel; like wine that has never been racked off from the vessel or vessels it was first put into: they were never removed from place to place, but always continued in their land; in which they were an emblem of such who have never seen their own emptiness, and their want of the grace of God, and have never been emptied of sin, nor of self-righteousness:

neither hath he gone into captivity; this explains in proper words the metaphor in the preceding clause: the Moabites had never been carried captive out of their own land into others; an emblem of such who have never seen their captive state to sin and Satan; or ever brought to complain of it, or become the captives of Christ;

therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed; his wealth, riches, and prosperity, continued without any change and alteration; and also his sins and vices, idolatry, pride, luxury, and which were the cause of his ruin; and for that reason are here mentioned; an emblem of unregenerate men, whose taste is vitiated by sin, and continues as it was originally; they relish sin, and disrelish everything that is good; and savour the things that be of man, and not the things of God; and so are in a most dangerous condition.

Ver. 12. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] This being their case, they should not continue in it; a change would be made, and that

in a very short time, as there was; for, according to Josephus^{f880}, it was about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem that the Moabites were subdued by the king of Babylon:

that I will send unto him wanderers that shall cause him to wander; the Chaldeans, who wandered out of their own country to Moab, directed by the providence of God to come there to do his work; and who, at first, might be treated by the Moabites with contempt, as vagrants, but would soon be made to know that they would cause them to wander; or would remove them out of their own country into other lands, particularly Babylon, to be vagrants there. The word may be rendered “travellers”^{f881}; and signifies such that walk with great strength of body, in a stately way, and with great agility and swiftness; in which manner the Chaldeans are described as coming to Moab, and who should cause them to travel back with them in all haste; see word in (²⁴⁸¹Isaiah 63:1). The Targum renders it “spoilers”; according to the metaphor of wine used in (²⁴⁸¹Jeremiah 48:11), it may signify a sort of persons that cause wine to go, or empty it from one vessel to another; such as we call “wine coopers”; and this agrees with what follows:

and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles; depopulate the cities of Moab; destroy the inhabitants of them, and make them barren and empty of men. The Targum is,

“I will send spoilers upon them, and they shall spoil them, and empty their substance, and consume the good of their land;”

(see ²⁴⁸⁸Jeremiah 48:8). The Septuagint version is, “they shall cut in pieces his horns”; which, as Origen^{f882} interprets them, were a kind of cups anciently used; for in former times they drank out of horns, either of oxen, or other animals; and Pliny^{f883} says that the northern people used to drink out of the horns of buffaloes, a creature larger than a bull, and which the Muscovites call “thur”; the same is asserted by Athenaeus^{f884}, and others, that the horns of beasts were drinking vessels before cups were invented.

Ver. 13. *And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh*, etc.] His idol; (see ²⁴⁸⁷Jeremiah 48:7); of his worship of him, prayers to him, and confidence in him; he not being able to save him from the destruction of the Chaldeans, and being carried captive by them; he himself also going into captivity:

as the house of Israel were ashamed of Bethel their confidence; that is, of the golden calf that was set up in Bethel by Jeroboam, and which the ten

tribes of Israel worshipped, and in which they trusted; but that could not save them from being carried captive by the Assyrians; and so were ashamed of it, and of their idolatrous worship, and vain confidence.

Ver. 14. *How say ye, we [are] mighty and strong men for the war?*] The Moabites were proud, haughty, and arrogant; boasted much of their strength and valour; of the strength of their bodies, and fitness for war, and skill in it; and of the strength of their fortified cities; and thought themselves a match for the enemy, and secure from all danger: for this their pride, vanity, and self-confidence, they are here reproved, since their destruction was at hand.

Ver. 15. *Moab is spoiled*, etc.] The whole country is ruined; which is spoken of as present, though future, after the manner of prophecy, because of the certainty of it:

and gone up [out of] her cities; the inhabitants of Moab were gone up out of their cities, either through fear and flight; or through force, being made to go out of them, and were carried captive. The Targum is,

“the Moabites are spoiled, and their cities are desolate;”

and so Kimchi interprets it,

“the multitude of her cities is made to cease;”

the people of them. It might be as well rendered, “and he is gone up to her cities”^{f885}; that is, the spoiler^{f886}, as Kimchi’s father rightly interprets it; (see ~~2408~~ Jeremiah 48:8); or it may be rendered, “and his cities, into which he went up”^{f887}; that is, those are spoiled and destroyed, into which the Moabites used to go up, being built on high places; or whither they went for safety, the enemy being in their country, but in vain:

and his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter; or, “the choice of his chosen ones”^{f888}; the select of them, for comeliness, strength, and valour; these being taken, when the enemy entered the cities, were had down to some place of slaughter, and there put to death; or were brought down to the grave, the pit of corruption; unless this can be understood of the choice young men of the enemy, the Chaldean army; who, mounting and scaling the walls of the cities of Moab, went down into them to slay the inhabitants of them; but this is submitted to consideration. All this was

not barely said by the prophet, who was but a man, though sent of God; but by the Lord himself, as it follows:

saith the King, whose name [is] the Lord of hosts; who is “the King” by way of eminency; the King of kings, and Lord of lords; mightier than the king of Moab, or even than the king of Babylon; and the Lord of greater armies than either; and therefore what he said should certainly be accomplished.

Ver. 16. *The calamity of Moab [is] near to come*, etc.] As it did come within live years after the destruction of Jerusalem, as observed on (^{<248D>}Jeremiah 48:12); out of Josephus:

and his affliction hasteth fast: or, “his evil”^{f889} the evil of punishment for his sin; his utter destruction.

Ver. 17. *All ye that are about him, bemoan him*, etc.] The neighbouring nations, such as the Ammonites, and others, are called upon to condole the sad case of Moab; all upon the borders of the country of Moab, either within them or without them:

and all ye that know his name; not only that had heard of his fame and glory, but knew in what grandeur and splendour he lived; these have a form of condolence given them:

say, how is the strong staff broken, [and] the beautiful rod! the mighty men of war, the staff of the nation, in which they trusted, destroyed; their fortified cities demolished; the powerful kingdom, which swayed the sceptre, and ruled in great glory, and was terrible and troublesome to others, now pulled down. The Targum is,

“how is the king broken that did evil, the oppressing ruler!”

Ver. 18. *Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon*, etc.] A city in Moab; (see Gill on “^{<235D>}Isaiah 15:2”). The Targum is,

“O kingdom of the congregation of Dibon;”

but this was not a kingdom of itself, though a principal city in the kingdom of Moab:

come down from [thy] glory, and sit in thirst; in a dry and thirsty land; in want of all the necessaries of life; in captivity; who before abounded with all good things, inhabiting a well watered and fruitful soil; (see ^{<235D>}Isaiah

15:9); but now called to quit all their former glory and happiness, their fulness and felicity, and submit to the greatest straits and difficulties:

for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, [and] he shall destroy thy strong holds; the king of Babylon and his army, who spoiled the other cities of Moab; he should come against this also, and take it, and demolish its fortifications, by reason of which it thought itself secure; but these should not be able to protect it.

Ver. 19. *O inhabitant of Aroer*, etc.] Another city that belonged to Moab, situated on the border of it towards Ammon, near the river Arnon; (see Gill on “²³⁷⁰Isaiah 17:2”);

stand by the way, and espy; get to the road side where travellers pass, and look out for them:

ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth; whether man or woman you see fleeing, having escaped the army of the Chaldeans:

[and] say, what is done? by the Chaldeans; ask what cities they have taken; what progress they have made; what is done to their cities, that they flee from them? tell all the particulars of things.

Ver. 20. *Moab is confounded, for it is broken down*, etc.] This is the answer returned, by those that had escaped and were fleeing, to those who inquired of them; who report that the whole country of Moab was in the utmost confusion and consternation; not being able to stand before the enemy, who broke down and destroyed all that was in his way: and therefore calls upon them to

howl and cry; because of the general ruin at the nation, and who must expect themselves to share the same fate; and therefore should prepare themselves and their neighbours for it, as follows:

tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is spoiled; the country of Arnon, so called from a river of that name, on the banks of which Aroer was situated; the inhabitants of which are desired to spread it all over that part of the country, that Moab was utterly ruined by the Chaldean army; the particulars of which follow:

Ver. 21. *And judgment is come upon the plain country*, etc.] Of Moab, which was for the most part such, especially that which lay near Arnon; the

judgment of God's vengeance, punishment for sin, by the hand of the Chaldeans. The Targum is,

“they that execute vengeance are come:”

upon Holon; a city of Moab; of which (see ^{<6151>}Joshua 15:51 21:15); it had its name perhaps from the sandy ground on which it stood. Grotius takes it to be the Alabana of Ptolemy:

and upon Jahazah: the same with Jahaz, (see Gill on “^{<2350>}Isaiah 15:4”); reckoned by Grotius to be the Jadu of Ptolemy; (see ^{<6138>}Joshua 13:18);

and upon Mephaath; of which (see ^{<6138>}Joshua 13:18 21:37); said by Grotius to be the Maipha of Ptolemy.

Ver. 22. *And upon Dibon*, etc.] Whose destruction by this time was come upon it, as suggested, (^{<2488>}Jeremiah 48:18);

and upon Nebo: of which (see ^{<2480>}Jeremiah 48:1);

and upon Bethdiblathaim: the same with Almondiblathaim in (^{<0636>}Numbers 33:46,47) and Diblath in (^{<2064>}Ezekiel 6:14).

Ver. 23. *And upon Kirjathaim*, etc.] Of which (see ^{<2480>}Jeremiah 48:1);

and upon Bethgamul; this is nowhere else mentioned in Scripture; supposed by Grotius to be the Maccala of Ptolemy, put for Camala:

and upon Bethmeon: of which (see ^{<2352>}Isaiah 15:2).

Ver. 24. *And upon Kerioth*, etc.] Which once belonged to the tribe of Judah, (^{<0625>}Joshua 15:25); from this place Judas Iscariot is by some thought to have his name; as if it was “Ish Kerioth”, “a man of Kerioth”. Grotius takes it to be the Goiratha of Ptolemy:

and upon Bozrah; not in Idumea, but in Moab; the same with Bezer, (^{<0623>}Joshua 21:36);

and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, for and near; all the rest of the cities not named, whether nearer or farther off from Aroer.

Ver. 25. *The horn of Moab is cut off*, etc.] The kingdom of Moab, high and strong, his power and strength, by which he defended himself, and offended others, as a beast with his horns; his powerful kingdom, and the glory of it:

and his arm is broken, saith the Lord; so that he cannot hold a sword, or manage any weapon of war against the enemy, or do anything to annoy him, or in his own defence. The Targum is,

“the kingdom of Moab is cut off, and their rulers are broken, saith the Lord;”

and so Ben Melech interprets it of his princes, and his armies, which were the arm of the king, and of the people.

Ver. 26. *Make ye him drunken*, etc.] Not with wine, but with the cup of divine wrath; with the vengeance of God; with sore judgments, afflictions, and calamities; give him his fill of them, till he is quite intoxicated with them, and has lost his senses, and is brought to madness and distraction, and reels, and staggers, and falls to the ground, like a drunken man; and his state and kingdom is quite ruined: this is said to the enemies of Moab, the king of Babylon and his army:

for he magnified [himself] against the Lord; made himself as great as he; yea, set himself above him; thought himself out of his reach; spoke proudly, haughtily, and contemptibly of him, and blasphemously against him, as if he could not deliver his people, or destroy his and their enemies. The Targum interprets it of the people of God, as in (³¹²⁰Zephaniah 2:10); paraphrasing the words thus;

“bring distress upon them, that they may be like to drunken men; for against the people of the Lord have they magnified themselves:”

Moab also shall wallow in his vomit; as drunken men do: or, he shall “clap”, or “dash”^{f890} [his hand] in his vomit”: dash his hands and feet against the ground as he lies in his vomit, as persons in such a condition do: or shall wring his hands, and clap them together for sorrow, being sick, and in distress. Some render it, “he shall clap [the hand at] Moab in his vomit”^{f891}; men shall laugh at him as he lies wallowing in it, or rejoice at his fall and ruin; but this is expressed in the next clause:

and he also shall be in derision; as drunken men are; he shall be derided by others, as others have been derided by him; now it will be his turn.

Ver. 27. *For was not Israel a derision unto thee?* etc.] In the time of his calamity, when the ten tribes were carried captive by the Assyrians some years ago; and of late the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin by the

Chaldeans; the Moabites rejoiced at this, which they ought not to have done, upon the common principles of humanity; and especially since they were not only neighbours, but akin; and therefore, according to the law of retaliation, it was but just that they should be had in derision themselves:

was he found among thieves? that is, Israel; that he should be a derision to any, as thieves are when they are taken; men rejoice at it, insult them, and deride them; but was this the case of Israel? had he robbed any? had he done any injury to Moab, or any other? no, verily: why this derision then?

for since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy; or, “shookedst thyself”^{f892}; whenever the Moabites spoke of the distresses and calamities of Israel, and of their captivity, they laughed till they shook themselves; not only shook their heads, but their whole bodies. The Vulgate Latin version is, “therefore, because of thy words which thou hast spoken against him, thou shall be carried captive”; and Jarchi mentions such a sense of the words, as given by some of their Rabbins; and to this agrees the Targum,

“and because ye have multiplied words against them, therefore ye shall go into captivity.”

Ver. 28. *O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock,* etc.] Signifying hereby that they would not be in safety in their strongest and most fortified cities, which would be besieged by the enemy, and taken; and therefore are advised to leave them, and flee to the rocks and mountains, that if possible they might be safe there:

and be like the dove, [that] maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth; which, for fear of birds of prey, makes her nest in the side of a hole, or cleft of a rock, that she and her young may be safe from them; and which being pursued by the hawk, flies into a hollow rock or cavern, as Homer^{f893} observes: but here it intends the place where it makes its nest; which is for the most part in deserts and rocky places, where great numbers of doves resort, and make their nests, as Diodorus Siculus^{f894} relates; and especially in the holes and clefts of rocks, to which the allusion is in (²⁰¹⁴Song of Solomon 2:14). The Targum is,

“and be as a dove that leaves her dove house, and comes down and dwells in the bottom of a pit,”

or ditch.

Ver. 29. *We have heard the pride of Moab*, etc.] Israel, and all the nations round about, had heard of this, and seen or heard of many instances of it; the thing was notorious; according to Kimchi, it is the prophet that here speaks in the name of the nations; but it seems best to understand it of the Lord himself, as appears from the (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 48:30); and who here speaks in the plural number, because of the plurality of persons in the Godhead; as he afterwards does in the singular number, to denote the unity of the divine essence:

(he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, and his arrogance, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart; a heap of words to express the same thing; suggesting that the instances of his pride were many, and that it was exceeding great indeed: these many words were little enough; and indeed words were wanting fully to declare it. The same was observed in Isaiah's time, and in much the same language; only more words are here used, to show that his pride was increased since that time; (see ²³⁰⁶Isaiah 16:6).

Ver. 30. *I know his wrath, saith the Lord*, etc.] Against the Jews, and other nations; what he has threatened to do unto them, and would do if not restrained:

but [it shall] not [be] so; as he has devised in his mind, and threatened in his wrath; all his swelling thoughts and big words shall come to nothing:

his lies shall not so effect [it]; it shall not be according to his words; they will prove lies, and of no effect. Kimchi interprets it of the sons of Moab, who shall not be able to do what they thought to do; and Jarchi of his mighty ones; and the Targum of his nobles, paraphrasing it,

“and their nobles are not right, they do not as is becoming;”

perhaps it may be better understood of his diviners and soothsayers, as the word is used in (²³⁴⁵Isaiah 44:25); and be rendered, “his diviners have not done right”^{f895}; they have deceived him with their lying oracles; swelled him with pride; and brought him to ruin, he trusting to them.

Ver. 31. *Therefore will I howl for Moab*, etc.] The prophet, being as a man affected with the miseries of a people very wicked, and so deserving of them; though indeed by this he does not so much design to express the affections of his own heart, as to show what reason the Moabites would have to howl for the calamities of their country; for, as Kimchi observes,

the prophet here speaks in the person of the people of Moab; (see ^{<23417>}Isaiah 16:7);

and I will cry out for all Moab; the whole country of Moab, which should become desolate:

[mine heart] shall mourn for the men of Kirheres; the same with Kirhareseth, a city of Moab, (^{<23417>}Isaiah 16:7); whose foundations should be sapped, the city taken, and the men of it put to the sword, or caused to flee; and their case being deplorable, the prophet says his heart should mourn for them like a dove, as Kimchi and Jarchi observe; though it may be rendered, “he shall mourn”^{f896}; that is, Moab; for the destruction of such a principal city, and the men of it. The Targum renders it,

“for the men of the city of their strength.”

Ver. 32. *O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer*, etc.] Sibmah was a city in the land of Moab abounding with vines, but now should be destroyed; and Jazer another city in the same country, which was destroyed before the other; and therefore its destruction should be lamented and wept over, as that had been: or “from”, or “after the weeping of Jazer”^{f897}; when that is over, or from thence will I go in course as the desolation proceeds, to weep for Sibmah: or I will weep for that “more than the weeping of Jazer”^{f898}; make a greater lamentation for it than for Jazer; or, as some, than Isaiah made for Jazer; of which (see ^{<23419>}Isaiah 16:9);

thy plants are gone over the sea; the Dead sea; meaning the inhabitants of Sibmah, the governors and common people, who were gone over sea into captivity, as it is generally understood:

they reach [even] to the sea of Jazer; a lake or confluence of water near to Jazer, called a sea; as it was usual with the Jews to call such seas; as the sea of Tiberias, and the like: this spread of the plants seems to refer to the multitudes of those that belonged to Sibmah, and the villages of it, which extended beyond the Dead sea, even to the sea of Jazer; but as fruitful as this vine was, and extensive as its branches were, they should come to destruction:

the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits, and upon thy vintage: the king of Babylon, who came upon them with his army in the summer season, and at the time of their vintage, and devoured the fruits of their vines and fig

trees, with which this country abounded; and so impoverished and ruined them. The Targum of the whole is,

“therefore as I have brought an army against Jazer, so I will bring slayers against Sibmah; they that carry them captive have waded; they have passed through the sea; they are come to the sea of Jazer; upon thy harvest, and upon thy vintage, the spoilers are fallen.”

Ver. 33. *And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field*, etc.] Or, from Carmel^{f899}; not Mount Carmel in the land of Israel; for the prophecy is of Moab; though that reached to Sibmah; but here it signifies any fruitful place, like Carmel, where were good pasturage, corn, and fruit bearing trees, which produced great plenty of good things, and caused joy to the owners of them: but now all being destroyed by the enemy, joy and gladness would cease:

and from the land of Moab; from all parts of it, where there had used to be plenty, and so joy:

and I have caused wine to fail from the wine presses: there being no grapes to put into them, or men to tread them, were there any; or, if put in and trodden, not the owners, but the enemy, should have the wine; so that it should fail from the Moabites; they should be never the better for it. These are the words of the Lord, who has the disposal of the fruits of the earth:

none shall tread with shouting; as treaders in the wine press used to do, to encourage one another, and make their labour more easy, and the time to pass on in it more pleasantly; but now there should neither be treading nor shouting; (see ²³¹⁶⁰Isaiah 16:10);

[their] shouting [shall be] no shouting; not a shouting of joy, as used to be when they trod out the wine; but a cry of mourning and lamentation, because of the sword of the enemy.

Ver. 34. *From the cry of Heshbon [even] unto Elealeh*, etc.] Two cities in the land of Moab; of which (see ²³¹⁰⁴Isaiah 15:4 16:9). Heshbon being destroyed, a cry was made by the inhabitants of it, which either reached from thence to Elealeh; or the destruction being carried on to that city, the cry was continued there:

[and even] unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice; another city of Moab; (see ^{<2315H>}Isaiah 15:4); which also was laid waste, and where the Moabites uttered their voice of lamentation on account of it:

from Zoar [even] unto Horonaim, [as] an heifer of three years old: that is, as the destruction should go on to Zoar, and so to Horonaim; of which places (see ^{<2315I>}Isaiah 15:5); so the cry of the distressed, and of those that flee, should also go from place to place; and be as loud, and as strong, and heard as far, as the lowing of a heifer of three years old. Naturalists^{f900} observe, that the voice in all female creatures is smaller and shriller, excepting the ox; for the voices of the females of that creature is stronger than in the males; and also that the taming of these creatures is when they are three years old, that is the proper time; before it is too soon, and afterwards too late^{f901}; and then it is their voice is fuller, and their strength firmer, to which the allusion here is; (see Gill on “^{<2315I>}Isaiah 15:5”);

for the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate; being disturbed by the Chaldean army, their horses treading them with their feet, and so fouling them; or being mixed with the blood of the slain, and so unfit to drink. A sad case this, to have neither wine nor water; (see Gill on “^{<2316I>}Isaiah 15:6”); to which may be added, that Jerom also makes mention of a village in his time called Benamerium, to the north of Zoar; and seems rather the place intended.

Ver. 35. *Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the Lord, him that offereth in the high places,* etc.] A burnt offering there; that is, the priest, who shall be taken and carried captive, (^{<2487I>}Jeremiah 48:7); even everyone of them; so that there will not be one left to offer sacrifice:

and him that burneth incense to his gods: Chemosh, and others, the Moabites worshipped: this suggests that idolatry was one of the sins for which they were punished; and as all places and all sorts of persons should suffer in this calamity, so likewise idolatrous places, priests, and worshippers.

Ver. 36. *Therefore my heart shall sound for Moab like pipes,* etc.] That are sounded on mournful occasions, as at funerals, and the like; (see ^{<4192I>}Matthew 9:23). This the prophet said, as Kimchi observes, in the person of the people, the inhabitants of Moab; whose hearts would yearn and sound for the calamities of their country like the doleful sound of minstrels. So the Targum,

“therefore the Moabites shall sound in their hearts like a harp:”

and my heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kirheres; as for the country of Moab in general, so for this principal city, and the inhabitants of it, in particular; (see Gill on “^{<2361>}Isaiah 16:11”);

because the riches [that] he hath gotten is perished; either Moab or Kirheres; the abundance of goods they had got together were now lost, falling into the hands of the enemy; and which was matter of lamentation. The Targum is,

“for the rest of their substance they had got were spoiled.”

Some understand it of the residue of men that escaped the sword; these perished by famine, or other means; (see ^{<2337>}Isaiah 15:7).

Ver. 37. *For every head [shall be] bald, and every beard clipped*, etc.] Men, in times of mourning, used to pluck off the hairs of their head till they made them bald, and shaved their beards; which, as Kimchi says, were the glory of their faces; (see ^{<2342>}Isaiah 15:2);

upon all the hands shall be cuttings: it was usual with the Heathens to make incisions in the several parts of their bodies, particularly in their hands and arms, with their nails, or with knives, in token of mourning; which are forbidden the Israelites, (^{<540>}Deuteronomy 14:1);

and upon the loins sackcloth; this is a well known custom for mourners, to put off their clothes, and put on sackcloth; all these things are mentioned, to show how great was the mourning of Moab for the calamities of it.

Ver. 38. *[There shall be] lamentation generally*, etc.] Or, “all of it [is] mourning”^{<1902>}; the whole country of Moab is in mourning; or all is full of mourning; all persons, places, and things, express nothing but mourning; go where you will, it is to be seen:

upon all the house tops of Moab, and in the streets thereof; the mourning, as it was general, it was public; it was seen by all, and everywhere; (see Gill on “^{<2353>}Isaiah 15:3”);

for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein [is] no pleasure, saith the Lord; as an earthen vessel, which the potter does not like, and which is useless and unprofitable to any, and which he takes and dashes into pieces; into a thousand shivers, as the word^{<1903>} here signifies, and can never be put

together again; or as a filthy unclean vessel a man cannot bear in his sight: Moab is by the Lord called his wash pot, (^{<3918>}Psalm 60:8). The Moabites were vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction by their own this; and now the time of it was come.

Ver. 39. *They shall howl, [saying], how is it broken down?* etc.] Or, “how is it broken” or “thrown into consternation^{f904}? they howl”; that is, they howl out these words, or, while they are howling, say, how is Kirheres or Moab broken all to pieces; their strength, power, and glory; their cities, and their mighty men; and are in the utmost fright and confusion? Jarchi takes it to be an imperative, and paraphrases it,

“howl ye over her^{f905}, and say, how is it broken!”

Kimchi says it may be taken either as in the past or in the imperative;

how hath Moab turned the back with shame? not being able to look their enemies in the face, but obliged to flee before them;

so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him; a derision to some, to their enemies, as Israel had been to them, and so they are paid in their own coin; and a consternation to others, their friends, who would fear sharing the same fate, at the hands of the Chaldeans.

Ver. 40. *For thus saith the Lord, behold, he shall fly as an eagle,* etc.] The enemy, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, with his army; who is compared to an eagle for his strength, swiftness, and greediness after the prey:

and shall spread his wings over Moab; as an eagle spreads its wings, which are very large, over the little birds it seizes upon as its prey; so the king of Babylon would bring a numerous army against Moab, and spread it over his country. The Targum is,

“behold, as all eagle which flies, so a king shall come up with his army, and encamp against Moab.”

Ver. 41. *Kerioth is taken,* etc.] The name of a city in Moab, as in (^{<2483>}Jeremiah 48:24); so Jarchi, and others; but Kimchi and Abarbinel observe, that it may be taken for an appellative, and be rendered “the cities”; everyone of the cities of Moab, which were as easily and quickly taken as one city; these may intend the cities in the plain, as the strong holds those in high places:

and the strong holds are surprised; everyone of them; so that there was not a city, or a fortified place, but what came into the enemies' hands:

and the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs; even the hearts of the soldiers, and the most courageous generals, shall sink within them; and they be not only as timorous as women in common, but as low spirited as a woman when she finds her pains are coming upon her, and the time of her delivery is at hand.

Ver. 42. *And Moab shall be destroyed from [being] a people*, etc.] For some time, not always; since the captivity of Moab is promised to be returned, (²⁴⁸⁷Jeremiah 48:47); or from being such a people as they had been, enjoying so much ease, wealth, power, and prosperity. Abarbinel takes it to be a comparative, and renders it, "more than a people"; that is, shall be destroyed more than any other people; but the former sense is best;

because he hath magnified [himself] against the Lord; the Targum is, against the people of the Lord; this is the cause of his destruction; (see Gill on "²⁴⁸³Jeremiah 48:26").

Ver. 43. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare, [shall be] upon thee*, etc.] A proverbial expression, showing, that if they escaped one danger, or sore judgment, they should fall into another and greater: the words seem to be taken from (²³⁴⁷Isaiah 24:17).

O inhabitant of Moab, saith the Lord; what in the prophecy of Isaiah is said of the inhabitants of the earth in general, is here applied to the inhabitants of Moab in particular.

Ver. 44. *He that fleeth from the fear*, etc.] From terrible enemies he is afraid of, and dares not face them, but flees, in order to escape them:

shall fall into the pit; into some misfortune or another:

and he that getteth out of the pit shall be taken in the snare; laid by the enemy for him, and so shall fall into his hands. Sanctius very ingeniously observes that the allusion is to the hunting of deer, and such like creatures; when first a line of feathers of various colours is placed to frighten them; and if they get over that, then there is a pit dug for them, to catch them in; and if they get out of that, a snare is laid to take them; so that they rarely escape: and thus it would be with the Moabites, if they got rid of a first and

second danger, a third would involve them; their destruction was certain, as follows; (see ²³⁴⁸Isaiah 24:18);

for I will bring upon it, [even] upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the Lord; in a way of wrath and punishment; for which there was a time fixed, and was now at hand, and would quickly take place, according to the will and word of the Lord, of which Moab might be assured; who is expressed by name, for the sake of explanation, and that it might be manifest who was intended.

Ver. 45. *They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon, because of the force,* etc.] Heshbon was a strong city in the land of Moab, to which many of the Moabites betook themselves in this time of their calamity; thinking they should be sheltered, under the protection of it, from the fury of the Chaldean army; hither they fled, and here they stood, imagining they were safe, “because of the force”; because of the strength of the city of Heshbon, as Kimchi; or because of the force of their enemies, for fear of them, as Kimchi’s father; or for want of strength, because they had no more strength to flee, and therefore stopped there, so Jarchi and Abarbinel: but the words should rather be rendered, “they that stood under the shadow of Heshbon”; thinking themselves safe, but now perceiving danger, “fled with strength”¹⁹⁰⁶; or as swiftly as they could, and with all the strength they had, that they might, if possible, escape from thence:

*for a fire*¹⁹⁰⁷ (for so it should be rendered, and not “but a fire”)

shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon; the same with Heshbon; so called from Sihon, an ancient king of it; the meaning is, that the Chaldeans should make themselves masters of Heshbon, this strong city, in which the Moabites trusted; and from thence should go out like a flame of fire, and spread themselves all over the country, and destroy it: what was formerly said of the Amorites, who took the land of Moab out of the hands of the king of it, and it became afterwards a proverbial expression, is here applied to the Chaldeans; (see ¹⁹²⁵Numbers 21:26-28); so the Targum, by a flame of fire, understands warriors:

and shall devour the corner of Moab; the whole country, even to the borders of it. The Targum is,

“and shall slay the princes of Moab;”

so great men are sometimes called corners; (see ^{<3804>}Zechariah 10:4
^{<4817>}Numbers 24:17);

and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones; not of the common people that were tumultuous and riotous, but of the great ones, who swaggered and boasted, and made a noise about their strength and riches; but now should have their heads broke, and their pride and glory laid in the dust. So the Targum,

“and the nobles, the children of noise.”

Ver. 46. *Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth*, etc.] The inhabitants of Moab, who worshipped the idol Chemosh; of which (see ^{<2487>}Jeremiah 48:7); and so called his people, as Israel were called the people of the Lord; now these, notwithstanding their idol, whom they worshipped, and in whom they trusted, should perish; and sad and deplorable would be their condition and circumstances:

for thy sons are taken captives, and thy daughters captives; this explains the woe that should come upon them, and in what sense they should perish; since their sons and daughters, who they hoped would have continued their name and nation, were taken, and would be carried captives into Babylon; (see ^{<4212>}Numbers 21:29).

Ver. 47. *Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter day, saith the Lord*, etc.] Some think this is added, not so much for the sake of Moab as of the Jews, to assure them of their return from captivity, as had been promised them, since this would be the case even of Moab. It had a literal accomplishment under Cyrus, as is thought, when they were restored to their land; and certain it is they were a people in the times of Alexander, or King Jannaeus, who subdued them, as Josephus^{f908} relates: and it had a spiritual one in the times of the Messiah, in the conversion of some of these people, as very probably in the first times of the Gospel; so it will have in the latter day; (see ^{<2314>}Isaiah 11:14). Kimchi interprets it of the days of the Messiah. For though that people are no more, yet there are a people which inhabit their country, who will, at least many of them, be converted, when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in; and it is no unusual thing in Scripture for the present inhabitants of many countries to be called after those who formerly inhabited them, as the Turks are often called Assyrians;

thus far [is] the judgment of Moab; that is, either so long, unto the latter days, will the judgment of Moab continue. So the Targum,

“hitherto to execute vengeance of judgment on Moab;”

or rather, thus far is the prophecy concerning the destruction of Moab; this is the conclusion of it; here it ends, being a long one.

CHAPTER 49

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 49

This chapter contains prophecies concerning the judgments of God on several nations and kingdoms, chiefly bordering on the land of Israel; on the Ammonites, (^{<2401>}Jeremiah 49:1-6); on the Edomites, (^{<2407>}Jeremiah 49:7-22); on the kingdom of Damascus, or the Syrians, (^{<2423>}Jeremiah 49:23-27); on the Kedarenes or Arabians, (^{<2428>}Jeremiah 49:28-33); and on the Elamites or Persians, (^{<2438>}Jeremiah 49:34-39).

Ver. 1. *Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “to the Ammonites”^{f909}; or, “against” them^{f910}; it will bear to be rendered either way, and all is true; for what is said by the Lord, as follows, is concerning them, their sins, and their punishment, and is directed to them, and is a threatening against them:

hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? certainly he has, and who ought to possess the land; this is to be understood not of the ten tribes, sometimes called Israel, as distinct from the other two; for these had been long ago carried captive, and left no heirs of their tribes; but of all Israel, including the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; who, though their brethren of the ten tribes were carried captive, and left no children to inherit, yet, being next in blood, were the lawful heirs of their lands and possessions:

why [then] doth their king inherit Gad? that part of the land of Israel which belonged to the tribe of Gad; this, when the ten tribes were carried captive by the king of Assyria, and the Gadites among the rest, was seized on by the Ammonites, with their king at the head of them, lying near unto them; who might also pretend relation, as being the children of Lot, the brother’s son of Abraham; or claim it, as having been their own formerly, and so were the lawful heirs of it, as they imagined; when it of right belonged to the children of Judah and Benjamin: or, “why doth Malcam inherit Gad?”^{f911} the same with Milcom or Molech, the abomination of the Ammonites, the idol they worshipped, (^{<1116>}1 Kings 11:5,7); so Jarchi interprets it. The Ammonites having got possession of the land, set up their idol in it, where temples were built for him, and altars erected, and

sacrifices offered to him, so that he might be said to inherit it; and which must be very offensive to, and highly resented by, the God of Israel:

and his people dwelt in his cities: the Ammonites dwelt in the cities belonging to the tribe of Gad, as if they were their own; who are called the people of Milcom, or Molech, just as the Moabites are called the people of Chemosh, from the idol they worshipped, (²⁴⁸⁶Jeremiah 48:46).

Ver. 2. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “are coming”^{f912}; as they did, in a very little time after this prophecy:

that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites; the metropolis of the Ammonites; it was their royal city in the times of David, (¹¹⁰⁰1 Kings 11:1 12:26); called by Polybius^{f913} Rabbahamana; and by Ptolemy^{f914} Philadelphia, which name it had from Ptolemy Philadelphus, who rebuilt it; this the Lord threatens with the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, or the noise of warriors, as the Targum; the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar, who, about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, subdued the Ammonites, as Josephus^{f915} relates:

and it shall be a desolate heap; be utterly destroyed; its walls broken down, and houses demolished, and made a heap of rubbish: and

her daughters shall be burnt with fire: Rabbah was the mother city, and the other cities of the Ammonites were her daughters, which are threatened to be destroyed with fire by the enemy; or it may mean the villages round about Rabbah, it being usual in Scripture for villages to be called the daughters of cities; (see ³⁶⁶Ezekiel 16:46); so the Targum here paraphrases it,

“the inhabitants of her villages shall be burnt with fire:”

then shall Israel be heirs unto them that were his heirs, saith the Lord: that is, shall inherit their land again, which the Ammonites pretended to be the lawful heirs of; yea, not only possess their own land, but the land of Ammon too: this was fulfilled not immediately upon the destruction of Ammon, but in part upon the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, when they repossessed their own country; and partly in the times of the Maccabees, when they subdued the Ammonites,

“Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain.” (1 Maccabees 5:6)

and will more fully in the latter day, when the Jews shall be converted, and return to their own land, and the children of Ammon shall obey them, (²³¹¹⁴Isaiah 11:14); so Kimchi interprets it; and other Jewish writers understand it of the days of the Messiah, as Abarbinel observes.

Ver. 3. *Howl, O Heshbon*, etc.] Which was a city of Moab, though it formerly belonged to the Amorites; (see ²⁴⁸²Jeremiah 48:2 ⁴⁰²³Numbers 21:26); it was upon the border of Ammon, and near to Ai, now destroyed; and therefore is called upon to howl and lament, because its destruction also was near at hand, and might be expected; hence Kimchi gathers, that the Ammonites were destroyed before the Moabites: but some have thought that Heshbon was a double city, divided by a river, which ran through it; and that that city which was on one side of the river belonged to Moab, and that on the other side to Ammon:

for Ai is spoiled; not that which was near Jericho in the land of Canaan, but a city in the land of Ammon, thought to be the Gaia of Ptolemy; this seems to be the first city in the country of Ammon that Nebuchadnezzar would lay waste:

cry, ye daughters of Rabbah; the royal city before mentioned; (see Gill on ²⁴⁸²Jeremiah 49:2”); either the inhabitants of it, particularly the women, especially the younger women, who would be in the utmost distress on hearing the enemy was so near them, and what had befallen Ai; or the villages about Rabbah, as Kimchi interprets it; that is, as the Targum,

“the inhabitants of the villages of Rabbah:”

gird ye with sackcloth; as a token of calamity and mourning for it, as was usual:

lament, and run to and fro by the hedges; which Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, understand of the enclosures or fences of villages, like those of gardens, fields, and folds, in distinction from walls of cities, and fortified places; but rather it signifies the hedges in the fields, whither, being drove from their habitations, they would seek unto for shelter, and run about among them for safety, lamenting their unhappy case:

for their king shall go into captivity; be taken and carried captive; either their principal governor; or rather Milcom their god, since it follows:

[and] his priests and his princes together; both such as offered sacrifices to him, and attended on and supported his worship: the same is said of Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, (~~2480~~Jeremiah 48:7).

Ver. 4. *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys*, etc.] Of which there were many in the country of Ammon, fruitful and well watered, which were situated by the rivers of Arnon and Jabbok, the borders of this country, and in which was the plain of the vineyards; (see ~~47113~~Judges 11:13,33); and indeed the whole country was a vale. For, as Josephus^{f916} says, the country both of the Moabites and Ammonites were in the valley of Syria, or Coelesyria; that is, hollow Syria, so called from its lying low, or in a valley; for this country lay between the mountains Libanus and Antilibanus, as Strabo^{f917} says, and brought forth a large increase; in this they gloried, in the produce of these valleys, in the grass, corn, and vines, that grew upon them, and the flocks that fed there; but now should have no occasion to glory, all being swept away by the enemy:

thy flowing valley, or, “thy valley flows”^{f918}; is overflowed with water, through abundance of rain, which destroyed the fruits of it, so Jarchi; or rather flowed with the blood of the slain, as Kimchi, Ben Melech, and Abarbinel; the enemy having entered it, and made so great a slaughter of men in it:

O backsliding daughter? the Targum is, O foolish kingdom; the whole kingdom of Ammon is meant, or the people of it; who, descending from righteous Lot, may be called backsliders; and, being also idolaters, have this character; for such revolt from the true God, to worship idols: it may be rendered, “refractory”, “rebellious”^{f919}; as all such persons are:

that trusteth in her treasures, [saying], who shall come unto me? dwelling in valleys encompassed with mountains, and in fortified cities, and abounding in wealth and riches, whereby they were able to procure men and arms to defend themselves; thought they were safe from any enemy, and that none could come nigh them, and so dwelt at ease, and in great security.

Ver. 5. *Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord God of hosts*, etc.] The terrible army of the Chaldeans, which should strike them with a

panic; who thought themselves so secure in their fortresses, trusting in their riches:

from all those that be about thee; meaning either from the Chaldeans, and the neighbouring nations, that should join and surround the Ammonites on all sides; or from all the borders of Ammon round about, where they should come; they would be a “magormissabib”, “a fear all round”, (^{241B}Jeremiah 20:3):

and ye shall be driven out every man right forth; driven out of their houses, and cities, and villages, and steer their course right forward, and never look behind to see what were become of their families and their friends; everyone having enough to do to provide for his own safety:

and none shall gather up him that wandereth; that is straggling about, and knows not which way to take, and whither to flee for safety; all will be so intent on their own safety, that they will not concern themselves for others, to take them under their care; to take those that are on foot upon their horses or carriages, whom they overtake; or into their houses, as they pass by.

Ver. 6. *And afterwards I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.*] Perhaps by Cyrus; for, in the times of Judas Maccabeus, the children of Ammon were again a large and mighty people,

“Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain.” (1 Maccabees 5:6)

Justin Martyr^{f920} says, that in his time there was a large multitude of Ammonites; but Origen^{f921}, who was later than he, observes, that not only the Idumeans, but the Ammonites and Moabites, were then called by the common name of Arabians; and these are now the present inhabitants of their country; and when these shall be converted in the latter day; (see ^{241B}Isaiah 60:6,7); who may be called by the name of the ancient inhabitants; then will this be more fully accomplished: for some refer this to the days of the Messiah, and to the conversion of some of these Heathen people, either in the first times of the Gospel, or in the latter day; (see Gill on “^{241D}Jeremiah 49:2”). The Jews^{f922} understand this as fulfilled in Ammonite proselytes to their religion.

Ver. 7. *Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts,* etc.] Or, “unto Edom”^{f923}, thus saith the Lord; or, “against Edom”^{f924}; all which is true, as observed on (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 49:1); meaning the Idumeans, the posterity of Esau, who was called Edom. Kimchi thinks this respects time yet future, and points at the destruction of Rome, and the Romans, who with the Jews frequently go by the name of Edom; and Abarbinel is of the same mind. And Cocceius is of opinion that the Jews are meant, and their destruction, with whom the Idumeans were incorporated before the coming of Christ, and had Herod, an Idumean, king over them; but it is best to understand the prophecy properly and literally of the Idumeans themselves;

[is] wisdom no more in Teman? a city in Edom, which had its name from Teman, a grandson of Esau, (^{<0131>}Genesis 36:11); whose descendants were called Temanites; one of which was Eliphaz, a friend of Job’s, (^{<801>}Job 2:11); it was a principal city, famous for men of wisdom; such an one was the person just mentioned: perhaps the grand senate of the country, or the chief counsellors, dwelt here; where schemes were formed for the good of the country in times of war or peace; or schools were kept here for the instruction of persons in various arts and sciences; and which had continued to this time, but now would be no more. The Targum is,

“is there no more wisdom in the south?”

but Jarchi better interprets it of Edom, which lay south to the land of Israel;

is counsel perished from the prudent? it was so, even from those that were the most famous for being prudent and understanding men; they were now at their wits’ end, and knew not what course to take, nor what advice to give, in this their time of distress. The Targum renders it “from the children”; the sons of the Temanites, strangely degenerated from their ancestors;

is their wisdom vanished? or corrupted, as the Targum; or does it stink? according to the Rabbinical sense of the word; or infatuated, and become good for nothing? verily it was, it was useless, disregarded and despised.

Ver. 8. *Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan,* etc.] Another city in Idumea; though some take it to be a country in Arabia, bordering on Edom, and subdued by the Edomites: the inhabitants of this place are advised to “flee” for their lives, since the enemy was just upon them; and “turn back”, lest they should fall into his hands; and hide themselves in some deep caverns of the earth, in holes, and dens of rocks,

and such like places. It is a prophecy that they should flee from and turn their backs on their enemies, and betake themselves to some very secret places for safety;

for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him; which was determined concerning him, threatened to him, and was his just desert; even the utter destruction of the whole land:

the time of his visitation; the time fixed to visit him in a way of wrath and punishment being come,

Ver. 9. *If grape gatherers come to thee, would they not leave [some] gleaning grapes?* etc.] If gatherers of grapes, at the time of the vintage, should come into thy fields to gather the grapes, being ripe, would not they leave some for the poor to glean? certainly they would, and not take every cluster. The Targum renders it,

“if thy spoilers, as grape gatherers, should come to thee,” etc.

if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough; who break into houses by night, these will eat and drink as much as is sufficient, and carry off what serves their turn; but they seldom take away everything they find in a house; they leave some things behind them; but it is suggested that the Chaldeans should take away all from the Edomites, and leave them nothing; (see Obidiah 1:5,6).

Ver. 10. *But I have made Esau bare*, etc.] By the hand of the Chaldeans; stripped him of everything that is valuable; of his cities, castles, villages, people, wealth, and treasure:

I have uncovered his secret places; where either his substance was hid, or his people; these were made known to their enemies, who seized on both:

and he shall not be able to hide himself; even in his deep places, in the caves and dens of the earth, but his enemy shall find him out:

his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours; his children, as the Targum; and his brethren, the Ammonites and Moabites; and his neighbours, the Philistines; or as many as were with him, and belonged unto him:

and he [is] not: his kingdom is not; he is no more a people and nation, but all destroyed by the sword, or carried captive; or there should be none left

of his brethren, and neighbours, and friends, to say to him what follows: “leave thy fatherless children”, etc. So Kimchi and Ben Melech say this phrase is in connection with the (²⁴⁴¹Jeremiah 49:11).

Ver. 11. *Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve [them] alive*, etc.] Leave them with me; commit them to my care; I will provide for them; they shall have food and raiment, and want nothing to make them comfortable: to have such a friend or friends, promising such things to a man, when he is obliged to flee and leave his family, or is at the point of death, serves to make him easy; but there would be none left of the Edomites to say such kind words, or do such a friendly part. Some think they are the words of God, either spoken ironically or seriously; suggesting that they should have no children or widows to leave, all should be destroyed; or, if any left, they could not expect that he would take care of them, whom they had so provoked; or that such would be their miserable case, unless he had mercy on them, and took care of their fatherless children, there would be none to do it. Others think it respects a remnant of the Edomites that should be preserved, and be converted to Christ in Gospel times. The Targum takes them to be an address to the people of Israel, paraphrasing them thus:

“you, O house of Israel, your orphans shall not be left, I will sustain them, and your widows shall trust in my word:”

which last clause we render,

let your widows trust in me; which, could they be considered as the words of God, agree well with him, who is the Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widows, (²⁴⁸⁵Psalm 68:5); and a great encouragement to persons, in such circumstances, to place their confidence in him; and it must be right so to do.

Ver. 12. *For thus saith the Lord*, etc.] This that follows shows that what goes before is not said by way of promise and comfort, but threatening:

behold, they whose judgment [was] not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; meaning either some of the other nations, who had not dealt so ill with the Jews as the Edomites had, at least their sins were not so aggravated as theirs were; they being akin to the Jews, and having used them in a very injurious and scornful manner; or the Jews themselves, who, in comparison of them, had not deserved divine vengeance, signified by a cup, a portion of wrath, and punishment righteously allotted them, and which they had partook of, being carried captive into Babylon: for this is

not to be understood strictly of proper justice, but in a comparative sense; for otherwise it was but just and right that they should be treated in the manner they were; only they were not so guilty as these were;

and [art] thou he [that] shalt altogether go unpunished? if lesser sinners are not let go free, how should it be thought that greater ones should? and especially if judgment had begun at God's own people, the wicked Edomite, could not expect to escape;

thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink [of it]; the cup of wrath and vengeance; or have the just punishment inflicted on them threatened them.

Ver. 13. *For I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord,* etc.] This he did, because he could swear by no greater, and to show the certain and infallible accomplishment of the event, and the importance of it; and which was so extraordinary, that it was scarce thought credible, and therefore an oath is used to confirm it:

that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; not Rome, as Abarbinel; nor Jerusalem, as Cocceius; nor Bozrah of Moab, (^{<2483>}Jeremiah 48:24); but Bozrah of Idumea, (^{<2611>}Isaiah 63:1); the royal city of Edom, as Kimchi; this should be utterly destroyed, and be spoken of contemptibly, and used proverbially, to express a curse; the Lord curse thee as Bozrah is cursed. It may be put for the whole country of Edom, of which it was the metropolis, since it follows,

and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes; either those in the neighbourhood of it, and belonging to it, it being the capital or mother city; or all the cities in the land of Edom; so general should be the desolation.

Ver. 14. *I have heard a rumour from the Lord,* etc.] “A hearing”^{f925}; or a report concerning the destruction of Edom, made to him in a dream or vision, by the spirit of God, as a spirit of prophecy:

and an ambassador is sent to the Heathen; or a messenger; Jeremiah the prophet, as some; or an angel, as Kimchi suggests, sent to gather the nations to war against Bozrah; or a divine impulse, as others, with which the Chaldeans were impressed; which was as a voice to them,

[saying], gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle; get your forces together, and come against Bozrah or Edom, to

invade and subdue it; attack it in a military way, not doubting of victory; (see Obadiah 1:1).

Ver. 15. *For, lo, I will make thee small among the Heathen*, etc.] Or, “I have given thee”, or “made thee”^{f926}; as if it respected what Edom was at first, a people few in number, and their country not large, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi, and after them Abarbinel: but it rather intends what Edom should be^{f927}; and which was the reason of gathering the Chaldeans against them, to reduce their number, weaken their strength, and destroy their substance, and so make them a small, feeble, and contemptible people; as follows:

[and] despised among men: for the fewness of their men, the desolation of their country, the consumption of their wealth and riches, their poverty and meanness; (see Obidiah 1:2).

Ver. 16. *Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, [and] the pride of thine heart*, etc.] Some render it, “thine idol”^{f928}; (see ^{<1153>}1 Kings 15:13); which, being terrible to them, they thought it might be so to others, and protect them. In the place referred to the word “miphlezeth” is used, and comes from the same root with this, which signifies to be terrible and formidable, and cause to tremble, as the idols of the Gentiles were to their worshippers, and others. The Vulgate Latin version of the above place interprets it of Priapus, which was an idol set up in gardens to frighten birds and thieves from coming thither^{f929}. So Kimchi observes, that some interpret it here of idolatrous worship or superstition; but it is to be understood either of the roughness and terribleness of their country, abounding with rocks and mountains, which made it inaccessible; or rather of that terror which they struck into their neighbouring nations, by their wealth and riches, their power and strength, their courage and valour, and skill in military affairs; and having such strong cities, fortresses, and fastnesses, natural and artificial, of which they were proud; and, on account of all which, fancied that none would dare to invade them; or, if they did, their attempts would be fruitless; and this deceived them, making them careless and secure:

O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock; the land of Idumea being very hilly and rocky. Jerom^{f930} says, who lived near it, that all the southern part of Idumea, from Eleutheropolis to Petra and Hailah, had their habitations in caves cut out of rocks:

that holdest the height of the hill; that dwelt on the tops of hills and mountains, and in towers and fortified places built upon them, as Kimchi

and Ben Melech; who think respect is had particularly to Mount Seir. The Targum is,

“for thou art like to an eagle that dwells in the clefts of the rock,
whose high habitation is inn strong place;”

hence it follows:

though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord; signifying, though they might think themselves as safe and as much out of the reach of men as an eagle’s nest, and were as high and as secure in their own imaginations; yet they should be come at by their enemies, be fetched out of their strong holds, and reduced to the lowest and most miserable state and condition; of which they might be assured, since the Lord had spoken it, who would do it by the hand of the Chaldeans. The allusion to the eagle is very pertinent to illustrate the self-exaltation and self-security of the Edomites; the eagle being a bird that flies higher than any other, as Kimchi on the place observes, even up to the clouds, and out of sight; hence Homer^{f931} calls it the high flying eagle; and which builds its nest in high places, in the tops of rocks; so Aristotle^{f932} says, they make their nests, not in plains, but in high places, especially in cragged rocks; and Pliny^{f933} relates that they build their nests in rocks; and he also says^{f934} of the vultures, who seem to be meant by the eagles in (^{<128>} Matthew 24:28); that they build their nests in the highest rocks, and which no man can reach.

Ver. 17. *Also Edom shall be a desolation*, etc.] Not only Bozrah, its principal city, before spoken of, but the whole country of Idumea should be laid waste; its fortified cities destroyed; its riches plundered; and its inhabitants slain with the sword; or carried captive:

everyone that goeth by it shall be astonished; at the desolation made, so suddenly and so universally:

and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof; rejoice at them; clap their hands, and shake their heads, as the Targum; and hiss with their tongues, insulting and deriding them.

Ver. 18. *As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah*, etc.] Which was so sudden and general, that nothing was left, or any spared; so should it be with Edom:

and the neighbour [cities] thereof, saith the Lord; the cities that were in the plain, Admah and Zeboim:

no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it; that is, of the race of Edom; no Idumean should inhabit it; otherwise those who conquered it should, and doubtless did. There seems to be some allusion to the Dead sea, these cities became, to which Edom is compared, and so were quite uninhabitable.

Ver. 19. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan,* etc.] The Targum rightly interprets it of a king and his army, paraphrasing the words thus,

“behold, a king with his army shall come up against them, as a lion comes up from the height of Jordan;”

not the king of Edom that should come up against Judea, or to defend himself against those that invaded him; but Nebuchadnezzar and his army that should come up against the Edomites from the land of Judea, where Jordan was, having first subdued that; or should come with that strength, fury, and fierceness, as a lion when forced out of its covert near the river Jordan, by the overflowing of its banks, and obliged to betake himself to higher grounds; who, being enraged, roars and tears in pieces all in his way. Monsieur Thevenot^{f935} says, that Jordan is beset on both sides with little, thick, and pleasant woods; and Mr. Maundrell^{f936} observes, that

“there is a first and outermost bank to the river, about a furlong, upon a level, before you come to the second bank, to which it may be supposed the river did, and still does, overflow; and the second bank is so beset with bushes and trees, such as tamarisk, willows, and oleanders, etc. that you can see no water till you have made your way through them. In this thicket anciently (and the same is reported of at this day) several sorts of wild beasts were wont to harbour themselves, whose being washed out of the covert, by the over flowings of the river, gave occasion to the allusion, (~~2499~~Jeremiah 49:19).”

So Jerom^{f937} speaks of lions, in his time, taking up their abode by the river Jordan, near which were desert places, reeds, and sedges:

against the habitation of the strong; the land of Edom, a country well fortified, in which mighty men dwelt; particularly Mount Seir, where their

king was, and which was “the fold of the mighty”; either of the mighty shepherd, as it may be rendered^{f938}; or of the strong place^{f939}; but what is this to a lion?

but I will make him suddenly run away from her; that is, either the mighty shepherd, the king of Edom, from his fold, upon the approach of the lion, the king of Babylon; or else, as it may be rendered, “and I will cause him to run upon it^{f940} suddenly”: that is, cause the king of Babylon to come speedily into the land of Edom, and seize upon it, overrun it, prevail over it, and be master of it, as Jarchi interprets it:

and who [is] a chosen [man that] I may appoint over her? a choice person in Nebuchadnezzar’s army, fit to be made a deputy governor over the land of Edom:

for who [is] like me? for wisdom and power; able to do whatever I please, and to furnish those with proper abilities to perform and accomplish whatever I give them in charge and commission to do:

and who will appoint me the time? set a time to dispute the matter with me, or engage in war against me?

and who [is] that shepherd that will stand before me? or king, as the Targum and Ben Melech; any king, prince, or potentate, who, both in Scripture and in other writings, are often called shepherds; the king of Edom is particularly pointed at, whose habitation or fold is before observed: alas! what could such a shepherd do? or how could he stand before the almighty God, or any lion he should send?

Ver. 20. *Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Edom,* etc.] The decree of the Lord; the purpose and resolution he had taken up in his heart against the Idumeans, which was wisely formed, and upon just and good grounds:

and his purposes that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman; a principal place in Edom, the inhabitants of which were famous for their wisdom, (^{<2440>}Jeremiah 49:7); and therefore are here particularly mentioned; there being no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord, so as to frustrate his purposes and designs, which have always their effect, (^{<1002>}Proverbs 19:21 21:30);

surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; not the Persians, the least of the sons of Japheth, as some Rabbins in Jarchi^{f941}; nor the Israelites, as Kimchi, particularly Rachel's sons, or the posterity of Joseph and Benjamin; but the common soldiers, the weakest and most feeble in the Chaldean army: as princes are compared to shepherds, their people are like flocks; and now the least of these in the king of Babylon's army should be a match for the strongest of the Edomites; and should draw them out of their habitations, as dogs or wolves drag sheep out of the folds, and draw about dead carcasses, and devour them. The words are in the form of an oath, "if the least of the flock do not draw them out"; that is, as I live they shall; or I swear by myself they shall certainly do it; so the Targum,

"if they do not draw and kill the mighty of the people:"

surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them; or, "their folds"; the sheep shall be destroyed, and their folds shall be demolished; that is, the inhabitants of Edom shall be slain with the sword, and their cities, towns, and villages, shall be laid waste.

Ver. 21. *The earth is moved at the noise of their fall*, etc.] Of the Edomites; whose fall was from the height of greatness and glory to a very low condition indeed; and as things, the higher they are from whence they fall, the greater noise they make, so it was with the Edomites; perhaps there may be some allusion to the falling of rocks and hills, with which Edom, abounded: this may respect either the noise and shout of the conquerors, when they fell; or the cry of the Edomites, when taken and destroyed; or the report of their destruction, when it came into the world; which struck the inhabitants of the whole earth with terror and amazement, so that they trembled at it; an hyperbolical expression, as Kimchi observes:

at the cry, the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea, or, "sea of Suph", or "weeds"; where weeds and rushes grew in great abundance, from whence it had its name. This is the Arabian gulf, which washed the shores of Edom, and was called the Red sea from thence, Edom signifying red. The meaning is, that the cry of the slain, or of the conquerors at the slaughter of them, should be heard to the borders of the land, to the sea shore, and by those in ships there; who should carry the report of it to each of the parts of the world.

Ver. 22. *Behold, he shall come up, and fly as the eagle*, etc.] The Targum is,

“behold, as an eagle comes up and flies, so shall a king come up with his army;”

the king of Babylon with his army, compared to an eagle for his swiftness and voraciousness, as before to a lion for his strength and fierceness:

and spread his wings over Bozrah; besiege that city, invest it, and seize upon it; very fitly are the wings of an army expressed by the wings of this bird, denoting both their extent and force; the same is said concerning Moab, (²⁴⁸⁰Jeremiah 48:40);

and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Moab be as the heart of a woman in her pangs; when just ready to be delivered; not only weak and timorous, but full of anguish, and: quite dispirited; (see Gill on ²⁴⁸¹Jeremiah 48:41”).

Ver. 23. *Concerning Damascus*, etc.] Or, “unto Damascus”^{f942}; or, “against Damascus”^{f943}; that is, “thus saith the Lord”; which is to be repeated from the foregoing instances, (²⁴⁰⁰Jeremiah 49:1,7). This is to be understood, not only of the city of Damascus, but of the whole kingdom of Syria, of which Damascus was the metropolis; (see ²³⁰⁸Isaiah 7:8);

Hamath is confounded, and Arpad; two cities in Syria; the first is generally thought to be Antioch of Syria, sometimes called Epiphania; and the other the same with Arvad, inhabited by the Arvadim, or Aradians; (see ¹²⁸³⁴2 Kings 18:34 ²³⁰⁹Isaiah 10:9 ²³⁷¹Ezekiel 27:11); these, that is, the inhabitants of them, as the Targum, were covered with shame, thrown into the utmost confusion and consternation:

for they have heard evil tidings; of the Chaldean army invading the land of Syria, and of their coming against them; and perhaps of their taking of Damascus their capital city; all which must be bad news unto them, and give them great uneasiness:

they are fainthearted; or “melted”^{f944}; their hearts melted like wax, and flowed like water; they had no heart nor spirit left in them, through fear of the enemy;

[there is] sorrow in the sea, it cannot be quiet: the Targum is,

“fear in the sea, carefulness hath taken hold on them, behold, as those that go down to the sea to rest, and cannot rest;”

or, as other copies, cannot flee. So Jarchi, and Kimchi interpret it, as if the note of similitude was wanting, and the sense this, that the inhabitants of the above places were either like the troubled sea itself, which cannot rest; or like persons in a storm at sea, who are in the utmost uneasiness and distress: or else it designs such that belonged to the kingdom of Syria, that dwelt in the isles of the sea; who were in great fright when they heard of the invasion of their country by the Chaldeans, particularly the Antaradians.

Ver. 24. *Damascus is waxed feeble*, etc.] Or, “is become remiss”^{f945}; her hands hang down, not being able through fear and fright to lift them up against the enemy; that is, the inhabitants of Damascus, as the Targum:

[and] turneth herself to flee; instead of going out to meet the enemy, the inhabitants of this city meditated a flight, and turned their backs upon him in order to flee from him, and escape falling into his hands:

and fear hath seized on [her]: or, “she seized on fear”^{f946}; instead of seizing on arms, and laying hold on them to defend herself with, she seized on that; or however that seized on her, and made her quite unfit to stand up in her own defence:

anguish and sorrows have taken her as a woman in travail; (see Gill on “⁻²⁴⁴²⁻Jeremiah 49:22”); A phrase often used to express the sudden and inevitable destruction of a people, and their distress and inability to help themselves.

Ver. 25. *How is the city of praise not left*, etc.] The city of Damascus, famous for its antiquity, its wealth and riches, strength and power; and with the Heathens for its devotion and superstition. So Julian^{f947} the emperor calls it,

“the truly city of Jupiter; the eye of the whole east; Damascus the holy and the greatest;”

but more especially for its delightful and pleasant situation. Benjamin Tudelensis^{f948} says it was, in his time,

“a very great and beautiful city, surrounded with a wall; and the country about it was full of gardens and orchards, fifteen miles’ walk on every side of it; and no city in the whole world appeared with such plenty of fruit as that did.”

Monsieur Thevenot^{f949} relates, that

“the city of Damascus is in the middle of a spacious plain, surrounded with hills, but all distant from the town, almost out of sight; those on the north side are the nearest, on which side it hath a great many gardens, full of trees, and most fruit trees; these gardens take up the ground from the hill of the forty martyrs, even to the town; so that at a distance it seems to be a forest.”

Mr. Maundrell^{f950} tells us, that the Turks relate this story of their prophet Mahomet, that,

“coming near Damascus, he took his station at a high precipice, in order to view it; and considering the ravishing beauty and delightfulness of it, he would not tempt his frailty by entering into it; but instantly departed with this reflection on it, that there was but one paradise designed for men, and for his part he was resolved not take his in this world;”

and, adds the same traveller,

“you have indeed from the precipice the most perfect prospect of Damascus; and certainly no place in the world can promise the beholder at a distance greater voluptuousness. It is situate in an even plain of so great extent, that you can but just discern the mountains that compass it on the farther side. In its length it extends near two miles, and is encompassed with gardens, extending no less, according to common estimation, than thirty miles round; which makes it look like a noble city in a vast wood.”

Strabo^{f951} says of this city, that it is worthy of praise, and almost the most famous city of all near Persia. The sense of it either is, how is it that so famous a city was not spared by the enemy, that they did not leave it untouched, but destroyed and demolished it? or how is it that it was not fortified by the inhabitants of it; that a parapet was not built about the wall all around, to strengthen it, and keep out the enemy? This sense, as well as the former, is mentioned both by Jarchi and Kimchi, who direct to (Na 3:8), for the confirmation of this sense of the word:

the city of my joy! these are either the words of the prophet, who had a great regard to the city of Damascus as ancient, well built, and opulent city, and lamented its destruction; or rather of the king of it, as Jarchi; or of the inhabitants of it, who said this to one another as they fled; so Kimchi: but there is no necessity of rendering it “my joy”, only “joy”; for the “jod”

affixed may not be considered as a pronoun, but as a paragogic, or a Syriac termination, which is common; though some interpret this of the city of Jerusalem, and as spoken by the Lord, or by the prophet in his name, upbraiding the Syrians for their hatred to it, and disturbance they gave it; and which is now mentioned as one cause and reason of their ruin; (see Amos 1:3).

Ver. 26. *Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets*, etc.] Or “verily”^{f952} so Jarchi interprets it as an oath; Jehovah swearing that so it should be; that her young men, her choice ones such who were the flower of the city, and on whom its future prosperity depended; these should fall by the sword of the Chaldeans in the streets of the city, when having entered, and taken it:

and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord of hosts; soldiers and officers, men of strength and valour in whom the inhabitants of Damascus trusted for their defence; these should be cut off by the sword of the enemy at the time of the siege, and taking of it.

Ver. 27. *And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus*, etc.] Signifying either that, a breach being made there the destruction of the city should begin, and be carried on until it was completed; or it may be understood literally, that first the houses built upon the wall should beset on fire by the Chaldeans, through the divine permission, and according to his order and wilt, and therefore ascribed to him, which should proceed further. Compare with this (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 11:32, 33);

and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad; not only the houses of the common people in general, but particularly the palaces of their king and his nobles; Benhadad being a name of one of the kings of Syria, (⁴¹²⁰1 Kings 20:1); and which, according to Kimchi, was the name of the king of Syria at the time of the destruction of Damascus by Nebuchadnezzar. Some think that this was a common name of the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh and Ptolemy with the Egyptians. It signifies the son of Hadad, which was the name of their idol; from whence their kings might be called, as was usual with the Assyrians and Babylonians.

Ver. 28. *Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor*, etc.] A new prophecy concerning the Arabians; for Kedar was a son of Ishmael, (⁴⁰²⁵³Genesis 25:13); whose posterity inhabited Arabia Petraea. Hazor was Petra itself, the metropolis of the country, whose king had several petty

kings and kingdoms under him; for this is not the Hazor in the land of Canaan destroyed by Joshua, which had been the head of several kingdoms; and where Jabin king of Canaan afterwards reigned, (^{<6110>}Joshua 11:10) (^{<7012>}Judges 4:2); though some think that some of those Hazorites in Joshua's time made their escape, and fled into these parts, and built a city, and called it after the name of the former:

which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the Lord: that is, "thus saith the Lord concerning", or "unto", or "against Kedar"^{f953}, etc. as in (^{<2440>}Jeremiah 49:1); which the king of Babylon "hath smitten"; the past for the future, common in prophetic language: or, "is about to smite"^{f954}; would do it in a very little time; for the phrase, "thus saith the Lord", is not to be connected with what follows after, but with what goes before; though indeed the next words are the words of the Lord to the Chaldeans:

arise ye, go up to Kedar; in a hostile manner; invade that country, and possess it:

and spoil the men of the east; the Arabians, which lay east of Judea and Babylon: or, "the children of Kedem"^{f955}; the same with Kedemah, another son of Ishmael, (^{<0125>}Genesis 25:15); whose posterity dwelt still more to the east; so Kimchi; though the Targum renders it "the children of the east".

Ver. 29. *Their tents and their flocks shall they take away,* etc.] The Kedarenes were a people whose business chiefly lay in feeding flocks, and of which their substance consisted; and they mostly dwelt in tents, which they removed from place to place, for the sake of pasturage for their flocks; hence they were sometimes called Scenites, and sometimes Nomades; (see ^{<3015>}Psalms 120:5 ^{<2106>}Song of Solomon 1:5); but now both their habitations, such as they were, and their flocks too, wherein lay their riches, would be taken away from them:

they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels; their curtains made of skins of beasts, of which their tents were made; or with which they were covered to protect them from the inclemencies of the weather; and all the furniture of them, their household goods; their vessels for domestic use; and utensils for their calling and employment; and their camels, which were much used in those countries for travelling from place to place; on which they put their tents, curtains, and vessels, when they removed from one pasturage to another; these they,

not the Kedarenes, should take to themselves, and flee with them; but the Chaldeans should seize on them for themselves, as their booty and prey:

and they shall cry unto them, fear [is] on every side; or, “magormissabib”, “a fear all round”, (^{241B}Jeremiah 20:3); this is the word the Chaldeans shall use, and with it frighten the Kedarenes out of their tents; or by the sound of their trumpets, the alarm of war, and by their shouts and cries, and the clashing of their arms, they shall put them in fear all around: or else the Kedarenes and Hazorites, when they shall see the Chaldean army approaching, shall say one to another, fear is on all sides of us; nothing but ruin and destruction attend us from every quarter.

Ver. 30. *Flee, get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the Lord*, etc.] The same is said to the inhabitants of Dedan, (see Gill on “^{241B}Jeremiah 49:8”);

for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you: had determined upon their destruction, and had consulted and contrived ways and means to effect it; and therefore, since so powerful an enemy had such a design upon them, it was high time to flee, and get as far off as they could, and hide themselves in the caverns of the earth.

Ver. 31. *Arise, get you up unto the wealthy nation*, etc.] Or, “to the nation [that is] at ease”¹⁹⁵⁶; the people that live quietly and in peace; have no wars with their neighbours, nor any among themselves; which seems to be the better sense of the word, for these Kedarenes were not a very wealthy people: these words do not express the counsel and purpose of Nebuchadnezzar; or are an address of his to his army, commanding them to arise, and invade the country of Arabia; for they are the words of the Lord, and are addressed to him and his army to go up in a hostile manner against the Kedarenes, here described:

that dwelleth without care, saith the Lord; not without the care of their flocks, or without providing things necessary for themselves and families; they were not an indolent people, that lived an idle and inactive life; but they dwelt “confidently”, or “securely”¹⁹⁵⁷, as it may be rendered; they had no thought nor care to defend themselves from an enemy; they had no fear of any, imagining that no one would think it worth while to give themselves any trouble to invade them; their meanness they supposed was a protection to them:

which have neither gates nor bars; to their cities, or to their houses, being in no fear of an enemy to come and plunder them:

[which] dwell alone; being in no alliance with other nations; nor dwelling together in cities, towns, and villages, at least the common people; the greater part of them being scattered up and down, a few in one place, and a few in another; they dwelt for the convenience of feeding their flocks.

Ver. 32. *And their camels shall be a booty*, etc.] To the Chaldean army, as before, (^{244D}Jeremiah 49:29);

and the multitude of their cattle a spoil; to the same; the Kedarenes had large flocks of sheep, as well as a multitude of camels, on which they lived, and in which their substance lay; (see ²³⁰⁶Isaiah 60:6,7 ^{800B}Job 1:3);

and I will scatter into all winds them [that are] in the utmost corners; them that were gone with their flocks to feed them in the uttermost parts of their land; who, on hearing of the Chaldean army being entered and ravaging their country, would leave their flocks, and flee and be dispersed in the several parts of the world: or, “them that are cut in the corner”^{f958}; in the corners of their beard; that have their hair cut all around, as the Arabians had; (see Gill on “^{240B}Jeremiah 9:26”);

and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the Lord; suggesting that Nebuchadnezzar should surround them with his army, and so dispose of his troops, by placing them some in one part, and some in another, that they should not be able to escape on any side. It denotes their utter destruction and desolation.

Ver. 33. *And Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, [and] a desolation for ever*, etc.] The city of Hazor, as well as the kingdoms of it; the royal city, where their king and principal men dwelt; even this should be no more inhabited by men, but by dragons, and the wild beasts of the field, and so remain for ever, at least a long time; (see ²³³⁰Isaiah 13:20-22);

there shall no man abide there, nor any son of man dwell in it: signifying the utter desolation of it; (see Gill on “^{240B}Jeremiah 49:18”).

Ver. 34. *The word of the Lord that came unto Jeremiah the prophet against Elam*, etc.] The Persians, as it is commonly understood, who descended from Elam the son of Shem, (⁰¹⁰²Genesis 10:22); according to Josephus^{f959}; but rather the country of Elymais is here designed; which,

though in the times of Cyrus, was added to, and made a part of, the Persian empire, yet was a country distinct both from Persia and Media; and as such is spoken of by Pliny^{f960}; though as near unto Persia, and bordering on Media; according to Stephanus^{f961}, the Elymaites were a country that belonged to the Assyrians; and so Strabo^{f962} places the Elymaeans in Aturia or Assyria; and it seems very manifest that Elam served under Sennacherib, king of Assyria, when he besieged Jerusalem, (^{<2216>}Isaiah 22:6); and afterwards fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and became subject to him, which is the calamity here threatened them; for certain it is, that, in Belshazzar's time, Shushan in Elam was the royal seat of the kings of Babylon, (^{<2012>}Daniel 8:2); now this prophecy against Elam was delivered out

in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah; perhaps in the first year of his reign, ten or eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem; how long before it had its accomplishment is not certain:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 35. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I will break the bow of Elam*, etc.] The inhabitants of this country were famous for their skill in archery; (see Gill on "^{<2216>}Isaiah 22:6"); this the Lord threatens to break, so that it, should be useless, and of no more service to them to defend themselves, or annoy others. Their strength, as the Targum; that in which their great strength and security lay; in which they put their trust and confidence, as follows:

the chief of their might; which may be interpreted, by way of apposition, of their bow, the chief instrument of their might and power; or may design their mighty men, the archers themselves, who should be destroyed, even Elam itself, and all the inhabitants of it; especially their warriors, who should be slain or carried captive.

Ver. 36. *And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven*, etc.] The Targum interprets it the four kingdoms; (see ^{<2012>}Daniel 7:2). Some think this had its accomplishment in the times of Alexander; or else after his death, in the times of his four successors; but rather in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, who should bring with him, in his army, people that dwelt in the several parts of the world, comparable to the winds for their swiftness and strength; whose blast would be so great as to

drive the Elamites to every part of the world, as every light thing is by the wind:

and will scatter them towards all those winds; those four winds, east, west, north, and south:

and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come; those that are driven out of it, forced to flee from it, or are taken captive, should come into the several nations of the world; so that there would not be any in which an Elamite was not.

Ver. 37. *For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies*, etc.] Frightened; thrown into the utmost consternation, so that they shall have no heart nor spirit to go out against them, and meet them, and defend themselves; but make all haste imaginable to flee from them, such a panic would seize them:

and before them that seek their life; a further description of their enemies; they being such, who, not content with their substance, sought to take away their lives; nothing less would satisfy them, being: cruel and blood thirsty ones:

and I will bring evil upon them, [even] my fierce anger, saith the Lord; and a greater evil than that cannot be; signifying that the destruction that should be made among them would be the effect of the wrath of God upon them for their sins:

and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them; that is, those that slay with the sword, as the Targum; these should go after those that fled, and destroy them, till the greater part of them were consumed; for all of them that were taken were not destroyed; or otherwise there would have been none to return from captivity, as is promised at the close of this prophecy.

Ver. 38. *And I will set my throne in Elam*, etc.] Either when Alexander subdued it, or Cyrus, or rather Nebuchadnezzar, whose palace probably was, as it is certain his successors was, in Shushan in Elam, as before observed from (^{-208E}Daniel 8:2). This is called the Lord's throne, because he gave it to him; his conquest of Elam, and his dominion over it, were from him:

and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the Lord; so that there should be no more kings of Elam, and princes and nobles of their own, after this time; and because mention is made of the kings of Elam in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, (²⁵⁵Jeremiah 25:25); though that is observed in the first year of his reign, some have thought that it is best to understand it of Cyrus, the Lord's servant and anointed; and whose throne might well be called the throne of God, which he gave him, and set him on in an eminent manner, not only there, but elsewhere; (see ⁴⁰⁰Ezra 1:2 ³⁸⁰Isaiah 45:1); and when this country of Elam, or Elymais, became at part of the Persian empire, and never had any more kings to reign over it separately. Some of the Jewish Rabbins¹⁹⁶³, as Kimchi observes, interpret the king and princes of Vashti of Haman and his sons; but very wrongly.

Ver. 39. *But it shall come to pass in the latter days,* etc.] Not in the times of Cyrus, when these people enjoyed their liberty, as the Jews and other nations did, freed by him from the Babylonian yoke; which cannot with propriety be called the latter days, being but seventy or eighty years at most after this prophecy; but in the times of the Messiah, often in prophecy called the latter days:

[that] I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord: which was accomplished in a spiritual sense, when some of these people, the Elamites, were converted to Christ, and delivered by him from the captivity of sin and Satan, and were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God; (see ⁴¹⁰Acts 2:9).

CHAPTER 50

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 50

This and the following chapter contain a long prophecy concerning the destruction of Babylon; and which is expressed in such language, that it may be, and is to be, accommodated to the destruction of mystical Babylon; and several passages in the book of the Revelation are borrowed from hence; and it is intermixed with promises and prophecies of the deliverance of God's people from thence, and of the conversion of the Jews, and the restoration of them to their own which will be at that time; (see ^{<2810>}Jeremiah 50:4,5,8,19,20,33,34). The destruction of Babylon in general is proclaimed and declared, and the manner and cause of it, (^{<2810>}Jeremiah 50:1-13); then the enemies of Babylon are stirred up and animated to proceed against her, and execute the judgments of God upon her, (^{<2814>}Jeremiah 50:14-30). Next follows the Lord's controversy with her, because of her pride and oppression of his people; and threatens her with the sword, drought, and utter destruction, (^{<2818>}Jeremiah 50:31-40); and then a description is given of her enemies, that should be the instruments of her destruction, (^{<2841>}Jeremiah 50:41-44); and the chapter is closed with observing, that this is all according to the counsel and purpose of God, (^{<2845>}Jeremiah 50:45,46).

Ver. 1. *The word that the Lord spake against Babylon*, etc.] Or "to", of "of Babylon"^{f964}; the city of Babylon, the metropolis of the Chaldean empire; sometimes it signifies the whole country, here the city only, as appears by what follows:

[and] against the land of the Chaldeans; whither the Jews were carried captive, for whose comfort this prophecy is delivered out; and which had subdued other nations, and was become an universal monarchy; these people are mentioned last, because the rest of the nations were to drink the cup of God's wrath at their hands, and then they were to drink it after them; (see ^{<2829>}Jeremiah 25:9,26); this is to be understood not only of Babylon and its empire, literally taken, but of mystical Babylon and its dependencies; of Rome, and its jurisdiction; of antichrist, and the antichristian states, the last enemies of the church and people of God, who

will be destroyed by the pouring out of the seven vials; (see ⁽⁶⁶⁵⁾Revelation 15:1 16:19). This prophecy, which is called “the word that the Lord spake”, for it was from him, the thing was decreed and declared by him, came

by Jeremiah the prophet, to whom the king of Babylon had been very kind; but yet he must be, and was, faithful as a prophet, to deliver what he had from the Lord concerning the ruin of his empire.

Ver. 2. *Declare ye among the nations*, etc.] The taking of Babylon; a piece of news, in which the nations of the world had a concern, as well as the Jews, being brought under the Babylonish yoke, from which they would now be freed; and therefore such a declaration must be very acceptable and joyful to them. Some take these words to be the words of God to the prophet; others, the words of Jeremiah to the nations; the meaning is only, that such a declaration should be made, and such things done, as follow:

and publish, and set up a standard; publish, [and] conceal not; cause it to be heard far and near; and, that it may be heard, set up a sign or standard, to gather the people together to hear it; for this standard was not to be set up for the enlisting of men, or gathering them together, to go up and fight against Babylon, since it was now taken; but as a token of victory, and as expressive joy, on account of it; or rather for the reason given; (see ⁽⁶⁶⁶⁾Isaiah 13:2);

say, Babylon is taken; this is the thing to be declared, published, and not concealed; but with an audible voice to be pronounced, and rung throughout the several nations of the earth. Thus, when the everlasting Gospel is preached to every nation on earth, and Christ is set up in it as an ensign and standard to the people; it shall be everywhere published, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen”, (⁽⁶⁶⁷⁾Revelation 14:6,8 18:1,2);

Bel is confounded; an idol of the Babylonians, thought by some to be the same with Baal by contraction; he is by the Septuagint called Belus, the name of one of their kings; who might be idolized after his death, as was usual among the Heathen lions: he is said to be “confounded”, because he must have been, could he have been sensible of the taking of Babylon, where his temple stood, and he was worshipped, since he was not able to protect it; or rather, because his worshippers were confounded, that gloried in him, and put their trust in him. So the Targum,

“they are confounded that worship Bel;”

(see Gill on “²³⁶¹Isaiah 46:1”).

Merodach is broken in pieces; another of their idols, which signifies a “pure lord”; some of their kings had this as one of their names, (²³⁰¹Isaiah 39:1 ⁴⁵²³Jeremiah 52:31). The Targum is,

“they are broken that worshipped Merodach;”

her idols are confounded, her images are broken to pieces; these were their lesser deities, as the other two were their greater ones; all should be destroyed along with it; as all the idols and images of the church of Rome will, when that is destroyed, (⁶¹⁰¹Revelation 9:20).

Ver. 3. *For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her*, etc.] The Medes and Persians, which under Cyrus were one nation; and which not only lay north of Judea, where this prophecy came, but of Babylon, against which they were to come; and might lay more north to it, before the enlargement of their dominions; and besides, Cyrus came through Assyria to Babylon, which lay north of it; (see ²³⁴²⁵Isaiah 41:25). Thus, as Rome Pagan was sacked and taken by the Goths and Vandals, that came out of the north; so Rome Papal, and the antichristian states, will be destroyed by the Christian princes of the north, or those who have embraced what the Papists call the northern heresy; tidings out of the north shall trouble antichrist, (²⁷¹⁴⁴Daniel 11:44);

which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; that is, in process of time; for this desolation was not made at once; it was begun by Cyrus, made greater by Darius, and completed by Seleucus Nicator;

they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast; or, “from man to beast”^{f965}; such as were not slain should either flee away or be carried captive; so that in time none should remain, either of man or beast; (see ²³¹³⁹Isaiah 13:19-22); and for the accomplishment of it on mystical Babylon (see ⁶⁶⁸¹²Revelation 18:2,21-23).

Ver. 4. *In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord*, etc.] When Babylon shall be taken and destroyed, then what follows shall be accomplished; which, as it respects the conversion of the Jews, shows that this prophecy is not to be restrained to literal Babylon:

the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together: upon the taking of Babylon, in a literal sense, by Cyrus, the children of

Israel, or the ten tribes, carried away by the Assyrians, did not return; only the children of Judah, or the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites, and a few of the other tribes, that might be mixed among them: but when mystical Babylon is fallen, then the whole body of the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, Israel and Judah; which is foretold in other prophecies, as here, which speak of their general conversion; (see ^{<3018>}Jeremiah 30:3,9 ^{<3576>}Ezekiel 37:16-25) (^{<3011>}Hosea 1:11);

going and weeping; which is another circumstance, which shows that this does not respect the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; for that was attended with joy, and not with tears; (see ^{<1301>}Psalm 126:1,2); unless it is to be understood of weeping for joy, and of tears of joy, as Kimchi interprets it; but it is better to understand it of that godly sorrow and mourning for sin, which will appear in the Jews at the time of their conversion; particularly for their fathers' ill treatment of the Messiah, their unbelief and rejection of him, and their continued obstinacy and perverseness, and other sins; (see ^{<2310>}Jeremiah 31:9) (^{<3820>}Zechariah 12:10);

they shall go and seem the Lord their God; even David their King, the true Messiah, who is Lord and God; to him they shall seek for peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life; and acknowledge him to be the Messiah, their Lord, and their God; embrace his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances; (see ^{<3010>}Jeremiah 30:9 ^{<3015>}Hosea 3:5). The Targum is,

“when they were carried captive, they went weeping; but when they return from the land of their captivity, they shall seek the worship of the Lord their God.”

Ver. 5. *They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward*, etc.] Either to Jerusalem, near to which Mount Zion was; or to the land of Israel, so called, from a principal part of it: and this also is not to be understood of their return thither, upon the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, and the liberty he gave them; for they had no need to inquire their way thither, nor do we find any where that they did; for though there might be many among them born in the captivity, who knew not the way; yet there were others that did, and could direct and go before them, even such who had seen the former temple, (^{<1312>}Ezra 3:12); but this suits better with the Jews in the latter day, upon the fall of mystical Babylon, when they shall be converted and return to their own land, and shall ask their way thither; being under a strong impulse of mind, and being bent upon it, and having

full resolution to go thither: or else by Zion may be meant the church of God in Gospel times, as it often is; the way into which the converted Jews will ask, being determined to give up themselves to it, and become members of it; which way is not a religious education, mere morality, or a bare attendance on worship; but faith in Christ, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism;

[saying], come, and let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant [that] shall not be forgotten; and then may they be said to “join [themselves] to the Lord”, when, under a divine influence, they shall give up themselves to Christ, to be saved by him; when they shall lay hold on him, embrace him, and believe in him; when they shall follow him in his own ways, and cleave unto him with full purpose of heart; and also when they shall join themselves to his people, to the churches of Christ, and abide by his truths and ordinances; to all which they shall stir up and encourage one another; either laying hold on the covenant of grace, which is an everlasting one, and will never be forgotten by the Lord; he is ever mindful of it, and keeps it; which is done when men join themselves to the Lord, (²⁵⁶⁶ Isaiah 56:6); or making an agreement or covenant with one another, and the churches to which they join themselves, to walk together in all the ways, ordinances, and commandments of the Lord; which agreement or covenant ought to be perpetually observed, and never forgotten. Kimchi owns that this part of the verse belongs to the days of the Messiah. The Targum is,

“they shall come and be added unto the people of the Lord, and he shall make with them an everlasting covenant, which shall not cease.”

Ver. 6. *My people hath been lost sheep,* etc.] like lost sheep, without a shepherd, going astray the fold, wandering from place to place, having none to take care of them, guide and direct them, or to go in and out before them, and lead them into suitable pastures; so it was with the Jews in the Babylonish captivity, and so it is with them now, and yet the Lord’s people still in some sense; he has a design of grace concerning them, a store of mercy for them, and thoughts of peace towards them, which will take place in due time; and such is the case of all God’s elect in a state of nature, they are sheep, but lost sheep, and yet his people;

their shepherds have caused them to go astray; from God and his worship, from the true religion; so their civil and ecclesiastical governors, their

kings, princes, priests, and prophets, were the causes of leading them into errors, by their laws, doctrines, and examples; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of their kings; but the Targum seems to understand it of other kings, that carried them captive,

“kings carried them away, rulers spoiled them;”

so their priests and Rabbins now cause them to err from the true Messiah, his Gospel and ordinances, as their false Christs and false prophets have done in all ages since the times of Christ;

they have turned them away [on] the mountains; or, “to” them^{f966}; where idols were worshipped, as Jarchi; this was their case before and at the Babylonish captivity, though never since: or, “from the mountains”^{f967}; from the mountains of Israel, and the good pastures there; from the Gospel of Christ, and the ordinances of it;

they have gone from mountain to hill; from one religion to another, from duty to duty, seeking rest and happiness there, in the law of Moses, and traditions of the elders; or from kingdom to kingdom, wandering about from place to place, as they do to this day;

they have forgotten their resting place; either the land of Canaan, which was their rest, (^{f968}Deuteronomy 12:9); or rather God himself, the resting place of his people, (^{f969}Psalms 116:7); or the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and fulness, is the true rest of his people; and which is forgotten when men rest in themselves and their duties, and seek elsewhere than in Christ for peace and comfort.

Ver. 7. *All that found them have devoured them*, etc.] As lost and wandering sheep are liable to be found, and to be devoured, by every beast of prey, lions, wolves, and bears; so the Jews were found by their neighbours, their enemies, and especially by the Chaldeans, having forsaken God, and being forsaken by him; and which is their case now, and are often found and seized upon by their enemies, and made a prey of under one pretence or another:

and their adversaries said, we offend not; we are not guilty of any evil, in taking away their lives, or stripping them of their substance:

because they have sinned against the Lord; and therefore are justly punished in this way; and it is no other than what the Lord threatened them

with, and foretold by his prophets should come upon them: this they said, not that they feared the Lord, or had any regard to his honour and glory, but to excuse themselves, which would not do; for though they sinned against the Lord, they had not sinned against them, and they had no right to destroy them, and plunder them of their substance; and so it is now, many think it no crime to injure the Jews in their persons and property, because they have sinned against Christ, and rejected him as the Messiah, who is

the habitation of justice; the dwelling place of the saints, the city of refuge and strong tower, whither the righteous run and are safe:

even the Lord, the hope of their fathers; whom their fathers hoped for and expected, he being spoken and prophesied of by all the prophets that were from the beginning of the world, and therefore called the Hope of Israel, (^{244B}Jeremiah 14:8 17:13).

Ver. 8. *Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans*, etc.] This, in the literal sense, is a call to the Jews in Babylon, and in other parts of Chaldea, to go out from thence upon the proclamation of Cyrus; and especially to the chief of them, to animate the rest, and set them an example; such as Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Ezra, and others: and, in the mystical sense, is a call to the people of God in Rome, and the antichristian states, to come out from thence, a little before the destruction thereof, as in (^{680B}Revelation 18:4); which seems to refer to this passage:

and be as the he goats before the flocks; which walk stately and nimbly, cheerfully and readily, without fear and dread, boldly and confidently, and encourage others to follow them. The Targum is,

“as princes at the head of their people.”

Ver. 9. *For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon*, etc.] The work was of the Lord; it was he that would give a commission and a command to the enemies of Babylon; that would incline them, and stir them up, to come against her; that would direct their motions and guide them thither, so that it would assuredly be; wherefore it behooves the people of God to make haste out of it:

an assembly of great nations from the north country; the Medes and Persians, with their allies and auxiliaries which came with them from the

north; as also a collection of Christian nations from the north of Europe against antichrist:

and they shall set themselves in array against her; draw up their army in form of battle, or prepare and dispose their instruments of war for the siege of Babylon:

from thence shall she be taken; on the north side, from which quarter the enemy should come; or from the place where their army is drawn up in battle array; or suddenly, and at once: so Babylon was destroyed by Cyrus; and the destruction of Rome, or mystical Babylon, will be sudden and at an unawares, (^{<618>}Revelation 18:8);

their arrows [shall be] as of a mighty expert man; or “that bereaves”^{f968} women of their husbands, and parents of their children: the Medes and Persians were famous for archery, strong to draw the bow, and skilful to guide and direct the arrow. Strabo^{f969} says of Media major, that it sometimes furnished out thirteen thousand archers to the Elymaeans, or Persians, against the Susians and Babylonians;

none shall return in vain; not one of the arrows but shall do execution, kill a man: or “it”, or “he, which” or “who, shall not return in vain”^{f970}; the assembly of nations, or anyone of the archers or soldiers.

Ver. 10. *And Chaldea shall be a spoil*, etc.] The land of the Chaldeans, as the Targum, should become a spoil to the enemy, and be plundered of all its riches and treasures; not only Babylon principally, but the whole country it was the metropolis of:

all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord; for though spoilers are generally insatiable, yet so great should be the riches found in Babylon and in Chaldea, that they should have enough, and desire no more; (see ^{<617>}Revelation 18:17).

Ver. 11. *Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage*, etc.] This is addressed to the Chaldeans who destroyed Jerusalem and the land of Judea, once the heritage of the Lord; when they rejoiced at the destruction of God’s people, and insulted them in their miseries; and which is the cause and reason assigned of their ruin; for though they had a commission to destroy, yet they exceeded that, and especially by exulting at the ruin of that people, which showed great

inhumanity. So the Papists will rejoice at the slaying of the witnesses, but will be repaid in their own coin, (^{<66110>}Revelation 11:10 18:20);

because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass: which feeds all the day, and so grows fat. Some copies read, “as the heifer that treads out”^{f971} the corn; which, according to the law, was not to be muzzled, and so was continually feeding, and grew plump and sleek; and so these Chaldeans, having enriched themselves with the spoils of Judea and other nations, gave themselves up to ease and luxury; and it was at one of their festivals their city was taken, to which there may be some allusion:

and bellow as bulls: or, “neigh as horses”^{f972}; having got the victory, of which war horses are sensible; or it may denote their impetuous lust after women, whom they forced and ravished, when taken captives by them.

Ver. 12. *Your mother shall be sore confounded*, etc.] The monarchy of the Chaldeans; so the Targum and jarchi, your congregation; or rather their metropolis, their mother city, the city of Babylon; which would be confounded when taken, none of her sons being able to defend her: the same will be true of mystical Babylon, the mother of harlots, (^{<66175>}Revelation 17:5);

she that bare you shall be ashamed; which is the same as before, in different words:

behold, the hindermost of the nations [shall be] a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert; or, as the Vulgate Latin version, “she shall be the last among the nations”; she that was the head of them, signified by the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar’s image, shall now be the tail of them, and become like a dry land and desert, without inhabitants, having neither men nor cattle in it; (see ^{<25118>}Jeremiah 50:3); or, as Jarchi and Kimchi, their end, “the latter end”^{f973} of the kingdom of Babylon; or what should befall that people in their last days would be, that their land should become a wilderness, the habitants being slain, and none to till it; or Babylon is called the last of the nations, because her punishment, in order of time, was last, as Gussetius^{f974} thinks; (^{<25256>}Jeremiah 25:26).

Ver. 13. *Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall not be inhabited*, etc.] That is, Babylon; which the Targum expresses,

“because thou, Babylon, hast provoked the Lord;”

by their idolatry, luxury, ill usage of his people, and profanation of the vessels of the sanctuary; therefore it should be destroyed, and left without an inhabitant in it:

but it shall be wholly desolate; as it now is. Pausanias says^{f975}, in his time there was nothing but a wall remaining; and Jerom^{f976} says, he had it from a brother Elamite, or Persian, that Babylon was then a park or place for royal hunting, and that beasts of every kind were kept within its walls: of mystical Babylon, (see ^{<fr69>}Revelation 16:19 18:2);

everyone that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues; any traveller that had seen it in its glory would now be astonished to see the desolation of it; and, by way of scorn and derision, hiss at the judgments of God upon it, and rejoice at them, and shake their head, as the Targum.

Ver. 14. *Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about*, etc.] This is directed to the Medes and Persians, to dispose of their army in proper places round about the city of Babylon, to besiege it; and to order their instruments of war, fit for that purpose, a convenient manner; since they might be sure of victory, the Lord being wroth with it, and having so severely threatened its ruin:

all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows; the Elamites, or Persians, as before observed, were well skilled in archery; and, as Xenophon^{f977} reports, Cyrus had in his army, when he came to Babylon, a great number of archers and slingers; and the archers are called upon to draw the bow, who were expert at it, and not spare their arrows, since they would everyone do execution, as in (^{<fr10>}Jeremiah 50:9); and the slingers to “cast [their stones] at her”^{f978}, for so may be rendered; and thus it is interpreted, by Jarchi and by Kimchi, of casting either arrows or stones:

for she hath sinned against the Lord; which brought the wrath of God upon her; and chiefly the ill treatment of his people was the sin against him he resented.

Ver. 15. *Shout against her round about*, etc.] As soldiers do when they make an assault upon a place, to encourage one another, and dismay the besieged; just as the Israelites did when they surrounded Jericho:

she hath given her hand; submitted to the conqueror, and sued for mercy. The Targum is,

“she is delivered into her hand;”

the hand of the Persians, by two princes of Babylon, who went off to Cyrus, and showed him how to take the city; or rather it was delivered by Zopyrus into the hands of Darius:

her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; not at the taking of it by Cyrus, but afterwards by Darius; for this respects the conclusion of its destruction, which was progressive and gradual:

for it [is] the vengeance of the Lord: which he decreed, threatened, and took, and that on account of his people, who had been ill treated here; so the Targum,

“for it is the vengeance of the people of the Lord:”

and her enemies are called upon to

take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her; that is, to execute the Lord’s vengeance, of which the Persians were the instruments; and who were to go according to the law of retaliation, which is a just one; to do to Babylon as she had done to Jerusalem, and other places, she had utterly destroyed. These words seem to be referred to, and much the same are used of mystical Babylon, (⁶⁶⁸¹⁶ Revelation 18:6).

Ver. 16. *Cut off the sower from in Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest*, etc.] Both sower and reaper: the walls of Babylon took in a large compass of land, where there were corn fields; and which, as Curtius¹⁹⁷⁹ observes, would yield a sufficiency to hold out a siege against an enemy; but being taken, the husbandman would not be spared, as used to be, but should be cut off, and so none to till the ground, or to reap what was upon it; and thus, in course, would be, desolate, as before threatened. The Targum understands this in a figurative sense,

“destroy the king out of Babylon, and take hold of the sword in the time of slaughter;”

and Cocceius interprets the sower of any doctor or bishop in mystical Babylon, and the reaper of such that gather the fruits, and exact obedience; (see ⁶⁶⁸¹⁴ Revelation 18:14,22);

for fear of the oppressing sword; of the Medes and Persians:

they shall turn everyone to his people, and they shall flee everyone to his own land; not those of other nations, as the Jews, who were detained captives there, as Kimchi thinks; for these were not in such fear of the Persians, nor did they flee because of them; but were let go by them, and sent into their own land honourably: but either such who, of other nations, were come to traffic at Babylon; or rather the auxiliaries of other nations, who were either hired or forced into the service of Babylon; these, finding the city taken, would make the best of their way into their own country.

Ver. 17. *Israel [is] a scattered sheep*, etc.] Or like a sheep that is frightened and drove from the fold, and is dispersed, and wanders about here and there; Israel includes all the twelve tribes:

the lions have driven [him] away; from his own land, and carried him captive, and scattered him among the nations; these lions are afterwards interpreted of the kings of Assyria and Babylon: so the Targum,

“kings have removed them;”

comparable to lions for their strength, fierceness, and voraciousness:

first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; eaten up his flesh; meaning Shalmaneser king of Assyria, who carried captive the ten tribes, that never returned, and therefore said to be devoured:

and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones; or, “boned him”^{f980}; took out his bones, all his strength and substance; or took the flesh off of them, stripped him of all his wealth and riches, reduced him to his bones, made a mere skeleton of him: we, with Kimchi and Ben Melech, and others, read “broke his bones”; to get the very marrow out, that nothing may be left of him: he took Jerusalem, burnt the temple, and carried captive the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the strength of Israel; so, between the one and the other, all Israel were like a scattered sheep, dispersed among the nations. Nebuchadrezzar was the then reigning king in Babylon when this prophecy was delivered, and therefore called “this Nebuchadrezzar”.

Ver. 18. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] Because of this cruel treatment of his people, whose God he was; and being the Lord of hosts, and able to avenge himself on their enemies, he threatens as follows:

behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land; not Nebuchadnezzar, but a successor of his, Belshazzar, who was slain the night Babylon was taken:

as I have punished the king of Assyria; not Shalmaneser, that carried the tribes captive; but a successor of his, Chynilidanus, the last king of Assyria; who was killed when Nineveh was taken, the metropolis of Assyria, and which was done before this prophecy was delivered. These two kings may figuratively design the Turk and Pope, who will both be destroyed at, or just before, the conversion of the Jews, and their return to their own land; which is prophesied of in (~~2809~~-Jeremiah 50:19,20).

Ver. 19. *And I will bring Israel again to his habitation*, etc.] Or “fold”^{f981}, or place of pasturage; for the metaphor of sheep is still continued. Israel designs not the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the Levites, and a few of the other tribes mixed with them only, but all Israel, together with Judah, as appears from (~~2810~~-Jeremiah 50:20); and so this prophecy had not its full accomplishment at the Jews’ return from the Babylonish captivity; but respects their future conversion, when all Israel shall be saved, and they will return to their own land. Kimchi says this refers to time yet to come; which he prefers to the other sense he mentions, of the return of the captivity of Babylon;

and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead; which, as they were all fruitful places, and had good pasturage, so they belonged to the ten tribes; which shows that it respects the return of them and the fulness of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, they shall then enjoy.

Ver. 20. *In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord*, etc.] When mystical Babylon shall be destroyed, and the Jews will be converted and brought into their land, and be in possession of every temporal and spiritual mercy; it will then most clearly appear that they are the favourites of heaven, and all their sins are forgiven them, as follows:

the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and [there shall be] none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; not that they will be wholly free from sin; or there will be none in them; or none committed by them; or that their sins are no sins; or that God has no sight or knowledge of them; but that they will not be found upon them, so as to be charged on them in a judicial way; having been removed from them to Christ, and satisfaction

made for them by him; who has finished them, and made an end of them, so as that no condemnation or punishment can be inflicted on them for them; wherefore, should they be sought for by Satan, or by the law and justice of God, they will never be found, so as to be brought against them to their condemnation. The reason is,

for I will pardon them whom I reserve; the remnant, according to the election of grace, whom God has chosen in Christ, preserved in him, and reserved for himself, for his own glory, and for eternal happiness; these are pardoned freely for Christ's sake; and being pardoned, no sin is imputed to them; all is removed from them, as far as the east is from the west; covered out of the sight of God; hid from the eye of avenging justice; blotted out as a debt book, which is not legible, or as a cloud which is no more; cast by the Lord behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, and entirely forgotten; never remembered or seen more, but buried in everlasting oblivion and obscurity; (see ^{<5117>}Romans 11:27) (^{<0221>}Numbers 23:21).

Ver. 21. *Go up against the land of Merathaim*, etc.] Thought to be the country of the Mardi, which lay part of it in Assyria, and part of it in Armenia; expressed in the dual number, because one part of it lay on one side the Tigris, and the other on the other side. Cyrus, with his army of Medes and Persians, is here called upon; who, according to Herodotus, passed through Assyria to Babylon: and so it may be agreeably rendered, "go by the land of Merathaim"; or the country of the Mardi. Many interpreters take it for an appellative, and not the proper name of a country. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "the land of rulers"; and the Targum,

"the land of the rebellious people;"

and so Kimchi¹⁹⁸²: and to the same sense Jarchi, the land

"that hath exasperated me, and provoked me to anger;"

meaning the land of the Chaldeans, which had ruled over others, rebelled against the Lord, and provoked him to wrath against it. The word, being in the dual number, may, in the mystical sense, respect the two antichrists, the eastern and western, that have ruled over the nations, and rebelled against God, and provoked him; the Turks and Papists, those two rebels, the beast and false prophet, (^{<6611>}Revelation 19:20); against whom the Christian princes will be bid to go up;

[even] against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod; the name of a place in Assyria; (see ⁴²²³Ezekiel 23:23); by which also Cyrus might go up to Babylon, so Jarchi; and the Targum takes it to be the name of a place: but Kimchi and others take it to be an appellative; and so it may be rendered, “the inhabitants of visitation”^{f983}; because the time was come to visit and punish them for their sins; and may particularly design the inhabitants of Babylon, the city to be visited for its iniquities; and especially mystical Babylon, which shall come up in remembrance before God, (⁶⁶⁹Revelation 16:19);

waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the Lord; either after the destruction of the places before mentioned; or pursue after those that flee and make their escape from thence, and destroy them; or rather their posterity, the remnant of them, as the Targum:

and do according to all that I have commanded thee; either Cyrus, according to all the Lord commanded him by the Prophet Isaiah, as Jarchi; or the seven angels, that are to pour out the vials of wrath on antichrist; the kings of the earth, who are to fulfil the will of God upon the man of sin, (⁶⁶⁰Revelation 16:1 17:16).

Ver. 22. *A sound of battle [is] in the land*, etc.] In the land of the Chaldeans, as it is expressed in the Septuagint and Arabic versions; the noise of warriors, the clashing of arms, and sound of trumpets, both of the enemy entered into the land, and of the Chaldeans arming themselves in their own defence:

and of great destruction; in the same land; or in Babylon, as Abarbinel supplies it; this is the consequent of the former.

Ver. 23. *How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken!* etc.] The Targum is,

“how is the king cut down and broken that moved the whole earth!”

The king of Babylon, or the kingdom of Babylon, which was like a hammer for its hardness and strength; and being an instrument, in the hand of God, of beating to pieces and destroying the kingdoms and nations around it; but is now destroyed itself. These are the words either of the prophet, or rather of the people of other nations, wondering how this destruction came about, and rejoicing at it;

how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! this explains who and what is meant by the hammer of the earth, and by its being cut asunder and broken; even the utter destruction of the city and kingdom of Babylon.

Ver. 24. *I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon,* etc.] Retorting to the stratagem that Cyrus used, in draining the river Euphrates, and marching his army up through it into the midst of the city of Babylon, and took it by surprise, while the inhabitants at night were feasting and revelling: this is said to be a snare laid by the Lord, because it was according to the counsel of his will, and through his directing and overruling providence:

and thou wast not aware; of what the enemy had done, of his march into the city, and taking of it; for, as Herodotus and Aristotle report, one part of the city was seized and taken before the other knew anything of it:

thou art found, and also caught; as wild beasts in a net, or birds in a snare. The Targum is,

“thy sins are sought, and are found, and also thou art taken:”

because thou hast striven against the Lord; as persons litigate a point with each other in courts of judicature, or as warriors strive against each other in battle; she sinned against the Lord, and offended him, not only by her idolatry and luxury, but by her oppression of his people, and profaning the vessels of his house; as Belshazzar did, the night Babylon was taken. The Targum is,

“for with the people of the Lord thou hast strove.”

Ver. 25. *The Lord hath opened his armoury,* etc.] Alluding to the manner of kings, who have some particular edifice built for an armoury; (see ~~2004~~ Song of Solomon 4:4); wherein are provided and laid up all sorts of armour, small and great, which are fetched out from thence, in time of need. This armoury is to be understood of Media and Persia, and other parts, from whence a mighty army, well accoutred, was brought by the powerful providence of God; and indeed the whole world is his armoury, from whence he can raise up instruments to do his will at pleasure; or, “his treasury”,^{f984}; so the Targum; and some think this is said with reference to the treasure of the Lord’s house the king of Babylon had seized upon, and now by way of retaliation the Lord would open his treasury to his ruin:

and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation; as a king, when he goes to war, opens his armoury, and takes out armour of every kind, both offensive and defensive, swords, spears, shields, etc. so the Lord would now bring the Medes and Persians, well armed, to be the instruments of his wrath and vengeance on Babylon: or, “the vessels of his indignation”^{f985}; having some view to the vessels of the sanctuary, as some think, the king of Babylon had taken away and profaned; these may well be applied to the vials of wrath poured out on the antichristian states by the angels, called forth out of the temple, (~~f681~~ Revelation 15:1,8 16:1);

for this [is] the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans; which he decreed and ordered to be done; and which, without his power and providence, could never have been done: compare with this (~~f688~~ Revelation 18:8).

Ver. 26. *Come against her from the utmost border*, etc.] Or, “from the end”^{f986}; from the end of the earth; from the Persian gulf, and the Caspian sea, on which the Persians and Medes bordered; from the most distant countries; for the Medes and Persians, who are here called unto, brought others along with them in their army from places still more remote; for this is not to be understood, with the Targum, of entering into Babylon on one “side”; or, with Jarchi, of beginning at one “end” of the city, that it might not be known, and be taken suddenly:

open her storehouses; where her gold, silver, jewels, and other precious things, lay: or, her barns or “granaries”^{f987}, as the Targum and Kimchi; where the fruits and increase of the earth were laid up; and may figuratively design her cities and fortified places, full of inhabitants, as well as of riches and stores of all kinds:

cast her up as heaps; as heaps of rubbish to make a causeway of, and then tread upon them to make it smooth: or, “as heaps”, or “sheaves”^{f988} of corn; tread upon them as oxen do, and thereby thresh them out; so Jarchi interprets it,

“thresh her as grains of wheat;”

and to this sense the Targum refers,

“consume her substance as they consume heaps of wheat;”

(see ~~f682~~ Revelation 18:12-14);

and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left; of the city of Babylon, its inhabitants, wealth, and riches; so complete should the destruction be, (^{468B}Revelation 18:8,21-23).

Ver. 27. *Slay all her bullocks*, etc.] Or, “all her mighty ones”, as the Targum and Vulgate Latin version; her princes and great men, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel; compared to bullocks for their strength, fatness, and fierceness; (see ^{492D}Psalms 22:12,13); this may well be applied to the slaughter of kings, captains, and mighty men, at the battle of Armageddon, (^{469B}Revelation 19:18);

let them go down to the slaughter; to the place slaughter, as oxen do, insensible, and whether they will or not:

woe unto them, for their day is come, the time of their visitation; the time of their destruction, of visiting or punishing them for their sins, appointed by the Lord, which they could not pass; and so a woeful and dreadful time to them.

Ver. 28. *The voice of them that flee and escape out the land of Babylon*, etc.] The Jews that were captives in Babylon, upon the taking of it, took that opportunity to flee out of it, and make their escape to their own land, which some of them might do before the proclamation of Cyrus; whose voice declaring to their brethren in Judea what God had done to Babylon, and rejoicing at it, was as if it was heard by the prophet in vision, or under a spirit of prophecy; this also is true of them who will be called out of mystical Babylon, and escape from thence, just before its destruction, (^{468B}Revelation 18:4);

to declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple; the vengeance which God took on the Chaldeans for their ill usage of his people, and for plundering and burning his temple; this the Jews, when they came to their own land, declared to their brethren there with joy and pleasure; and a like joy will be expressed when God shall avenge his people on antichrist, for his blasphemy against him, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in it, (^{461B}Revelation 13:6 18:20 19:1,2).

Ver. 29. *Call together the archers against Babylon*, etc.] The Medes and Persians, who were well skilled in archery, especially the Elamites; (see ^{232B}Isaiah 22:6); hence Horace^{f989} makes mention of “Medi pharetra”; and Cyrus in Xenophon^{f990} says, that he had under his command sixty thousand men that wore targets and were archers; (see Gill on ^{251B}Jeremiah 50:9”).

Some render it “many”, as the Targum; and the sense is, either gather many together against Babylon, a large army; or cause many to hear the vengeance against Babylon; publish this good news; so the word used by the Targum signifies; and this will be done by Gospel preachers, with respect to mystical Babylon, (^{664b}Revelation 14:6,8);

all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape; surround it on every side; besiege it so closely that none may be able to escape:

recompence her according to her work: according to all that she hath done, do unto her; which is the law of retaliation; (see Gill on “^{280b}Jeremiah 50:15”); and with it compare (^{663b}Revelation 18:6);

for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel; behaved haughtily and contemptuously towards the Lord and his people; burning the city and temple of Jerusalem; profaning the vessels of it, and ill treating the captive Jews; so the Targum,

“because she hath spoken ill against the people of the Lord, saying words which were not right before the Holy One of Israel;”

which may fitly be applied to antichrist the man of sin, sitting in the temple of God, showing himself as God; opening his mouth in blasphemy against him and his saints, (^{510b}2 Thessalonians 2:4 ^{663b}Revelation 13:5,6).

Ver. 30. *Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets*, etc.] Or “surely”^{f991}; it is the form of an oath, according to Jarchi Cyrus, when he took Babylon, ordered proclamation to be made that the inhabitants should keep within doors; and that whoever were found in the streets should be put to death^{f992}, as doubtless many were:

and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord; as Belshazzar and his guards were^{f993}; (see ^{270b}Daniel 5:30); compare with this (^{669b}Revelation 19:18).

Ver. 31. *Behold, I [am] against thee, [O thou] most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts*, etc.] Or, O “pride”, or O “man of pride”^{f994}; intolerably proud, superlatively so, as the kings of Babylon were, as Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar likewise, the present king; so the Targum interprets it of a king,

“behold, I send my fury against thee, O wicked king;”

and is applicable enough to the man of sin, that monster of pride, that exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, (^{<5114>}2 Thessalonians 2:4); and therefore it is no wonder that the Lord is against him, who resists all that are proud; and woe to him and them that he is against:

for the day is come, the time [that] I will visit thee; in a way of vindictive wrath and justice, for pride and other this; (see ^{<2817>}Jeremiah 50:27).

Ver. 32. *And the most proud shall stumble and fall*, etc.] Or “pride”, as before; “the man of pride”, who is so proud that he may be called pride itself. The Targum, as before, interprets it a wicked king; and Abarbinel understands it of Belshazzar particularly, who was slain the night that Babylon was taken. It may be understood of the whole kingdom and monarchy of Babylon, which was a superb state; but all its grandeur and glory were brought down and laid in the dust at once, as mystical Babylon will; when it will be said, “Babylon the great”, the proud and the haughty, is fallen, (^{<6812>}Revelation 18:2);

and none shall raise him up; the kingdom of Babylon shall not be restored train, nor the king of it have any successor, nor the city be rebuilt; compare with this (^{<6821>}Revelation 18:21);

and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him; in Babylon, the metropolis of the kingdom, and in all others round about it: it denotes the utter destruction of the whole monarchy. It may be applied to the burning of Rome with fire, and the ruin of its whole jurisdiction; for, when that is destroyed, the cities of the nations all around shall fall, which belong unto it; (see ^{<6818>}Revelation 18:8 16:19).

Ver. 33. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, etc.] This is a preface to another prophecy, detached from the former, respecting the redemption of the Lord’s people by the Messiah; and is used to excite the attention to it, as well as, to assure the truth of it:

the children of Israel and the children of Judah [were] oppressed together; which cannot be well understood of the ten tribes of Israel, and of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, or the whole body of the Jewish people; since these were not oppressed at one and the same time, nor by one and the same monarch and monarchy. The children of Israel, or the ten tribes, were carried captive by Shalmaneser the Assyrian monarch; and the children of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian monarch, a hundred

and fifty years after; to say that some of the ten tribes were mixed with the children of Judah, at the time when carried captive into Babylon, and so oppressed together with them, can hardly be thought to answer the import of the phrase, “the children of Israel”; which seems to design the body of that people. It is better therefore to understand it of the whole mystical Israel of God, as in their nature state oppressed by sin and Satan, being under their dominion; or as labouring under the oppressions and persecutions of antichrist; or else of the Jewish people in their present captivity, who will be redeemed from it, and converted, and all Israel shall be saved:

and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go; as the Assyrians and Chaldeans took and held fast literal Israel and Judah; so the elect of God, the Israel he has chosen for himself, are taken captive by sin and Satan, and are held by them, till they are snatched from them by powerful and efficacious grace; and as many of God’s Israel are taken and held captive under the antichristian yoke; and as the Jews to this day are in a state of exile and captivity, from which they cannot free themselves.

Ver. 34. *Their Redeemer [is] strong, the Lord of hosts [is] his name,* etc.] And seeing his name is the Lord of hosts or armies, and has all the armies of heaven and earth at his command; and especially since he is Jehovah, the everlasting and unchangeable I AM; he must be strong and mighty, yea, the Almighty, and so able to redeem his Israel, as the Messiah was, who is here intended; from sin, Satan, and the world; from the law, its curse and condemnation; from death and hell, and wrath to come; as well as to deliver his people from the Romish yoke, and to avenge them on all their enemies:

he shall thoroughly plead their cause; with God and man; he that is the Redeemer of men is their advocate with the Father; with whom he pleads on their behalf his blood, righteousness and sacrifice, for all blessings of grace and glory; and to all charges of law and justice, and their own hearts, and the condemnings of them; and he pleads their cause with men, and rights their wrongs, and avenges the injuries done them by antichrist and others, (^{4681D} Revelation 19:2);

that he may give rest to the land; not to the land of Judea only, but to the whole world; which will be at rest and in peace upon the destruction of mystical Babylon, and the conversion of the Jews, and their return to their

own land; as well as the Messiah will give spiritual rest to all the redeemed ones here, and eternal rest, which remains for the people of God, hereafter:

and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon; by the destruction of it and them; and rendering tribulation to them that trouble his people; and by punishing antichrist with the vials of his wrath, and with everlasting damnation, the smoke of whose torment shall ascend for ever and ever, (³⁰⁰⁶2 Thessalonians 1:6,7,9 ^{6641b}Revelation 14:11 16:9-11,21).

Ver. 35. *A sword [is] upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord*, etc.] Or, “shall be”^{f995} or, “O sword, [be thou] on the Chaldeans”^{f996}; that is, the sword of the Medes and Persians; those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; in the mystic sense, the Christian princes that shall draw the sword against the antichristian states:

and upon the inhabitants of Babylon; the metropolis of Chaldea; the common people in it, as distinguished from those of high rank and degree following:

and upon her princes; Belshazzar and his nobles, who were slain the night Babylon was taken:

and upon her wise [men]; prime ministers, politicians, and counsellors of state; neither high birth nor great wisdom can secure from the sword of the enemy, when it has a commission from God, as it had here.

Ver. 36. *A sword [is] upon the liars*, etc.] Some render it “bars”^{f997}, as the word sometimes signifies; and interpret it of great men, who are the strength and security of cities and commonwealths; but these are mentioned both before and after. The Targum renders it “diviners”; and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it^{f998}; of which there were many among the Chaldeans, who were a lying set of men, who imposed upon and deceived the people; these with their divinations and soothsayings could not save the land, nor themselves, from the devouring sword; nay, their sorceries and divinations were the cause of the ruin of it; (see ^{347b}Isaiah 47:9,12,13 ^{6182b}Revelation 18:23);

and they shall dote; or, that they may “become foolish”^{f999}; be infatuated, and act a mad part, and be at their wits’ end; not knowing what course to take for their own safety, and much less be able to give direction and advice to others:

a sword [is] upon her mighty men, and they shall be dismayed; the soldiers and their officers, the most valiant and courageous of them; these would be in the utmost fright and consternation at the approach of the enemy; especially when they perceived the city taken, and the carnage made of the king and his nobles.

Ver. 37. *A sword [is] upon their horses, and upon their chariots,* etc.] Upon the horsemen, and those that rode in chariots; upon the whole cavalry, which should fall into the enemies' hands, and be cut to pieces; (see ⁽⁶⁰⁸⁾Revelation 19:18);

and upon all the mingled people that [are] in the midst of her; those of other nations that sojourned in Babylon, or came thither for merchandise; the word having, as Kimchi observes, such a signification; or rather her auxiliaries, troops consisting of other people that were her allies, or in her pay and service:

and they shall become as women; timorous, faint hearted, quite dispirited, unable to act, or defend themselves:

a sword [is] upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed; or they that slay with the sword, as the Targum, the soldiers, shall seize upon her treasures, and plunder them: thus should she be exhausted of men and money, and become utterly desolate.

Ver. 38. *A drought [is] upon her waters, and they shall be dried up,* etc.] Either on the waters of the land of Chaldea in general, from whence should follow barrenness, and so a want of the necessaries of life; hence Kimchi interprets it of a consumption of riches, and all good things; or on the waters of Babylon, the river Euphrates, which ran through it; the channel of which was diverted by Cyrus, and drained and made so dry, that he marched his army up it into the city. Some say Babylon was taken three times, by this stratagem of turning the river Euphrates another way; first by Semiramis; and after Cyrus by Alexander: this may well be applied to the drying up of the river Euphrates, upon the pouring out of the sixth vial, and to the destruction of the antichristian states, signified by the many waters on which the great whore of Babylon or Rome sitteth, (⁽⁶¹²⁾Revelation 16:12 17:1,15);

for it [is] the land of graven images; much given to idolatry; had idols of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone, (⁽²¹⁰⁾Daniel 5:2 ⁽⁶¹⁰⁾Revelation 9:20);

and they are mad upon [their] idols; greatly affected, and much devoted to them; superstitiously mad upon them: or, “they gloried in them”; as the Targum, Vulgate Latin version, and others^{f1000}; they praised and extolled them as true deities; as Belshazzar and his nobles did the very night Babylon was taken, (²⁷⁸⁴Daniel 5:4); and this their idolatry was one cause of their ruin. The word^{f1001} for “idols” signifies “terrors”, or terrible things; because their worshippers stood in fear of them, as Kimchi observes.

Ver. 39. *Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell [there]*, etc.] Of these creatures (see Gill on “²³²¹Isaiah 13:21-22”);

and the owls shall dwell therein; so mystical Babylon when fallen shall become the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, (⁶⁶⁸²Revelation 18:2);

and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; interpreters observe that this was gradually accomplished: it was taken by Cyrus, and made tributary to the Persians; the seat of the empire was removed from it; its walls were demolished by Darius; it was drained both of its inhabitants and its riches through Seleucus Nicator building the city Seleucia^{f1002} near it. In Adrian’s time there was nothing but an old wall left; and in Jerom’s time it was a park for the king of Persia to hunt in; (see Gill on “²⁸¹³Jeremiah 50:13”); and (see Gill on “²³³⁰Isaiah 13:20”);

Ver. 40. *As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour [cities] thereof, saith the Lord*, etc.] Admah and Zeboim:

[so] shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein; the same is said concerning Edom; (see Gill on “²⁴⁹⁸Jeremiah 49:18”).

Ver. 41. *Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation*, etc.] The Modes and Persians, whose country lay north of Babylon: (see Gill on “²⁸¹⁰Jeremiah 50:9”);

and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth; the kings of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, (²⁸²⁷Jeremiah 51:27); and of the Armenians and other nations that Cyrus had subdued and brought with him in his army against Babylon, as Xenophon^{f1003} relates. Ten kings shall be raised up against mystical Babylon, and hate her, and burn her with fire, (⁶⁹⁷²Revelation 17:12,16).

Ver. 42. *They shall hold the bow and the lance*, etc.] Or “spear”. The Targum interprets it, “shields”; as many in Cyrus’s army had^{f1004}; the one an offensive, the other a defensive weapon; or, if bow and lance, the one is used at a distance, the other when near. The Medes and Persians were well skilled in handling the bow, as once and again observed: this very properly describes the armour of the Persians; which were, as Herodotus^{f1005} says, large bows and short spears; and Xenophon^{f1006} observes, that, besides bows and arrows, they had two javelins or lances, one of which they cast, and the other they held and used in their hands, as they found necessary; and so Cyrus^{f1007}, in a speech of his, says that they had breast plates to cover their bodies, and lances or javelins which they could use by throwing or holding, as they pleased:

they [are] cruel, and will not show mercy: not even to infants, but dash them against the stones, (^{<B078>}Psalm 137:8,9); (see ^{<2317>}Isaiah 13:17,18); and (see Gill on “^{<2317>}Isaiah 13:17”) and (see Gill on “^{<2318>}Isaiah 13:18”); hence “horribilis Medus”, in Horace^{f1008}:

their voice shall roar like the sea; when there is a tempest on it. This does not design the shout of the soldiers, when beginning the onset in battle, or making an attack upon a city besieged; but the noise of their march, their foot, and horse, and chariots, and the clashing of their army; all which, by reason of their numbers, would be very clamorous and terrible:

and they shall ride upon horses; the Persians had a large cavalry, their country abounding in horses:

[everyone] put in array like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon; furnished with armour, and put in a proper disposition, all in rank and file, well accoutred, and full of spirit, prepared to engage in battle, with you, O ye inhabitants of Babylon.

Ver. 43. *The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them*, etc.] Belshazzar, as Kimchi; he had the report brought him of the invasion of his land by them; of their approach to Babylon, and design upon it; and of their number, character, and force:

and his hands waxed feeble; as they did when he saw the handwriting upon the wall, (^{<2186>}Daniel 5:6);

anguish took hold of him, [and] pangs as of a woman in travail; a sudden panic seized him, and he was quite dispirited at once, as a woman in

childbirth, when her pains come upon her, and there is no avoiding them; though when those who were with Gobrias and Gadates rushed in upon him, they found him standing up with his sword drawn^{f1009}, but unable to defend himself against such a posse as came in upon him.

Ver. 44. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan,* etc.] What is said of Nebuchadnezzar coming up against Edom is here said of Cyrus coming up against Babylon; for of a king it is to be understood; as the Targum,

“behold, a king with his army shall come up against them, as a lion from the height of Jordan;”

(see ^{<2409>}Jeremiah 49:19);

unto the habitation of the strong; to Babylon; where dwelt the king, his nobles, and his mighty men:

but I will make them suddenly run away from her; as they did from her king Belshazzar, when Gobrias and Gadates entered the royal palace, and seized upon him^{f1010};

and who [is] a chosen [man, that] I may appoint over her? or, “a young man”^{f1011}? such an one Cyrus was, who, by divine appointment, became master and governor of Babylon:

and who will appoint me the time? to enter the lists with me, and litigate the point with me in a court of judicature, or contend with me in battle:

and who [is] that shepherd that will stand before me? or king? not Belshazzar, he could not stand before the Lord: so the Targum,

“there is no king that hath strength before me;”

that is, to withstand him, or hinder what he has appointed and ordered to be done; (see Gill on “^{<2409>}Jeremiah 49:19”).

Ver. 45. *Therefore hear ye the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Babylon,* etc.] The same is said in (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 49:20); only, instead of Edom, Babylon is here put, and in the next clause:

and his purposes that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans; instead of the inhabitants of Teman, the land of the Chaldeans:

surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; the weakest and most feeble in the army of Cyrus should be more than a match for any in Babylon, and should draw them out, and devour them, as dogs and wolves the sheep out of the flock:

surely he shall make [their] habitation desolate with them; (see Gill on “²⁴⁴²Jeremiah 49:20”).

Ver. 46. *At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved*, etc.] It being so sudden and unexpected, and so very astonishing:

and the cry is heard among the nations; that Babylon is fallen; which, as applied to mystical Babylon, will be matter of joy to some, and of lamentation to others; (see ⁶⁶⁴⁸Revelation 14:8 18:2,9-19).

CHAPTER 51

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 51

The former part of this chapter is a continuation of the prophecy of the preceding chapter, concerning the destruction of Babylon, (~~250~~ Jeremiah 51:1-58); the latter part of it contains a prophecy of Jeremiah sent to the captives in Babylon by the hand of Seraiah, with the copy of the above prophecy against Babylon, and an order to fasten a stone to it, and cast it into the river Euphrates, as a sign, confirming the utter and irreparable ruin of Babylon, (~~255~~ Jeremiah 51:59-64).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will raise up against Babylon, etc.]* This is not a new prophecy, but a continuation of the former, and an enlargement of it. The Babylonians being the last and most notorious enemies of the Jews, their destruction is the longer dwelt upon; and as they were against the Lord's people the Lord was against them, and threatens to raise up instruments of his vengeance against them:

and against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me; that dwell in Babylon, the metropolis of the Chaldeans, the seat and centre of the enemies of God and his people. It is a periphrasis of the Chaldeans; and, so the Targum renders it,

“against the inhabitants of the land of the Chaldeans;”

and so the Septuagint version, against the Chaldeans; and Jarchi and Kimchi observe that according to “athbash”, a rule of interpretation with the Jews, the letters in “leb kame”, rendered “the midst of them that rise up against me”, answer to “Cashdim” or the Chaldeans; however they are no doubt designed; for they rose up against God, by setting up idols of their own; and against his people, by taking and carrying them captive: and now the Lord says he would raise up against them

a destroying wind; a northern one, the army of the Modes and Persians, which should sweep away all before it. The Targum is,

“people that are slayers; whose hearts are lifted up, and are beautiful in stature, and their spirit destroying.”

Ver. 2. *And I will send unto Babylon farmers, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land,* etc.] Or, “strangers that shall fan her”^{f1012}; meaning the Medes and Persians, who should be like a strong wind upon the mountains, where corn, having been threshed, was fanned, and the chaff carried away by the wind; and such would the Chaldeans be in the hand of the Persians, scattered and dispersed among the nations as chaff with the wind, and their cities be emptied of inhabitants, and of their wealth and riches. The Targum is,

“I will send against Babylon spoilers, that shall spoil and exhaust the land:”

for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about; in the time of the siege they shall surround her on all sides, so that none might escape; as Babylon had been a fanner of the Lord’s people, now she should be fanned herself, and stripped of all she had; (see ^{<2457>}Jeremiah 15:7).

Ver. 3. *Against [him that] bendeth let the archer bend his bow,* etc.]

These are either the words of the Lord to the Medes and Persians, to the archers among them, to bend their bows and level their arrows against the Chaldeans, who had bent their bows and shot their arrows against others; or of the Medes and Persians stirring up one another to draw their bows, and fight manfully against the enemy:

and against [him that] lifteth up himself in his brigandine; or coat of mail; that swaggers about in it, proud of it, and putting his confidence in it, as if out of all danger. The sense is, that they should direct their arrows both against those that were more lightly or more heavily armed; since by them they might do execution among the one and the other:

and spare ye not her young men; because of their youth, beauty, and strength:

destroy ye utterly all her host; her whole army, whether officers or common soldiers; or let them be accoutred in what manner they will. The Targum is,

“consume all her substance.”

Ver. 4. *Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans*, etc.] By the sword, or by the arrows and darts of the Medes and Persians:

and [they that are] thrust through in her streets; either by the one or by the other, especially the latter, since they only are mentioned; (see Gill on ^{<ref>Jeremiah 50:30</ref>}).

Ver. 5. *For Israel [hath] not [been] forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts*, etc.] That is, not totally and finally; for though they might seem to be forsaken, when carried captive by their enemies, yet they were not in such sense as a woman is deprived of her husband when dead, and she is become a widow, as the word ^{f1013} used may signify; or when divorced from him; or as children are deprived of their parents, and become orphans; but so it was not with Israel; for though they were under the frowns of Providence, and the resentment of God they had sinned against, yet the relation between them still subsisted; he was their covenant God and Father, their husband and protector, and who would vindicate them, and avenge them on their enemies:

though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel; which was the reason why they were carried captive, and so seemed to be forsaken of God; or though their land was filled with punishment, with devastation and destruction, yet nevertheless God would appear for them, and restore that and them unto it; or rather this is to be understood of the land of the Chaldeans, as it is by Jarchi and Kimchi; and be rendered, “for their land is filled with [punishment] for sin, from”, or “by”, or “because of the Holy One of Israel”^{f1014}; by which it appears, that the people of God were not forsaken by him, and were not without a patron and defender of them; since it was a plain case that the land of the Chaldeans was filled with the punishment of the sword and other calamities by the Holy One of Israel, because of the sins they had committed against him, and the injuries they had done to his people. So the Targum,

“for their land is filled with, (punishment for) the sins of murder, by the word of the Holy One of Israel.”

Ver. 6. *Flee out of the midst of Babylon*, etc.] This is said either to such as were there of other nations upon trade and business, as Kimchi, to get out of it as fast as they could, that they might not be consumed; or to the Israelites, as Jarchi, the Jews that were captives there. This is applied to the people of God in mystical Babylon, (^{<ref>Revelation 18:4</ref>});

and deliver every man his soul; or “life”; from the destruction coming on the city, and the inhabitants of it;

be not cut off in her iniquity; or, “that he be not cut off”^{f1015}; with her, in the punishment inflicted upon her for her iniquities; which is the same as partaking of her plagues, (~~f680~~ Revelation 18:4);

for this [is] the time, of the Lord’s vengeance; the time fixed by him to take vengeance on Babylon for her sins against him, and the wrongs done to his people:

he will render unto her a recompence; the just demerit of their sins; a recompence or reward by way of punishment for them; (see ~~f680~~ Revelation 18:6).

Ver. 7. *Babylon [hath been] a golden cup in the hand of the Lord*, etc.] Either so called from the liquor in it, being of a yellow colour, or pure as gold, as the Jewish commentators generally; or from the matter of it, being made of gold, denoting the grandeur, splendour, and riches of the Babylonian empire; which, for the same reason, is called the head of gold, (~~2028~~ Daniel 2:38); this was in the hand of the Lord, under his direction, and at his dispose; an instrument he make use of to dispense the cup of his wrath and vengeance to other nations, or to inflict punishment on them for their sins; (see ~~2255~~ Jeremiah 25:15-26); or else the sense is, that, by the permission of God, Babylon had by various specious pretences drawn the nations of the earth into idolatry, and other sins, which were as poison in a golden cup, by which they had been deceived; and this suits best with the use of the phrase in (~~f670~~ Revelation 17:4);

that made all the earth drunken; either disturbed them with wars, so that they were like a drunken man that reels to and fro, and falls, as they did, into ruin and destruction; or made them drunk with the wine of her fornication, with idolatry, so that they were intoxicated with it, as the whore of Rome, mystical Babylon, is said to do, (~~f670~~ Revelation 17:2);

the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad: they drank of the wine of God’s wrath by her means, being engaged in wars, which proved their ruin, and deprived them of their riches, strength, and substance, as mad men are of their reason; or they drank in her errors, and partook of her idolatry, and ran mad upon her idols, as she did, (~~2488~~ Jeremiah 50:38); (see ~~f680~~ Revelation 18:3).

Ver. 8. *Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed*, etc.] Or “broken”^{f1016}; even into shivers, as a cup is; for when it had been used to answer the purposes designed by the Lord, he let it fall out of his hands at once, and it was broken; or rather he dashed it in pieces, as a potter’s vessel. The destruction of Babylon was brought about in a very short time, considering the strength of it; and was unexpected by the inhabitants of it, and by the nations round about; but, when it was come, it was irreparable: so the destruction of mystical Babylon will be in one hour, and it will be an utter and entire destruction, (~~f688~~ Revelation 18:8);

howl for her; as the inhabitants of Babylon, and her friends and allies that loved her, did no doubt; and as the kings and merchants of the earth, and others, will howl for spiritual Babylon, (~~f689~~ Revelation 18:9-19);

take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed: or balsam; (see ~~f461~~ Jeremiah 46:11); which is said by way of derision and mockery, as Kimchi and Abarbinel observe; or in an ironical and sarcastic manner; suggesting, that, let what means soever be made use of, her wound was incurable, her ruin inevitable, and her case irrecoverable.

Ver. 9. *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed*, etc.] These are either the words of the friends of Babylon of her auxiliaries and allies, who did all they could to defend her against the Persians, but to no purpose; it was not in their power to help her; the time of her destruction was come, and there was no avoiding it; or of the prophets and good people of the Jews that were in Babylon, that took pains to convince, the inhabitants of Babylon of their idolatries and other sins, and reform them, that so they might not be their ruin; but all instructions and admonitions were in vain; in like manner many worthy reformers have laboured much to reclaim mystical Babylon, or the church of Rome, from her errors and idolatries; but still she retains them; wherefore it follows:

forsake her, and let us go everyone into his own country; so said the auxiliary troops that were in the service of the king of Babylon; since we can do him no good, and are ourselves posed to danger, let us desert him, and provide for our safety by hastening to our own country as fast as we can; this was really the case after the first battle of Cyrus with the Babylonians, in which their king Neriglissar was slain: Croesus and the rest of the allies, seeing their case so distressed and helpless, left them to shift for themselves, and fled by night^{f1017}: or so might the Jews say when the city was taken, and they were delivered out of the hands of their

oppressors; and so will the people of God say, who shall be called out of mystical Babylon just before its ruin, (^{<66184>}Revelation 18:4);

for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up [even] to the skies: that is, her sins were so many, that they reached even to heaven; and were taken notice of by God that dwelleth there; and were the cause of judgment or punishment being from thence inflicted on her, which was unavoidable, being the decree of heaven, and the just demerit of her sin; and therefore no help could be afforded her; nor was there any safety by being in her; (see ^{<66185>}Revelation 18:5).

Ver. 10. *The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness,* etc.] Or “righteousnesses”^{f1018} this, as Kimchi observes, is spoken in the person of the Israelites; not as though the Jews had done no iniquity, for which they were carried captive; they had committed much, and were far from being righteous in themselves, but were so in comparison of the Chaldeans; and who had gone beyond their commission, and had greatly oppressed them, and used them cruelly; and now the Lord, by bringing destruction upon them, vindicated the cause of his people, and showed it to be a righteous one; and that the religion they professed was true, and which the Chaldeans had derided and reproached: this righteousness, not of their persons, but of their cause, and the truth of their holy religion, the Lord brought forth to the light, and made it manifest, by taking their parts, and destroying their enemies:

come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God; the Jews encourage one another to return into their own land, rebuild their temple, and set up the worship of God in it; and there declare the wondrous work of God in the destruction of Babylon, and their deliverance from thence; giving him the praise and glory of it; and exciting others to join with them in it, it being the Lord’s work, and marvellous in their eyes; and so, when mystical Babylon is destroyed, voices will be heard in heaven, in the church, ascribing salvation, honour, and glory, to God, (^{<66192>}Revelation 19:1,2). All this is true, in an evangelic sense, of such as are redeemed by Christ, and brought out of mystical Babylon, and are effectually called by the grace of God; to these the Lord brings forth the righteousness of Christ, which he makes their own, by imputing it to them; and he brings it near to them, and puts it upon them; it is revealed unto them from faith to faith; it is applied to them by the Spirit of God, and put into their hands to plead with God, as their justifying righteousness; and which is brought

forth by him on all occasions, to free them from all charges exhibited against them by law or justice, by the world, Satan, or their own hearts, (~~483~~ Romans 8:33); and it becomes such persons to declare in Zion, in the church of God, the works of the Lord; not their own, which will not bear the light, nor bear speaking of; but the works of God, of creation and providence; but more especially of grace, as the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ; and particularly the Spirit's work of grace upon their hearts, which is not the work of men, but of God; being a new creation work; a regeneration; a resurrection from the dead; and requiring almighty power, to which man is unfit and unequal: this lies in the quickening of men dead in trespasses and sins; in enlightening such as are darkness itself; in an implantation of the principles of grace and holiness in them; in giving them new hearts and new spirits; and in bringing them off of their own righteousness, to depend on Christ alone for salvation; and which work, as it is begun, will be carried on, and performed in them, until the day of Christ; and, wherever it is, should not be concealed, but should be declared in the gates of Zion, publicly, freely, and fitly and faithfully, to the glory of the grace of God, and for the comfort of his people, to whom every such declaration is matter of joy and pleasure; (see ~~486~~ Psalm 66:16 ~~489~~ Mark 5:19).

Ver. 11. *Make bright the arrows*, etc.] Which were covered with rust; scour them of it; anoint them with oil, as armour were wont to be; make them neat, clean, and bright, that they may pierce the deeper; hence we read of a "polished shaft", or arrow, one made bright and pure, (~~234~~ Isaiah 49:2); agreeably to this some render the word "sharpen the arrows"^{f1019}; so the Targum. The word has the signification of "choosing"; but, as Gussetius observes^{f1020}, whether the direction be to choose the best arrows, or to scour clean and polish them, the end is the same; namely, to have such as are most fit for use. Joseph Kimchi derives the word from another, which signifies a feather; and so renders it, "feather the arrows"^{f1021}; that they may fly the swifter. These and what follow are either the words of God, or of the prophet; or, as some think, of the Jews about to return to Judea, whose words are continued, exhorting the Medes and Persians to go on with the war against the Chaldeans; but they rather seem to be addressed to the Chaldeans themselves, putting them upon doing these things; and suggesting, that when they had done all they could, it would be to no purpose:

gather the shields; which lay scattered about and neglected in time of peace: or, “fill” them; fill the hands with them; or bring in a full or sufficient number; since there would be now occasion for them, to defend them against the enemy. The Targum, and several versions, render it, “fill the quivers”^{f1022}; that is, with arrows; and so Jarchi: or, “fill the shields”^{f1023}; that is, with oil; anoint them, as in (^{<23016>}Isaiah 21:5);

the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; of Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede, and of Cyrus, who succeeded his uncle as king of Media; and indeed the army that came against Babylon was an army of Medes joined by the Persians, Cyrus being employed as general of it by his uncle. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read it, “the spirit of the king of the Medes”; with which the following clause seems to agree:

for his device [is] against Babylon, to destroy it; the device of the king of the Medes, Darius; or rather the device of the Lord, who stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; put it into their hearts to fulfil his will; and gave them wisdom and skill, courage and resolution, to do it; and as he will to the kings of the earth against mystical Babylon, (^{<61716>}Revelation 17:16,17);

because it [is] the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple; his vengeance on Babylon, for the destruction of his temple, and the profanation of it; (see ^{<24118>}Jeremiah 50:28).

Ver. 12. *Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon*, etc.] This is not said to the Medes and Persians, to put up a flag on the walls of Babylon, as a sign of victory, as Kimchi, Abarbinel, and others think; for as yet the city is not supposed to be taken by what follows; but rather to the Babylonians, to set up an ensign on their walls, to gather the inhabitants together, to defend their city, and the bulwarks of it; which, with what follows, is ironically spoken:

make the watch strong; to guard the city; observe the motions of the enemy, and give proper and timely notice; increase and double it:

set up watchmen; meaning the keepers of the walls; place them upon them, to keep a good look out, that they might not be surprised: this seems to respect the great carelessness and security the whole city was in the night it was taken; being wholly engaged in feasting and revelling, in rioting and drunkenness, having no fear of danger, or concern for their safety; with which they are tacitly upbraided:

prepare the ambushes; or, “liers in wait”^{f1024}; to second or relieve those on the walls upon occasion; or seize unawares the besiegers, should they attempt to scale the walls, and enter the city:

for the Lord hath devised and done that which he spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon; or as he hath devised, so hath he done, or will do: his purposes cannot be frustrated, his counsel shall stand; and therefore had the Babylonians been ever so industrious in their own defence, they could never have prevented their ruin and destruction, which was resolved upon, and accordingly effected.

Ver. 13. *O thou that dwellest upon many waters*, etc.] Here Babylon is addressed, either by the Lord, or by the prophet, or the godly Jews; who is described by her, situation, which was by the great river Euphrates; which being branched out into several canals or rivers, both ran through it, and encompassed it; hence mention is made of the rivers of Babylon, (^{Psalm} Psalm 137:1); and a fit emblem this city was of mystical Babylon, which is also said to sit on many waters, interpreted of people and nations, (^{Revelation} Revelation 17:1,15); and which Kimchi here interprets of an affluence of good things, though he admits of the literal sense of the words:

abundant in treasures: of corn, and of the fruits of the earth, and so in condition to hold out a siege, as well as strongly fortified by art and nature, before described; and of gold and silver, the sinews of war, which she had got together, partly by commerce, and partly by the spoil of other nations; and yet neither her situation nor her affluence could secure her from ruin:

thine end is come, [and] the measure of thy covetousness; this flourishing city was now near its end, and with it the whole Babylonish monarchy; the time fixed by the Lord, for the duration of one and the other, was now come; and whereas her covetousness was insatiable, and would have known no bounds, for the enlargement of her dominions, and for the accumulation of more wealth and riches; God set a limit to it, beyond which it should not go; which measure was now filled up, and the time for it expired. The Targum is,

“the day of thy destruction is come, and the time of the visitation of thy wickedness,”

Ver. 14. *The Lord hath sworn by himself, [saying]*, etc.] Or, “by his soul” or “life”^{f1025}; which is himself, than which he cannot swear by a greater, (^{Hebrews} Hebrews 6:13); and the certain performance of what he swears unto

need not be doubted of; and indeed the design of the oath is to assure of the truth of the thing, about which, after this, there ought to be no hesitation:

surely I fill thee with men as with caterpillars; or “locusts”^{f1026}; march in vast numbers, and make sad desolation where they come; and to which a numerous army may fitly be compared; and which are here meant, even the army of Cyrus, that should enter Babylon, and fill it, as it did. So the Targum,

“the Lord of hosts hath sworn by his word, if I fill them with armies of many people as locusts:”

and they shall lift up a shout against thee; as soldiers, when they make the onset in battle; or as besiegers, when they make their attack on a city; or as when grape gatherers bring in their vintage, or tread out their wine, to which the allusion is: it signifies that her enemies should get an entire victory, and triumph over her.

Ver. 15. *He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.*] The Targum prefaces the words thus,

“these things saith he who hath made the earth, etc.”

The verses (²⁵¹⁶Jeremiah 51:16-19) are the same with (²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 10:12-16). God is described by his sovereignty, power, and wisdom; and the stupidity of men that trust in idols, and the vanity of them, are exposed, to convince the Babylonians that the Lord, who had determined on their destruction, would surely effect it, and that it would not be in the power of their idols to prevent it. (See Gill on “²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 10:12”).

Ver. 16. *When he uttereth [his] voice, [there is] a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.*] (See Gill on “²⁴⁰³Jeremiah 10:13”).

Ver. 17. *Every man is brutish by [his] knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image [is] falsehood, and [there is] no breath in them.*] (See Gill on “²⁴⁰⁴Jeremiah 10:14”).

Ver. 18. *They [are] vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.*] (See Gill on “²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 10:15”).

Ver. 19. *The portion of Jacob [is] not like them; for he [is] the former of all things: and [Israel is] the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts [is] his name.*] (See Gill on “²⁴⁰⁶Jeremiah 10:16”).

Ver. 20. *Thou [art] my battle axe [and] weapons of war,* etc.] This is said by the Lord, either to Cyrus, as some, to which our version inclines, whom God made use of as an instrument to subdue nations and kingdoms, and destroy them; (see ²³⁸¹Isaiah 45:1); or rather Babylon, and the king of it, who had been the hammer of the earth, (²⁴²³Jeremiah 50:23); as it may be rendered here, “thou [art] my hammer”^{f1027}; or, “hast been”; an instrument in his hands, of beating the nations to pieces, as stones by a hammer, and of destroying them, as by weapons of war: this, and what follows, are observed to show, that though Babylon had been used by the Lord for the destruction of others, it should not be secure from it itself, but should share the same fate; unless this is to be understood of the church of God, and kingdom of Christ, which in the latter day will break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, (²⁴¹⁴Daniel 2:44); which sense seems to have some countenance and confirmation from (²⁵²⁴Jeremiah 51:24) “in your sight”. The Targum is,

“thou art a scatterer before me, a city in which are warlike arms;”

which seems to refer to Babylon:

for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; or, “with thee I have broke in pieces, [and] have destroyed”; the future instead of the past^{f1028}; as the nations and kingdoms of Judea, Egypt, Edom, Moab, Ammon, and others: or, “that I may break in pieces”^{f1029}, etc. and so it expresses the end for which he was a hammer, as well as the use he had been or would be of.

Ver. 21. *And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider,* etc.] Or, “have broken”: meaning the cavalry of an army, wherein lies its chief strength:

and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; which were also used in war.

Ver. 22. *And with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman,* etc.] Or, “have broken”; having no respect to any sex, and to the propagation of posterity:

and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; not sparing men of any age, however useful they might be, the one for their wisdom, the other for their strength:

and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid; who by procreation of children might fill and strengthen commonwealths.

Ver. 23. *And I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock,* etc.] Or, have broken; which Abarbanel thinks respects the Arabians particularly, who were shepherds, and dwelt in tents; but it rather signifies shepherds and their flocks in general; who were killed or scattered wherever his armies came, which spared none, even the most innocent and useful, and though unarmed:

and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; with which he ploughed his ground: signifying by this, as well as the former, that those were not spared, by which kingdoms were supported and maintained, as shepherds and husbandmen:

and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers; by whom kingdoms and states are governed and protected.

Ver. 24. *And I will render unto Babylon, and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea,* etc.] Or, “but I will render”^{f1030}, etc. though I have made this use of Babylon, she shall not be spared, but receive her just recompense of reward; not the city of Babylon only, but the whole land of Chaldea, and all the inhabitants of it:

all their evil that they have done in Zion, in your sight, saith the Lord; the sense is, that for all the evil the Chaldeans had done in Judea; the ravages they had made there, the blood they had shed, and the desolation they had made; and particularly for what they had done in Jerusalem, and especially in the temple, burning, spoiling, and profaning that, God would now righteously punish them, and retaliate all this evil on them; and which should be done publicly, before all the nations of the world, and particularly in the sight of God’s own people: for this phrase, “in your sight”, does not refer to the evils done in Zion, but to the recompense that should be made for them.

Ver. 25. *Behold, I [am] against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth*, etc.] Babylon is called a mountain, though situated in a plain, because of its high walls, lofty towers, and hanging gardens, which made it look at a distance like a high mountain, as Lebanon, and others: or because it was a strong fortified city; so the Targum renders it, O destroying city: or because of its power and grandeur as a monarchy, it being usual to compare monarchies to mountains; (see ^{<31P>}Isaiah 2:2 ^{<30U>}Zechariah 4:7); here called a “destroying” one for a reason given, because it destroyed all the earth, all the nations and kingdoms of it: the same character is given of mystical Babylon and its inhabitants, (^{<6118>}Revelation 11:18):

and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee: in a way of vindictive wrath, pouring it out upon her, and inflicting his judgments on her; laying hold on and seizing her in a furious manner, as a man does his enemy, when he has found him:

and roll them down from the rocks; towers and fortresses in Babylon, which looked like rocks, but should be now demolished:

and will make thee a burnt mountain: reduced to cinders and ashes by the conflagration of it: or, “a burning mountain”: like Etna and Vesuvius; we never read of the burning of literal Babylon, but we do of mystical Babylon: (see ^{<6888>}Revelation 18:8); and with this compare (^{<6888>}Revelation 8:8). The Targum renders it, a burnt city.

Ver. 26. *And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations*, etc.] Signifying that it should be so utterly consumed by fire, that there should not be a stone left fit to be put into any new building, especially to be a corner or a foundation stone. The Targum understands it figuratively,

“and they shall not take of thee a king for a kingdom, and a ruler for government:”

but thou shall be desolate for ever, saith the Lord; (see ^{<257B>}Jeremiah 50:39,40).

Ver. 27. *Set ye up a standard in the land*, etc.] Not in Chaldea, but rather in any land; or in all the countries which belonged to Media and Persia; where Cyrus’s standard is ordered to be set up, to gather soldiers together,

and enlist in his service, in order to go with him in his expedition against Babylon:

blow the trumpet among the nations; for the same purpose, to call them to arms, to join the forces of Cyrus, and go with him into the land of Chaldea:

prepare the nations against her: animate them, stir up their spirits against her, and furnish them with armour to engage with her: or, “sanctify”^{f1031} them; select a certain number out of them fit for such work:

call together the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; the two former are generally thought to intend Armenia the greater, and the lesser; and the latter Ascania, a country in Phrygia; and certain it is that Cyrus first conquered these countries, and had many Armenians, Phrygians, and Cappadocians, in his army he brought against Babylon, as Xenophon^{f1032} relates. The Targum is, declare

“against her to the kingdoms of the land of Kardu, the army of Armenia and Hadeb,”

or Adiabene:

appoint a captain against her; over all these forces thus collected: Cyrus seems to be intended; unless the singular is put for the plural, and so intends a sufficient number of general officers of the army:

cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars; or “locusts”^{f1033}; which though generally smooth, yet some fire hairy and rough; to which the horses in Cyrus’s army are compared, for their multitude, the shape of their heads, long manes, and manner of going, leaping, and prancing. So the Targum,

“they shall cause the horses to come up, leaping like the shining locust;”

that is of a yellow colour, and shines like gold. So the word the Targum here uses is used by Jonathan in (~~Q1832~~ Leviticus 13:32); of hair yellow as gold, and here to be understood of hairy locusts: and, as Aelianus^{f1034} says, there were locusts of a golden colour in Arabia. And such may be meant here by the Chaldee paraphrase, which well expresses their motion by leaping; (see ~~Q1835~~ Joel 2:5); and which agrees with that of horses. The word rendered “rough” has the signification of horror in it, such as makes the hair to stand upright; (see ~~Q1845~~ Job 4:15); and so some^{f1035} render it here.

And Bochart^{f1036}, from Alcamus, an Arabic writer, observes, that there is a sort of locusts which have two hairs upon their head, which are called their horn, which when erected may answer to this sense of the word; and he brings in the poet Claudian^{f1037}, as describing the locust by the top of its head, as very horrible and terrible; and that some locusts? have hair upon their heads seems manifest from (~~cf~~ Revelation 9:8); though it may be, the reason why they are here represented as so dreadful and frightful may not be so much on account of their form, as for the terror they strike men with, when they come in great numbers, and make such terrible havoc of the fruits of the earth as they do; wherefore the above learned writer proposes to render the words, “as the horrible locusts”^{f1038}.

Ver. 28. *Prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes,* etc.] At the head of them, Darius and Cyrus. The Syriac version has it in the singular number, the king of the Modes:

the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominions; that is, the inhabitants of it, the common people, with their princes, nobles, governors, as captains of them, under Cyrus, their generalissimo.

Ver. 29. *And the land shall tremble and sorrow,* etc.] The land of Chaldea, the inhabitants of it, should tremble, when they heard of this powerful army invading their land, and besieging their metropolis; and should sorrow, and be in pain as a woman in travail, as the word^{f1039} signifies:

for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon; or, “shall stand”^{f1040}; be certainly fulfilled; for his purposes are firm and not frustratable:

to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant; this the Lord purposed, and threatened to do; (see ~~2819~~ Jeremiah 50:39,40) (~~2339~~ Isaiah 13:19,20).

Ver. 30. *The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight,* etc.] Or, “ceased from fighting”^{f1041} for it seems, upon Cyrus’s first coming, the king of Babylon and his army gave him battle; but being overthrown, they retired to the city^{f1042}, and dared never fight more:

they have remained in [their] holds; in the towers and fortresses of Babylon, never daring to sally out of the city, or appear in the field of

battle any more; even though Cyrus sent the king of Babylon a personal challenge, to end the quarrel by a single combat^{f1043}:

their might hath failed; their courage sunk and was gone; they had no heart to face their enemy:

they became as women; as weak as they, as the Targum; timorous and fearful, having no courage left in them, and behaved more like women than men:

they have burnt her dwelling places; that is, the enemy burnt their houses, when they entered into the city, to inject terror into them:

her bars are broken; the bars of the gates of the city, or of the palaces of the king and nobles, and of the houses of the people, by the soldiers, to get the plunder; (see ^{285B}Isaiah 45:1,2).

Ver. 31. *One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another*, etc.] That is, one post should be after another, and one messenger after another, post upon post, and messenger upon messenger, as fast as they could run; when one had been with his message, and delivered it, and returned, he meets another; or they met one another, coming from different places:

to show the king of Babylon his city is taken at [one] end; or, “at the end”^{f1044}; we render it “one end”, as Kimchi does; at the end where Cyrus’s army first landed, when they came up the channel of the river Euphrates they had drained. And so Herodotus^{f1045} says, that when the Babylonians, which inhabited the “extreme parts” of the city, were taken, they that were in the middle of it were not sensible of it, because of the greatness of the city; and the rather, because they were engaged that night in feasting and dancing. Nay, Aristotle^{f1046} says, it was reported that one part of the city was taken three days before the other end knew it, it being more like a country than a city; which does not seem credible, nor is it consistent with the Scripture account of it; however, it was taken by surprise, and some parts of it before the king was aware of it; who very probably had his palace in the middle of it, whither these messengers ran one after another, or from different parts, to acquaint him with it.

Ver. 32. *And that the passages are stopped*, etc.] Or “taken”, or “seized”^{f1047}; where Cyrus placed soldiers to keep them; these were the passages leading from the river Euphrates to the city, the keys of it; the

little gates, that Herodotus^{f1048} speaks of, leading to the river, which were left open that night. Kimchi thinks the towers built by the river side, to keep the enemy out, that should attempt to enter, are meant; these were now in his hands;

and the reeds they have burnt with fire; which grew upon the banks of the river, and in the marshes adjoining to it. Some render it, “the marshes”^{f1049}; that is, the reeds and bulrushes in them, which usually grow in such places. And Herodotus^{f1050} makes mention of a marsh Cyrus came to; the reeds in it he burnt, having many torches, with which he might set fire to them; as he proposed with them to burn the houses, doors, and porches^{f1051}; either to make way for his army, which might hinder the march of it; or to give light, that they might see their way into the city the better: though some think it was to terrify the inhabitants; which seems not so likely, since he marched up to the royal palace with great secrecy. This circumstance is mentioned, to show the certainty of the enemy’s entrance, and the taking of part of the city. R. Jonah, from the Arabic language, in which the word^{f1052} here used signifies “fortresses”, so renders it here;

and the men of war are affrighted; and so fled, and left the passes, towers, and fortresses, which fell into the hands of Cyrus, as soon as they perceived his army was come up the channel and was landed, and the reeds were burnt.

Ver. 33. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, etc.] “The Lord of hosts”, the Lord God omnipotent, and can do all things; “the God of Israel”, and therefore will plead their cause, and take vengeance on Babylon:

the daughter of Babylon [is] like a threshing floor; on which the nations of the earth had been threshed, or punished and destroyed; and now she was like a threshing floor, unto which should be gathered, and on which should be laid, her king, princes, and the people of the land, and be there beat and crushed to pieces. The Targum renders it the congregation of Babylon; and the Septuagint the houses of the king of Babylon; so the Arabic version:

[it is] time to thresh her; not the floor, but the sheaves on it: or, “it is the time to tread her”^{f1053}; as corn was trodden out by the oxen; or rather as threshing floors, being new laid with earth, were trodden, and so made hard and even, and by that means prepared for threshing against the

harvest; when the corn would be ripe, cut down, and gathered in, and laid up, as follows:

yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come; when she would be ripe for ruin, and God would, by his instruments, put in the sickle of his wrath, and cut her down, her king, her princes, her cities, and her people; (see ^{f1045}Revelation 14:15,16). The Targum is,

“and yet a very little while, and spoilers shall come to her.”

Ver. 34. *Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me*, etc.] Or “us”^{f1054}; everyone of us: these are the words of Zion and Jerusalem, as appears from (^{f1055}Jeremiah 51:35); complaining of the injuries done them by the king of Babylon, who had eaten them up; spoiled their substance, as the Targum; took their cities, plundered them of their riches, and carried them away captive:

he hath crushed me; to the earth; or “bruised” or “broken”, even all her bones; (see ^{f1056}Jeremiah 50:17);

he hath made me an empty vessel; emptied the land of its inhabitants and riches, and left nothing valuable in it:

he hath swallowed me up like a dragon; or “whale”, or any large fish, which swallow the lesser ones whole. The allusion is to the large swallow of dragons, which is sometimes represented as almost beyond all belief; for not only Pliny^{f1055} from Megasthenes reports, that, in India, serpents, that is, dragons, grow to such a bulk, that they will swallow whole deer, and even bulls; but Posidonius^{f1056} relates, that in Coelesyria was one, whose gaping jaws would admit of a horse and his rider: and Onesicritus^{f1057} speaks of two dragons in the country of Abisarus in India; the one was fourscore and the other a hundred and forty cubits long;

he hath filled his belly with my delicates; with the treasures of the king and his nobles; with the vessels of the temple, and the riches of the people, which he loaded himself with to his full satisfaction. So the Targum,

“he filled his treasury with the good of my land;”

he hath cast me out; out of my land, and carried me captive; so the Targum.

Ver. 35. *The violence done to me, and to my flesh, [be] upon Babylon,* etc.] That is, let the injuries done to Zion and her children, be avenged on Babylon; the hurt done to their persons and families, and the spoiling of their goods, and destruction of their cities, houses, and substance:

shall the inhabitant of Zion say; by way of imprecation:

and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say; let the guilt of it be charged upon them, and punishment for it be inflicted on them. The Targum is,

“the sin of the innocent blood which is shed in me;”

let that be imputed to them, and vengeance come upon them for it.

Ver. 36. *Therefore thus saith the Lord,* etc.] In answer to the prayers of the inhabitants of Zion and Jerusalem, imprecating divine vengeance on Babylon:

behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; not by words only, but by deeds, inflicting punishment on their enemies:

and I will dry up her sea; the confluence of waters about Babylon; the river Euphrates, the channel of which was drained by Cyrus, by which means he took the city; and this may figuratively design the abundance of riches and affluence of good things in Babylon, which should now be taken from her:

and make her springs dry; deprive her of all the necessaries of life; and stop up all the avenues by which she was supplied with them; and cut off all communication of good things to her.

Ver. 37. *And Babylon shall become heaps,* etc.] The houses should be demolished, and the stones lie in heaps one upon another, and become mere rubbish:

a dwelling place for dragons; and other wild and savage creatures.

Dragons, as Aelianus^{f1058} observes, love to live in desert places, and such now Babylon is; it lies in ruins; and even its palace is so full of scorpions and serpents, as Benjamin of Tudela^{f1059} says it was in his time, that men durst not enter into it; (see ^{<281B>}Jeremiah 50:39 ^{<281C>}Isaiah 13:21,22);

an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant; an astonishment to neighbouring nations, and to all that pass by; who shall hiss at the

destruction of it, and rejoice, there being not so much as a single inhabitant in it; which is its case to this day; (see ^{<2813>}Jeremiah 50:13,39).

Ver. 38. *They shall roar together like lions*, etc.] Some understand this of the Medes and Persians, and the shouts they made at the attacking and taking of Babylon; but this does not so well agree with that, which seems to have been done in a secret and silent manner; rather according to the context the Chaldeans are meant, who are represented as roaring, not through fear of the enemy, and distress by him; for such a roaring would not be fitly compared to the roaring of a lion; but either this is expressive of their roaring and revelling at their feast afterwards mentioned, and at which time their city was taken; or else of the high spirits and rage they were in, and the fierceness and readiness they showed to give battle to Cyrus, when he first came with his army against them; and they did unite together, and met him, and roared like lions at him, and fought with him; but being overcome, their courage cooled; they retired to their city, and dared not appear more; (see Gill on ^{<2610>}Jeremiah 51:30”);

they shall yell as lions' whelps. Jarchi and other Rabbins interpret the word of the braying of an ass; it signifies to “shake”; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “they shall shake [their] hair”; as lions do their manes; and young lions their shaggy hair; and as blustering bravadoes shake theirs; and so might the Babylonians behave in such a swaggering way when the Medes and Persians first attacked them.

Ver. 39. *In their heat I will make their feasts*, etc.] I will order it that their feasts shall be in the time of heat, that so they may be made drunk; so Jarchi: or when they are hot with feasting, I will disturb their feast by a handwriting on the wall; so Kimchi; (see ^{<2701>}Daniel 5:1-6); to which he directs: or when they are inflamed with wine, I will put something into their banquets, into their cups; I will mingle their potions with the wine of my wrath; and, while they are feasting, ruin shall come upon them; and so it was, according to Herodotus and Xenophon, that the city of Babylon was taken, while the inhabitants were feasting; and this account agrees with (^{<2811>}Daniel 5:1,30). This text is quoted in the Talmud^{f1060}, where the gloss on it says,

“this is said concerning Belshazzar and his company, when they returned from a battle with Darius and Cyrus, who besieged Babylon, and Belshazzar overcame that day; and they were weary

and hot, and sat down to drink, and were drunken, and on that day he was slain;”

and the Targum is,

“I will bring tribulation upon them:”

and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice; in a riotous and revelling way; or that they may be mad and tremble, as R. Jonah, from the use of the word ^{f1061} in the Arabic language, interprets it; so drunken men are oftentimes like mad men, deprived of their senses, and their limbs tremble through the strength of liquor; and here it signifies, that the Chaldeans should be so intoxicated with the cup of divine wrath and vengeance, that they should be at their wits’ end; in the utmost horror and trembling; not able to stand, or defend themselves; and so the Targum,

“they shall be like drunken men, that they may not be strong;”

but as weak as they:

and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord; not only fall asleep as drunken men do, and awake again; but sleep, and never awake more; or die, and not live again, until the resurrection morn; no doubt many of the Chaldeans, being in a literal sense drunk and asleep when the city was taken, were slain in their sleep, and never waked again. The Targum is,

“and die the second death, and not live in the world to come;”

(see ~~f1018~~ Revelation 21:8).

Ver. 40. *I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter*, etc.] To the place of slaughter; who shall be able to make no more resistance than lambs. This explains what is meant by being made drunk, and sleeping a perpetual sleep, even destruction and death:

like rams with he goats; denoting the promiscuous destruction of the prince and common people together.

Ver. 41. *How is Sheshach taken!* etc.] Not the city Shushan, as Sir John Marsham thinks ^{f1062}; but Babylon, as is plain from a following clause; and so the Targum,

“how is Babylon subdued!”

called Sheshach, by a position and commutation of letters the Jews call “athbash”; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel account for it; or else from their idol Shach, the same with Bel, which was worshipped here, and had a temple erected for it; and where an annual feast was kept in honour of it, called the Sacchean feast; and which was observing the very time the city was taken; and may be the true reason of its having this name given it now; (see Gill on “~~253~~ Jeremiah 25:26”); the taking of which was very wonderful; and therefore this question is put by way of admiration; it being so well fortified and provided to hold out a long siege:

and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised? for it was taken by stratagem and surprise, before the king and his guards, the army, and the inhabitants of it, were aware; that city, which was matter and occasion of praise to all the world, and went through it; for the compass of it, and height and strength of its walls; the river Euphrates that ran through it, and flowed about it; the temple, palaces, and gardens in it:

how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! or, “a desolation”; and indeed its being a desolation was the reason of its being an astonishment among the nations; who were amazed to see so strong, rich, and splendid a city brought to ruin in a very short time.

Ver. 42. *The sea is come up upon Babylon*, etc.] A vast army, comparable to the great sea for the multitude thereof, even the army of the Medes and Persians under Cyrus; so the Targum,

“a king with his armies, which are numerous like the waters of the sea, is come up against Babylon:”

she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof; being surrounded, besieged, surprised, and seized upon by the multitude of soldiers in that army, which poured in upon it unawares. Some think here is a beautiful antithesis, between the inundation of Cyrus’s army and the draining of the river Euphrates, by which means he poured in his forces into Babylon.

Ver. 43. *Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness*, etc.] Which some understand of Babylon itself, divided into two parts by the river Euphrates running in the midst of it, called by Berosus^{f1063} the inward and outward cities; though rather these design the rest of the cities in Chaldea, of which Babylon was the metropolis, the mother city, and the other her daughters, which should share the same fate with herself; be

demolished, and the ground on which they stood become a dry, barren, uncultivated, and desert land:

a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth [any] son of man pass thereby; having neither inhabitant nor traveller; see (²⁸¹²Jeremiah 50:12,39).

Ver. 44. *And I will punish Bel in Babylon*, etc.] The idol of the Babylonians, who had a temple in Babylon, where he was worshipped: the same is called Belus by Aelianus^{f1064}, Curtius^{f1065}, and Pausanias^{f1066}; perhaps the same Herodian^{f1067} calls Belis, and says some take him to be Apollo; for more of him, (see Gill on "²³⁴⁰Isaiah 46:1"); and (see Gill on "²⁸¹²Jeremiah 50:2"); who was punished when his temple was demolished, and plundered of its wealth; this golden image of Belus was broke to pieces, and the gold of it carried away. The Targum is,

“I will visit or punish them that worship Bel in Babylon:”

and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; the rich offerings made to him when victories were obtained; all success being ascribed to him; and the spoils of conquered enemies, which were brought and laid up in his temple, particularly the vessels of the sanctuary at Jerusalem, which were deposited there; (see ⁴⁴³⁷2 Chronicles 36:7,18 ²⁰⁰²Daniel 1:2); and which were restored by Cyrus, (²⁵⁰⁷Ezra 1:7,8); which restoration of them greatly fulfilled this prophecy; and was a refunding of what was lodged with him, or a vomiting what he had swallowed up; compare with this the story of “Bel and the dragon”:

and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; either to worship him, or bring their presents to him, to ingratiate themselves with the king of Babylon:

yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall; which Bel was not able to defend; and therefore should be deserted by his worshippers. The Targum renders it in the plural, the walls of Babylon; of which, (see Gill on "²⁵¹⁸Jeremiah 51:58"). Some think that not the wall of the city is here meant: but the temple of Bel, which was as a wall or fortress to the city; but now should fall, and be so no more; since it is not easy to give a reason why mention here should be made of the fall of the walls of the city; and seeing express mention is made of this afterwards.

Ver. 45. *My people, go ye out of the midst of her*, etc.] This is a call of the Jews to go out of Babylon, not before the taking of the city by Cyrus; but when he should issue out a proclamation, giving them liberty to return to their own land; which many of them, being well settled in Babylon, would not be ready to accept of, but choose to continue there; wherefore they are urged to depart from thence, because of the danger they would be exposed unto; for though the city was not destroyed by Cyrus upon his taking it, yet it was by Darius Hystaspes some time after. The same call is given to the people of God to come out of mystical Babylon, (⁶¹⁸⁰⁴ Revelation 18:4);

and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord; shown in the destruction of Babylon; (see Gill on "²⁵¹⁶Jeremiah 51:6").

Ver. 46. *And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land*, etc.] The rumour of war in the land of Chaldea; the report of the Medes and Persians preparing to invade it, and besiege Babylon, in the peace of which city the Jews had peace; and therefore might fear they should suffer in the calamities of it; but, lest they should, they are ordered to go cut of it, and accept the liberty that should be granted by the conqueror, who would do them no hurt, but good; and had therefore nothing to fear from him; and, as a token, assuring them of this, the following things are declared; which, when they should observe, they need not be troubled, being forewarned; yea, might take encouragement from it, and believe that their redemption drew nigh:

a rumour shall both come [one] year and after that in [another] year [shall come] a rumour; in one year there was a rumour of the great preparation Cyrus was making to invade Chaldea, and besiege Babylon; in another year, that is, the following, as the Targum rightly renders it, there was a second rumour of his coming; and who actually did come into Assyria, but was stopped at the river Gyndes, not being able to pass it for want of boats; and, being enraged at the loss of a favourite horse in it, resolved upon the draining it; which he accomplished, by cutting many sluices and rivulets; in doing which he spent the whole summer; and the spring following came to Babylon, as Herodotus^{f1068} relates; when what is after predicted followed:

and violence in the land, ruler against ruler; the king of Babylon came out with his forces to meet Cyrus, as the same historian says; when a battle ensued, in which the former was beat, and obliged to retire into the city, which then Cyrus besieged; and thus violence and devastations were made

in the land by the army of the Medes and Persians; and ruler was against ruler; Cyrus against Belshazzar, and Belshazzar against him. Some read it, “ruler upon ruler”^{f1069}; that is, one after another, in a very short time; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel; thus two before Belshazzar, then Darius, and, after Darius, Cyrus.

Ver. 47. *Therefore, behold, the days come that I will do judgment on the graven images of Babylon*, etc.] Because of the connection of these words, some understand (²⁵¹⁴⁶Jeremiah 51:46) of the report of the deliverance of the Jews time after time; and yet nothing came of it, which disheartened them; and they were used more cruelly, and with greater violence, by the Chaldeans and their kings, one after another; and “therefore” the following things are said; but the particle may be rendered “moreover”^{f1070}, as some observe; or “surely”, certainly, of a truth, as in (²⁴¹⁸²Jeremiah 5:2); the time is hastening on, the above things being done, when judgment shall be executed, not only upon Bel the chief idol, (²⁵¹⁴⁴Jeremiah 51:44); but upon all the idols of the Chaldeans; which should be broke to pieces, and stripped of everything about them that was valuable; the Medes and Persians having no regard to images in their worship; though Dr. Prideaux^{f1071} thinks that what is here said, and in (²⁵¹⁴⁴Jeremiah 51:44); were fulfilled by Xerxes, when he destroyed and pillaged the Babylonian temples:

and her whole land shall be confounded; the inhabitants of it, when they see their images destroyed, in which they trusted for their safety:

and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her; in the midst of Babylon; where the king and his army were shut up, and dared not move out; and where they were slain when the army of Cyrus entered.

Ver. 48. *Then the heaven and the earth, and all that [is] therein, shall sing for Babylon*, etc.] At the destruction of her, rejoicing at it; not at the ruin of fellow creatures, simply considered; but relatively, at the righteousness of God in it, and the glory of his justice, and the deliverance of many by it from tyranny and bondage. This seems to be a figurative expression often used, in which the heavens and the earth are brought in as witnesses, approvers, and applauders, of what is done by the Lord. Some indeed interpret it of the angels, the inhabitants of the heavens, and of the Jews, dwellers on earth; and others of the church of God, in heaven and in earth; which, of the two, seems best; the like will be done at the fall of mystical Babylon, (⁶¹⁸²⁰Revelation 18:20);

for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the Lord; the Medes and Persians that should and did spoil and plunder Babylon; and who came from countries that lay north to it.

Ver. 49. *As Babylon [hath caused] the slain of Israel,* etc.] In Jerusalem, when that city was taken the Chaldeans, and destroyed:

so at Babylon shall all the slain of all the earth; or “land”; that is, the land of Chaldea; the inhabitants of which fled to Babylon upon the invasion of the Medes and Persians, both for their own safety, and the defence of that city; and where, being slain, they fell; and this was a just retaliation of them for what they had done to Israel. These words may be considered, as they are by some, as the song of the inhabitants of heaven and earth, observing and applauding the justice and equity of divine Providence in this affair; (see ~~437~~ Revelation 13:7,10).

Ver. 50. *Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still,* etc.] The Jews, who had escaped the sword of the Chaldeans when Jerusalem was taken, and were carried captive into Babylon, where they had remained to this time; and had also escaped the sword of the Medes and Persians, when Babylon was taken; these are bid to go away from Babylon, and go into their land, and not stay in Babylon, or linger there, as Lot in Sodom; or stop on the road, but make the best of their way to the land of Judea:

remember the Lord afar off; the worship of the Lord, as the Targum interprets it; the worship of the Lord in the sanctuary at Jerusalem, from which they were afar off at Babylon; and had been a long time, even seventy years, deprived of it, as Kimchi explains it:

and let Jerusalem come into your mind; that once famous city, the metropolis of the nation, that now lay in ruins; the temple that once stood in it, and the service of God there; that upon the remembrance of, and calling these to mind, they might be quickened and stirred up to hasten thither, and rebuild the city and temple, and restore the worship of God. It is not easy to say whose words these are, whether the words of the prophet, or of the Lord by him; or of the inhabitants of the heavens and earth, whose song may be here continued, and in it thus address the Jews.

Ver. 51. *We are confounded, because we have heard reproach,* etc.] These are the words of the Jews, either objecting to their return to their land; or lamenting the desolation of it; and complaining of the reproach it

lay under, being destitute of inhabitants; the land in general lying waste and uncultivated; the city of Jerusalem and temple in ruins; and the worship of God ceased; and the enemy insulting and reproaching; suggesting, that their God could not protect and save them; and, under these discouragements, they could not bear the thoughts of returning to it:

shame hath covered our faces; they knew not which way to look when they heard the report of the state of their country, and the reproach of the enemy, and through shame covered their faces:

for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the Lord's house; the oracle, or the holy of holies; the temple, or the holy place, and the porch or court; so Kimchi and Abarbinel; into which the Chaldeans, strangers to God and the commonwealth of Israel, had entered, to the profanation of them, and had destroyed them.

Ver. 52. *Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will do judgment upon her graven images*, etc.] Destroy their gods, who have reproached the God of Israel, and profaned his sanctuaries; and for that reason; (see Gill on “⁻²⁵⁴⁷⁻Jeremiah 51:47”); it is an answer to the objection and complaint of the Jews, and is designed for their comfort and encouragement:

and through all her land the wounded shall groan; because of their wounds and pain; and which their idols could not cure, ease, or prevent.

Ver. 53. *Though Babylon should mount up to heaven*, etc.] Could the walls of it, which were very high, two hundred cubits high, as Herodotus^{f1072} says, be carried up as high as heaven; or the towers of it, which were exceeding high, ten foot higher than the walls, as Curtius^{f1073} says, likewise be raised to the same height:

and though she should fortify the height of her strength: make her walls and towers as strong as they were high; unless this is to be understood particularly of the temple of Bel, in which was a solid tower, in length and thickness about six hundred and sixty feet; and upon this tower another; and so on to the number of eight, towers; and in the last of them a large temple, as the above historian^{f1074} relates: but if these towers could have been piled up in a greater number, even so as to reach to heaven, it would have availed nothing against the God of heaven, to secure from his vengeance. The Targum is,

“if Babylon should be built with buildings as high as heaven, and should fortify the strong holds on high:”

[yet] from me shall spoilers come, saith the Lord; the Medes and Persians, sent and commissioned by him, who would pull down and destroy her walls and towers, be they ever so high and strong.

Ver. 54. *A sound of a cry [cometh] from Babylon,* etc.] Of the inhabitants of it upon its being taken; which is said to denote the certainty of it, which was as sure as if the cry of the distressed was then heard:

and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans; that is, the report of a great destruction there, was, or would be, carried from thence, and spread all over the world.

Ver. 55. *Because the Lord hath spoiled Babylon,* etc.] By means of the Merits and Persians; these were his instruments he made use of; to these he gave commission, power, and strength to spoil Babylon; and therefore it is ascribed to him:

and destroyed out of her the great voice; the noise of people, which is very great in populous cities, where people are passing to and fro in great numbers upon business; which ceases when any calamity comes, as pestilence, famine, or sword, which sweep away the inhabitants; this last was the case of Babylon. The Targum is,

“and hath destroyed out of her many armies:”

or it may design the great voice of the roaring revelling company in it at their feast time; which was the time of the destruction of the city, as often observed: or the voice of triumphs for victories obtained, which should be no more in it: or the voice of joy and gladness in common, as will be also the case of mystical Babylon, (²⁵¹⁸²Revelation 18:22); this “great voice” may not unfitly be applied to the voice of antichrist, that mouth speaking blasphemies, which are long shall be destroyed out of Babylon, (²⁵¹³⁵Revelation 13:5,6);

when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered; that is, when her enemies come up against her like the waves of the sea: a loud shout will be made by them, which will be very terrible, and silence the noise of mirth and jollity among the Babylonians; (see ²⁵¹⁴²Jeremiah 51:42); though some understand this of the change that should be made

among the Chaldeans; that, instead of the voice of joy and triumph, there would be the voice of howling and lamentation; and even among their high and mighty ones, who would be troubled and distressed, as great waters are, when moved by tempests. The Targum is,

“and the armies of many people shall be gathered against them, and shall lift up their voice with a tumult.”

Ver. 56. *Because the spoiler is come upon her, [even] upon Babylon, etc.]* That is, Cyrus, with his army:

and her mighty men are taken; unawares, by surprise:

everyone of their bows is broken; they had no strength to withstand the enemy, and were obliged to yield at once; lay down their arms, and submit:

for the Lord God of recompences shall surely requite; that God to whom vengeance belongs, and will recompense it; who is a God of justice and equity, the Judge of all the earth; he will render tribulation to them that trouble his; and requite his enemies and the enemies of his people, in a righteous manner, for all the evil they have done, as literal, so mystical Babylon; (see ^{668B}Revelation 18:6-8).

Ver. 57. *And I will make drunk her princes,* etc.] With the wine of divine wrath; that is, slay them; though there may be an allusion to their being drunk with wine at the feast Belshazzar made for his thousand lords; who are the princes here intended, together with the king and his royal family, (^{271B}Daniel 5:1,4);

and her wise [men], her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: the counsellors of state, priests, magicians, and astrologers; officers in the army, superior and inferior ones; and the soldiers and warriors, whom Cyrus and his men slew; when they entered the city; compare with this (^{669B}Revelation 19:18);

and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake; be all asleep in their drunken fits, and be slain therein; and so never wake, or live more. The Targum is,

“and they shall die the second death, and not come into the world to come;”

(see Gill on “^{281B}Jeremiah 51:39”);

saith the king, whose name [is] the Lord of hosts; the King of kings and Lord of lords; the Lord of armies in heaven and earth; and can do, and does, what he pleases in both worlds.

Ver. 58. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, etc.] Because what follows might seem incredible ever to be effected; it is introduced with this preface, expressed by him who is the God of truth, and the Lord God omnipotent:

the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken; or rased up; the foundations of them, and the ground on which they stood made naked and bare, and open to public view; everyone of the walls, the inward and the outward, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it. Curtius says^{f1075} the wall of Babylon was thirty two feet broad, and that carriages might pass by each other without any danger. Herodotus^{f1076} says it was fifty royal cubits broad, which were three fingers larger than the common measure; and both Strabo^{f1077} and Diodorus Siculus^{f1078} affirm, that two chariots drawn with four horses abreast might meet each other, and pass easily; and, according to Ctesias^{f1079}, the breadth of the wall was large enough for six chariots: or the words may be read, “the walls of broad Babylon”^{f1080}; for Babylon was very large in circumference; more like a country than a city, as Aristotle^{f1081} says. Historians differ much about the compass of its wall; but all agree it was very large; the best account, which is that of Curtius^{f1082}, makes it to be three hundred and fifty eight furlongs (about forty five miles); with Ctesias it was three hundred and sixty; and with Clitarchus three hundred and sixty five, as they are both quoted by Diodorus Siculus^{f1083}; according to Strabo^{f1084} it was three hundred and eighty five; and according to Dion Cassius^{f1085} four hundred; by Philostratus^{f1086} it is said to be four hundred and eighty; as also by Herodotus; and by Julian^{f1087} the emperor almost five hundred. Pliny^{f1088} reckons it sixty miles:

and her high gates shall be burnt with fire; there were a hundred of them, all of brass, with their posts and hinges, as Herodotus^{f1089} affirms:

and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary; which some understand of the builders of the walls, gates, and city of Babylon, whose labour in the issue was in vain, since the end of them was to be broken and burned; but rather it designs the Chaldeans, who laboured in the fire to extinguish and save the city and its gates, but to no purpose.

Ver. 59. *The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah, etc.]*

This word is no other than the above prophecy concerning the destruction of Babylon, contained in this and the preceding chapter; or rather the order the prophet gave this prince to take a copy of it with him to Babylon, and there read it, and their cast it into the river Euphrates, with a stone bound it. Of this Seraiah we read nowhere else: he is further described as

the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign; the Jews say^{f1090} that Zedekiah, in the fourth year of his reign, went to Babylon, to reconcile himself to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and took Seraiah with him, and returned and came to his kingdom in Jerusalem; but we have no account in Scripture of any such journey he took. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, “when he went from Zedekiah”; as this particle is sometimes^{f1091} elsewhere rendered, (~~<0041>~~ Genesis 4:1 ~~<1235>~~ 2 Kings 23:35); and so the Targum explains it,

“when he went on an embassy of Zedekiah;”

and Abarbinel, by the command of the king; it seems he was ambassador from the king of Judah to the king of Babylon upon some business or another; and Jeremiah took this opportunity of sending a copy of the above prophecy by him, for the ends before mentioned: this was in the fourth year of Zedekiah’s reign, seven years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and sixty years before the taking of Babylon; so long before was it prophesied of. The Syriac version wrongly reads it “in the eleventh year”; the year of Jerusalem’s destruction; supposing that Seraiah’s going with Zedekiah to Babylon was his going with him into captivity:

and [this] Seraiah [was] a quiet prince; one of a peaceable disposition, that did not love war, or persecution of good men; and so a fit person for Zedekiah to send upon an embassy of peace; and for Jeremiah to employ in such service as he did; for, had he been a hot and haughty prince, he would have despised his orders and commands. Some render it, “prince of Menuchah”^{f1092}; taking it to be the proper name of a place of which he was governor; thought to be the same with Manahath, (~~<1386>~~ 1 Chronicles 8:6). The Targum and Septuagint version call him “the prince of gifts”: one by whom such were introduced into the king’s presence that brought treasure, gifts, or presents to him, as Jarchi interprets it; according to Kimchi, he was the king’s familiar favourite, with whom he used to converse and delight himself when he was at rest and at leisure from business. Some take

him to be the lord of the bedchamber, or lord chamberlain; and others lord chief justice of peace. The first sense seems most agreeable.

Ver. 60. *So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon*, etc.] The evil of punishment predicted and threatened: this he delivered, not by word of mouth to Seraiah to relate when he came to Babylon; but he wrote it in a book for him reread; and he wrote it himself; Baruch, his amanuensis, not being now with him:

[even] all these words that are written against Babylon; in this and the preceding chapter: this book written by Jeremiah was a copy of them.

Ver. 61. *And Jeremiah said to Seraiah*, etc.] At the time he delivered the copy to him:

when thou comest to Babylon; or art come to Babylon, to the city of Babylon, and to the captive Jews there:

and shalt see them; the captives; or rather the great and populous city of Babylon, its high walls, gates, and towers, whose destruction is foretold in this book, and which might seem incredible. Abarbinel interprets it of his looking into the book given him; which he thinks was not to be opened and looked into till he came to Babylon:

and shalt read all these words; not before the king of Babylon and his princes, and yet not privately to himself; but in some proper place, in the presence of the captive Jews, or the chief of them, convened for that purpose.

Ver. 62. *Then shall thou say, O Lord*, etc.] Acknowledging this prophecy to be of God; believing the accomplishment of it; and praying over it, and for it, like a good man, as doubtless he was:

thou hast spoken against this place; the city of Babylon, where Seraiah is now supposed to be:

to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever; this is the substance of the whole prophecy, that the destruction of Babylon should be an utter and a perpetual one; and which is expressed in the same words that are here used, (²⁵¹³Jeremiah 50:3,13,26,40).

Ver. 63. *And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book*, etc.] To the captive Jews; and having also said the above words by way of prayer and approbation:

[that] thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates; a river by which Babylon was situated. The book, being read, was to be rolled up again, and then a stone tied to it, and cast into the middle of the river, where the waters were deepest, and from whence it could not be taken up; and this was a sign confirming the above prophecy; compare with this what was done by a mighty angel concerning mystical Babylon, in which there is an allusion to this, (⁶⁶⁸²Revelation 18:21).

Ver. 64. *And thou shall say*, etc.] Not only use the above sign and ceremony, but explain the meaning of it to those of his friends who might accompany him; and what he said was in the name of the Lord, as the form and manner in which the following words are delivered show:

thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her; as this book, with the stone bound to it, does, and shall no more rise than that can; the evil of punishment brought on Babylon will sink her to such a degree, that she will never be able to bear up under it; but be so depressed by it as never to rise to her former state and grandeur any more:

and they shall be weary; the inhabitants of it, and have no strength to resist their enemies; or, rather, shall be so weak as not to be able to stand up under the weight and pressure upon them, but shall sink under it; or shall weary themselves in vain to preserve their city from ruin, or restore it when ruined; (see ²⁵¹³Jeremiah 51:58);

thus far [are] the words of Jeremiah; that is, concerning the destruction of Babylon, as is said concerning Moab, (²⁴⁸⁷Jeremiah 48:47); for what Maimonides ^{f1093} says, that though Jeremiah lived some time after, yet ceased to prophesy; or that, when he had finished his prophecy concerning Babylon, he prophesied no more, is not true; for it is certain that many of his prophecies were delivered out after the date of this, though this is recorded last: or the sense may be, thus far are the prophetic words of Jeremiah; and so the Targum,

“hitherto is the prophecy of the words of Jeremiah;”

what follows in the next chapter being historical; for there is no necessity to conclude from hence that that was wrote by any other hand; either, as

many have thought, by Ezra; or by the men of the great synagogue, as Abarbinel.

CHAPTER 52

INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH 52

This chapter contains the history of the besieging, taking, and destroying of Jerusalem; the moving cause of it, the wicked reign of Zedekiah, (^{<2611>}Jeremiah 52:1-3); the instruments of it, the king of Babylon and his army, which besieged and took it, (^{<2614>}Jeremiah 52:4-7); into whose hands the king of Judah, his sons, and the princes of Judah, fell; and were very barbarously and cruelly used by them, (^{<2618>}Jeremiah 52:8-11). Then follows an account of the burning of the temple, the king's palace, and the houses in Jerusalem, and the breaking down of the walls of it, (^{<2622>}Jeremiah 52:12-14); and of those that were carried captive, and of those that were left in the land by Nebuzaradan, (^{<2625>}Jeremiah 52:15,16); and of the several vessels and valuable things in the temple, of gold, silver, and brass, it was plundered of, and carried to Babylon, (^{<2627>}Jeremiah 52:17-23); and of the murder of several persons of dignity and character, (^{<2629>}Jeremiah 52:24-27); and of the number of those that were carried captive at three different times, (^{<2628>}Jeremiah 52:28-30); and the chapter is concluded with the exaltation of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and of the good treatment he met with from the king of Babylon to the day of his death, (^{<2631>}Jeremiah 52:31-34).

Ver. 1. *Zedekiah [was] one and twenty years old when he began to reign,* etc.] Whose name was Mattaniah; and who was set on the throne by the king of Babylon, in the room of his brother's son Jehoiachin, (^{<12417>}2 Kings 24:17,18);

and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; so that he was thirty two years of age when he was taken and carried captive into Babylon:

and his mother's name [was] Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah; (see ^{<12418>}2 Kings 24:18).

Ver. 2. *And he did [that which was] evil in the eyes of the Lord,* etc.] Though we do not read of any idolatry he was guilty of; yet he was disobedient to the word of the Lord, and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet of the Lord, that spoke in his name; and particularly

he rebelled against the king of Babylon, and violated the oath he made to him, (⁴⁸⁶²2 Chronicles 36:12,13);

according to all that Jehoiakim had done; an elder brother of his, who reigned after Josiah, and before Jehoiachin.

Ver. 3. *For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah*, etc.] Or, “besides the anger of the Lord [that] was in”, or “against Jerusalem and Judah”^{f1094}; for their many sins and transgressions committed against him:

till he had cast them out from his presence; out of the land of Judea; out of Jerusalem, and the temple, where were the symbols of his presence; so the Targum,

“till he removed them from the land of the house of his Shechinah;”

or majesty:

that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon: acted a very perfidious part, and broke a solemn covenant made with him by an oath, which was highly displeasing to God, and resented by him; the oath being made in his name, and by one that professed to worship him: this was an additional sin to those of the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, which provoked the Lord to anger. According to our version the sense is, that because of the anger of the Lord for the sins of the Jews, God suffered Zedekiah to rebel against the king of Babylon, that so he might be provoked to come against them, and take vengeance on them; or for his former sins he suffered him to fall into this, to his own and his people’s ruin.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign*, etc.] Of Zedekiah’s reign:

in the tenth month, in the tenth [day] of the month; the month Tebet, which answers to part of December and part of January; hence the fast of the tenth month, on account of the siege of Jerusalem, (³⁸⁸⁹Zechariah 8:19);

[that] Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his army, against Jerusalem; from whence it appears that he came in person with his army at first to Jerusalem; but, during the siege, or some part of it, retired to Riblah; perhaps upon the news of the king of Egypt’s coming to the assistance of the Jews:

and pitched against it; or encamped against it:

and built forts against it round about; wooden towers, as Jarchi and Kimchi explain it; from whence they could shoot their arrows and cast their stones.

Ver. 5. *So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.*] The siege continued about eighteen months; from the tenth day of the tenth month, in the ninth of Zedekiah's reign, to the ninth day of the fourth month, in the eleventh year of his reign; as follows:

Ver. 6. *And in the fourth month, in the ninth [day] of the month*, etc.] The month Tammuz^{f1095}, which answers to part of June and part of July; hence the fast of the fourth month, for the taking of the city, (³⁸⁸⁹Zechariah 8:19);

the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land; for the common people; though there might be some in the king's palace, and in the houses of princes and noblemen, and officers of the army; yet none for the soldiers, and the meaner sort of people; who therefore were disheartened and enfeebled, that they could not defend the city, or hold out any longer: the famine had been before this time, but was now increased to a prodigious degree, so that the people had no bread to eat; (see ³⁸⁹⁰Jeremiah 38:9).

Ver. 7. *Then the city was broken up*, etc.] Either its gates were broke open, some one or other of them; or a breach was made in the walls of it, through which the Chaldean army entered:

and all the men of war fled; the soldiers, with their officers, not being able to stand before the army of the king of Babylon:

and went forth out of the city by night; at which time, very probably, the attack was made, and the gates of the city forced open, or the walls broke down; Josephus^{f1096} says it was taken in the middle of the night:

by the way of the gate between the two walls, which [was] by the king's garden; (see Gill on "³⁹⁰¹Jeremiah 39:4");

now the Chaldeans [were] by the city round about; as part of their army entered into it, the other part surrounded it; or, however, were placed at the gates and avenues all around, that none might escape:

and they went by the way of the plain; that is, the men of war or soldiers that fled, together with King Zedekiah, his family and princes; (see ^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:4).

Ver. 8. *But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king*, etc.] Not finding him in his palace, and being informed of his flight, and which way he took:

and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: (see Gill on “^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:5”);

and all his army was scattered from him; when they saw the enemy pursuing them, and near unto them, they left him, as Josephus^{f1097} says, and shifted for themselves.

Ver. 9. *Then they took the king*, etc.] King Zedekiah, being left alone, exempting some few with him:

and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; which is supposed to be Antioch in Syria:

where he gave judgment upon him; or “spake with him judgments”^{f1098}: chided and reproached him for his perfidy and ingratitude; expostulated and reasoned with him upon this subject, exposing his iniquity; and then passed sentence upon him, which was after executed; (see Gill on “^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:5”).

Ver. 10. *And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes*, etc.] Or, however, ordered them to be slain; (see Gill on “^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:6”);

he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah; who, together with the king’s sons, were taken with him; or, however, were taken in Jerusalem, and brought to Riblah; which of them is not certain, very probably the former.

Ver. 11. *Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah*, etc.] After he had seen his children and princes executed, which must be very terrible to him; (see Gill on “^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:7”);

and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon; in (^{<280>}Jeremiah 39:7); it is said, he bound him, “to carry him” there; here it is affirmed he did carry him thither: and it is added,

and put him in prison till the day of his death; from this place only we learn that King Zedekiah was put into a prison, and died a prisoner.

Ver. 12. *Now in the fifth month, in the tenth [day] of the month, etc.]*

Hence the fast of the fifth month, for the burning of the city, which was the month Ab, and answers to part of July and part of August, (^{<3889>}Zechariah 8:19);

which [was] the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; that is, the nineteenth year of his reign; who reigned in all forty three years, according to Ptolemy's canon:

came Nebuzaradan captain of the guard, [which] served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem; or "stood before the king of Babylon"^{f1099}; ministered to him, was a servant of his, the provost marshal, or chief marshal; he was sent, and came from Riblah to Jerusalem, with a commission to burn the city. In (^{<1238>}2 Kings 25:8); it is said to be on the "seventh" day of the fifth month that he came thither; here, on the "tenth" day; which difficulty may be solved, without supposing different copies, or any error: he might set out from Riblah on the seventh day, and come to Jerusalem on the tenth; or he might come thither on the seventh, and not set fire to the city till the tenth; or, if he set fire to it on the seventh, it might be burning to the tenth, before it was wholly consumed. The Jews^{f1100} account for it thus,

"strangers entered into the temple, and ate in it, and defiled it, the seventh and eighth days; and on the ninth, towards dark, they set fire to it; and it burned and continued all that whole day, as it is said, (^{<2004>}Jeremiah 6:4);"

R. Johanan was saying, if I had been in that generation, I should have fixed on that day, for the greatest part of the temple was burnt on that day. The authors of the Universal History say^{f1101} it was on Wednesday the eleventh of the fourth month, answering to our twenty seventh of July; but, according to the express words of the text, the city was broke up on the ninth of the fourth month, and burnt on the tenth day of the fifth month; and which was, according to Bishop Usher^{f1102}, the twenty seventh of August, on a sabbath day, and in the year of the world 3416, and before Christ 588; and is placed by them in the same years; and by Mr. Whiston^{f1103} in 589; and by Mr. Bedford^{f1104} in the year 587. This was a month after the taking of the city.

Ver. 13. *And burnt the house of the Lord*, etc.] The temple built by Solomon, after it had stood four hundred and seventy years, six months, and ten days, according to Josephus^{f1105}: but the Jews say it stood but four hundred ten years^{f1106}:

and the king's house; the royal palace; probably that which was built by Solomon, (~~1000~~1 Kings 7:1);

and all the houses of Jerusalem: of any note or strength:

and all the houses of the great [men] burnt he with fire; of the princes and nobles in Jerusalem; it is in the singular number, “and every house of the great one”; or “every great house”^{f1107}; Jarchi interprets it of the synagogue, where prayer was magnified; and others, he says, understood it of the schools, where the law was magnified.

Ver. 14. *And all the army of the Chaldeans, that [were] with the captain of the guard*, etc.] Which he brought with him from Riblah, or were left at Jerusalem by those that pursued after Zedekiah when the city was taken, which the captain of the guard now had the command of:

broke down all the walls of Jerusalem round about: (see Gill on ~~2000~~Jeremiah 39:8”).

Ver. 15. *Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive [certain] of the poor of the people*, etc.] That is, of the city, as distinct from the poor of the land of Judea he left, afterwards observed:

and the residue of the people that remained in the city; that died not by the sword or famine, and fled not with Zedekiah: or “even the residue of the people”; and so are the same with the poor people in the former clause; though Kimchi explains it thus,

“some of the poor of the people he carried captive, and some of them he left:”

and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon; that fell off from the Jews, and surrendered to the king of Babylon during the siege; or that voluntarily came in, and put themselves into the hands of the captain of the guard:

and the rest of the multitude; of the people, both in city and country.

Ver. 16. *But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left [certain] of the poor of the land,* etc.] Of the land of Judea, who lived in the country, and had not been concerned in defending the city against the Chaldeans:

for vinedressers, and for husbandmen; to look after the vineyards and fields, and dress and manure them, that the king of Babylon might receive some advantage by the conquest he had made; (see Gill on “^{<2490>}Jeremiah 39:10”).

Ver. 17. *Also the pillars of brass that [were] in the house of the Lord,* etc.] The two pillars in the temple, called Jachin and Boaz, which were made of cast brass, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:15);

and the bases; which were in number ten, and which were also made of cast brass, and were all of one measure and size; and on which the ten lavers of brass were set, five on the right side and five on the left side of the house, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:37-39);

and the brasen sea that [was] in the house of the Lord; called the molten sea; a sea, because of the large quantity of water it held; and brasen and molten, because made of molten brass, (^{<1073>}1 Kings 7:23);

the Chaldeans broke, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon: they broke them to pieces, that they might carry them the more easily. This account is given, and which is continued in some following verses, partly to show the accomplishment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, (^{<2479>}Jeremiah 27:19); and partly to show that what was left in the temple, at the former captivities of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah, were now carried clear off.

Ver. 18. *The cauldrons also,* etc.] Or “pots”, as it is rendered, (^{<1254>}2 Kings 25:14); which were made of bright brass, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:45); these were used to boil the flesh of the sacrifices in:

and the shovels; used to remove the ashes from off the altar of burnt offerings, and were of brass also: the Targum renders them “besoms”, whose handles perhaps were of brass:

and the snuffers; the Vulgate Latin translates it “psalteries”; and so Jarchi interprets it of musical instruments; some think “tongs” are meant:

and the bowls; or “basins”; either to drink out of, or to receive the blood of the sacrifice:

and the spoons: ladles, cups, or dishes, vessels used about the sacrifices:

and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered; that is, the priests in the temple:

took they away; the Chaldeans took them away.

Ver. 19. *And the basins*, etc.] Or “bowls”; these are omitted, (^{<12515>}2 Kings 25:15); they were of gold, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:50);

and the firepans; or “censers”; these were those of gold, which belonged to the golden altar, (^{<1008>}1 Kings 7:50);

and the bowls; or “basins”; there were a hundred of them made of gold, (^{<4008>}2 Chronicles 4:8);

and the cauldrons; or “pots”; these are not mentioned, (^{<12515>}2 Kings 25:15); what they should be, that were either of gold or silver, cannot be said:

and the candlesticks; of which there were ten in number, made of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, (^{<10749>}1 Kings 7:49);

and the spoons; which were also of gold, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:50);

and the cups: the word is rendered “bowls”, to cover withal, (^{<12529>}Exodus 25:29); it was some kind of instrument or vessel used about the shewbread table, made of pure gold; according to Jarchi, these were little golden forks, upon which they placed the shewbread, to keep it from moulding; according to the Misna^{f1108}, there were four of them:

[that] which [was] of gold [in] gold, and [that] which [was] of silver [in] silver, took the captain of the guard away; that is, everything that was of gold or silver he took away; the golden things by themselves, and the silver things by themselves, as some think.

Ver. 20. *The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brasen bulls*, etc.] The two pillars of Jachin and Boaz before mentioned, and the molten or brasen sea, with the twelve bulls or oxen the sea stood upon, (^{<10725>}1 Kings 7:25);

that [were] under the bases; or “by the bases”, as Jarchi; or rather, “that were instead of bases”^{f1109}; for the twelve oxen were the bases on which the molten sea stood:

which King Solomon had made in the house of the Lord; this is mentioned to show that these were the selfsame pillars, sea, and oxen, and other vessels, that Solomon made, that were now carried away; for though Ahaz took down the sea from off the brasen oxen, and put it on a pavement of stones, yet it seems not to have been destroyed; and might be restored to its proper place by Hezekiah, or some other prince;

the brass of all these vessels was without weight; there was no weight sufficient to weigh them; the weight of them could not very well be told; they were so heavy, that in Solomon's time the weight of them was not taken, when they were placed in the temple, so neither when they were taken away, (^{<1074>}1 Kings 7:47).

Ver. 21. *And [concerning] the pillars, the height of one pillar [was] eighteen cubits*, etc.] As in (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:15); said to be thirty five, (^{<1485>}2 Chronicles 3:15); of the reconciliation of which,

and a fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; a thread or line of that measure encompassed each of the pillars, (^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:15);

and the thickness thereof [was] four fingers; either of the pillar, or the fillet about it; that is, the brass of it was four fingers thick:

[it was] hollow; that is, the pillar was hollow.

Ver. 22. *And a chapter of brass [was] upon it*, etc.] Or a coronet of brass, of molten brass, was set upon the top of the pillar:

and the height of one chapter [was] five cubits; as in (^{<1076>}1 Kings 7:16); but in (^{<1257>}2 Kings 25:17); the height is said to be but three cubits; which is reconciled by the Jewish Rabbins thus, the three superior cubits of it were with ornaments, the two inferior without any; the whole together was five cubits; but, as ornamented, only three:

with network and pomegranates upon the chapters round about, all [of] brass; the nets were of chequer work, and wreaths of chain work, and there were seven of them to each chapter, (^{<1077>}1 Kings 7:17);

the second pillar also, and the pomegranates, [were] like unto these; one pillar was exactly like the other, and the ornaments of it the same.

Ver. 23. *And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side*, etc.] Or, “to the wind”^{f1110}; to the four winds; towards every corner or wind twenty four, which make up ninety six:

[and] all the pomegranates upon the network [were] an hundred round about; four, standing upon the four angles, made the ninety six a hundred; in (^{<1070>}1 Kings 7:20); they are said to be two hundred; and in (^{<14013>}2 Chronicles 4:13); are said to be four hundred upon the two wreaths; which may be accounted for thus, there were two rows of them on each pillar, in every row were a hundred, which made two hundred in one pillar, and four hundred in both. These were the things in the temple carried away in the last captivity.

Ver. 24. *And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest*, etc.] That is, out of the temple, where he was ministering, or fled for safety; this is supposed to be the father of Ezra, (^{<1364>}1 Chronicles 6:14 ^{<1500>}Ezra 7:1);

and Zephaniah the second priest: or deputy priest: the “sagan” of the priests, as the Targum calls him, who was deputed to minister for the high priest, in case anything happened which hindered him from officiating; such an one there always was in later times on the day of atonement, as appears from the Misna^{f1111}; this man is thought to be the same with Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, (^{<2100>}Jeremiah 21:1 29:25);

and the three keepers of the door; that is, of the temple. The Targum calls them three “amarcalin”; who had, as Jarchi says, the keys of the court committed to them. The number seems better to agree with the “gizbarim” or treasurers; of whom, it is said, they never appoint less than three treasurers, and seven “amarcalin”^{f1112}.

Ver. 25. *He took also out of the city an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war*, etc.] The master-master-general of the army:

and seven men of them which were near the king’s person which were found in the city; or, “saw the face of the king”: or rather, “made to see [his] face”^{f1113}; these were ministers of state, who were always at court, and assisted in councils of state, and introduced persons into the king’s presence; in (^{<1259>}2 Kings 25:19); they are said to be but “five”; but Josephus^{f1114} has seven, as here; perhaps two of them were of less note, and so not reckoned, as Jarchi observes: some will have it, that the two scribes of the judges are left out; but others, more probably, Jeremiah and Baruch, who were first taken, and afterwards dismissed:

and the principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; or the scribe of the prince of the army, as the Targum; the general's secretary:

and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city: persons of prime note, who, upon the invasion, betook themselves from the country to the city of Jerusalem with their effects, and to defend it. Josephus^{f1115} calls them rulers or governors.

Ver. 26. *So Nebuzaradan captain of the guard took them,* etc.] In the city, and made them captives:

and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah; to know his mind concerning them; how they should be disposed of; and for him to pass sentence on them: as he had done on the king of Judah, his sons, and his princes, in the same place.

Ver. 27. *And the king of Babylon smote them,* etc.] Or ordered them to be smitten with the sword; to have their heads cut off, according to Josephus^{f1116}:

and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath; these being such, no doubt, who obstinately defended the city, and persuaded the prince and people not to surrender the city into the hand of the Chaldeans; and therefore were put to death in cold blood:

thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land: at different times, of which this was the completion; and of which a particular account is given, even of the number of the captives at these several times, in (~~2428~~ Jeremiah 52:28-30).

Ver. 28. *This [is] the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive in the seventh year,* etc.] That is, of his reign: in (~~12412~~ 2 Kings 24:12); it is said to be in the eighth year of his reign; it being at the latter end of the seventh, and the beginning of the eighth, as Kimchi observes; this was the captivity of Jeconiah: the number of the captives then were

three thousand Jews, and three and twenty; but in (~~12414~~ 2 Kings 24:14); they are said to be ten thousand; which may be reconciled thus, there were three thousand twenty and three of the tribe of Judah, here called Jews; and the rest were of the tribe of Benjamin, and of the ten tribes that were mixed among them; (see ~~12416~~ 2 Kings 24:16).

Ver. 29. *In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar*, etc.] Said to be the nineteenth, (²⁴⁹²Jeremiah 52:12); it was at the end of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth, as Kimchi; or this was before the taking of the city, when he raised the siege, and departed to meet the king of Egypt, at which time he might carry captive many, as here said:

he carried away captive from Jerusalem, eight hundred thirty and two persons; which is more likely to be then done than at the taking of the city; when it is very probable a greater number was carried captive, which are not here taken notice of.

Ver. 30. *In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadnezzar*, etc.] In this year of his reign, the Jews say^{f1117}, Tyre was delivered into his hands; and he carried off the Jews in Moab, Ammon, and the neighbouring nations, to the number after mentioned; though some think these were the poor people of the land he took from thence, after the murder of Gedaliah, and in revenge of that:

Nebuzaradan captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons; all which being put together make the following sum:

all the persons [were] four thousand and six hundred; this is the sum total of the three mentioned captivities.

Ver. 31. *And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah*, etc.] He was eighteen years of age when he was carried captive; so that he must be now fifty five years old; (see ¹²⁴⁸2 Kings 24:8);

in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth [day] of the month; in the month Adar, which answers to part of February, and part of March: in (¹²⁵⁷2 Kings 25:27); the favour shown by the king of Babylon to Jeconiah, after related, is said to be in the twenty seventh day of the month; it might have been determined and notified on the twenty fifth, but not executed till the twenty seventh; or it might be begun to be put in execution on the twenty fifth, and not finished till the twenty seventh, The Jews, in their chronicle, say^{f1118} that Nebuchadnezzar died on the twenty fifth, and was buried; that, on the twenty sixth, Evilmerodach took him out of his grave, and dragged him about, to abolish his decrees, and to confirm what is said of him in (²³⁴⁹Isaiah 14:19); and on the twenty seventh he brought Jeconiah out of prison; but this is no reconciliation at all; the former is best;

[that] Evilmerodach king of Babylon, in the [first] year of his reign; who succeeded Nebuchadnezzar, having reigned forty three years; this king is called by Ptolemy^{f1119} Iloarudamus; by Abydenus^{f1120} Evilmaluruch; by Josephus^{f1121} Abilamarodach; but by Berossus^{f1122} as here: his proper name was Merodach, a name of one of the Chaldean idols, (^{280B}Jeremiah 50:2). “Evil” was a nickname, which signifies “foolish”; he was called “foolish Merodach”, on account of his ill conduct, or bad life: as soon as he came to the throne, he

lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison; that is, he changed his condition for the better; he raised him out of a low estate to a more honourable one; he brought him out of a state of imprisonment and misery into a state of liberty and honour; what was the reason of this is not easy to say. The Jews have a tradition, that Nebuchadnezzar, after seven years’ madness, coming to himself, and to his kingdom, and understanding that his son Evilmerodach had been guilty of mal-administration during that time, and particularly that he rejoiced at his madness, cast him into prison, where he contracted a friendship with Jeconiah; and when he came to the throne, upon the death of his father, released him: but others think that Jeconiah being a comely young man, when he was brought a captive to Babylon, and about the age of this prince, he took a liking to him, and, pitying his case, showed him this favour, as soon as he had an opportunity.

Ver. 32. *And spake kindly unto him*, etc.] Used him with great familiarity, treated him with great respect: or, “spake good things to him”^{f1123}; comforted him in his captive state, and promised him many favours; and was as good as his word:

and set his throne above the throne of the kings that [were] with him in Babylon; these kings were either petty kings over the several provinces that belonged to the Chaldean monarchy, that were occasionally at Babylon; or rather the kings Nebuchadnezzar had conquered, and taken captive, as Jehoiachin; such as the kings of Moab, Ammon, Edom, etc. these, notwithstanding they were captives, had thrones of state, partly in consideration of their former dignity, and partly for the glory of the Babylonish monarch; now Jehoiachin’s throne was higher and more grand and stately than the rest, to show the particular respect the king of Babylon had for him.

Ver. 33. *And changed his prison garments,* etc.] Which were filthy, and of an ill smell; and put on him raiment more comfortable, as well as more honourable, and suitable to his dignity, and more fit to appear in, in the presence of the king and his court:

and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life: either at the same table with the king; or at other near him, in his sight, in the same apartment; though the former seems more likely; and this he did as long as he lived; either Evilmerodach, or rather Jeconiah; though perhaps they both died much about the same time. All this was done about the year of the world 3444, and about five hundred sixty years before Christ, according to Bishop Usher^{f1124} and Mr. Bedford^{f1125}; the authors of the Universal History^{f1126} place it a year earlier.

Ver. 34. *And [for] his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon,* etc.] This seems to design not food only, and for himself, which he had daily at the king's table, but all necessary provisions for himself, family, and servants:

every day a portion, until the day of his death, all the days of his life; that is, of Jeconiah's; how long he lived after this is not known; he was now fifty five years of age, and cannot be thought to have lived a great while after, having been imprisoned so many years; and it is certain he did not live to the return from the captivity. Of the death of Zedekiah we have no account, only that he died in prison. The Jews say^{f1127} he died at this very time, when Jeconiah was advanced. The account here given of Jeconiah has led some to conclude that this chapter was not written by Jeremiah; since it cannot be well thought he should live so long as to the death of this prince; and, besides, had given an account of the destruction of Jerusalem in the thirty ninth chapter, which he would hardly repeat: though that he might do, partly for the sake of new circumstances here added; and partly as an introduction to the book of the Lamentations, which follows.

FOOTNOTES

- ft1 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2.
- ft2 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 326, 508.
- ft3 -- Schmidt in loc.
- ft4 -- Praefat. in Hieremiam, tom. 3. fol. 9. B,
- ft5 -- Annales Vet. Test, A. M. 3375.
- ft6 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 9.
- ft7 -- Vol. 21. p. 56.
- ft8 -- Scripture Chronology, p. 673.
- ft9 -- De. Vit. Prophet. c. 8. Vid. Isidor. Hispalens. de Vit. & Mort. Sanct. c. 38.
- ft10 -- Hist. Dynast. p. 46. Vid. Elmacin. Hist. Eccl. p. 128, Apud Hottinger. Thesaur. Phil. p. 478.
- ft11 -- Scorpiace, c. 8.
- ft12 -- Adv. Jovinian. l. 2, tom. 2. fol. 32. I.
- ft13 -- Stromat. l. 1. p. 328.
- ft14 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 14. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 59. 3. Jarchi in loc.
- ft15 -- Comment. in Hieremiam, I. 1. fol. 121. H. tom. 5. & I. 2. fol. 135. F. & I. 6. fol. 161. C. Isidor. Hispalens. de Vit. & Mort. Sanct. c. 38.
- ft16 -- Antiqu. I. 10. c. 7. sect. 3. Ed. Hudson.
- ft17 -- **rbd yt [dy al** “uescio loqui”, V. L. Munster, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius; “non novi loqui”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft18 -- Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 25.
- ft19 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 6. 1. and Bava Bathra, fol. 25. 2.
- ft20 -- **j tpt** “aperietur”, Munster, Tigurine version, Cocceius; “pandetur”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.

- ft21 -- **Æl ytrkz** “recordor tibi”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Schmidt, and some in Vatablus; which is preferred by Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 228.
- ft22 -- **wmçay** “rcos fuisse”, Junius & Tremellius; “rei peragebantur”, Piscator; “rei fiunt”, Cocceius.
- ft23 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 31. 1. & Sota, fol. 46. 2.
- ft24 -- **μyytk yya wrb[εἰς νησους]** Sept. “transite ad insulas Cethim”, V. L. “ad insulas Cypriorum”; so some in Vatablus; “in insulas”, Schmidt.
- ft25 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
- ft26 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 5. 2.
- ft27 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 60. 3.
- ft28 -- **tyb dyl y** “filius familias”, Munster.
- ft29 -- **μl wq wntn** “dederunt vocem suam”, Montanus, Pagninus; “edunt rocem suam”, Schmidt.
- ft30 -- **htxn, κατεσκευησαν**, “desolatae sunt, [sive] destructae”, Vatablus.
- ft31 -- Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9.
- ft32 -- L. 2. vel Euterpe, c. 99.
- ft33 -- lb. c. 163, 169.
- ft34 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 1. sect. 3.
- ft35 -- De. locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. H.
- ft36 -- Eustathius in Dionys. **περιηγ**
- ft37 -- Servius in Virgil. Georg. l. 4. p. 343. & in Aeneid. l. 1. p. 541.
- ft38 -- Selecta Sacr. l. 4. c. 9. p. 492, & l. 5. Exercit. 4. sect. 8. p. 700, 701.
- ft39 -- De. Arcano Kethib & Keri, p. 27, 28.
- ft40 -- Ib. p. 89, 90.
- ft41 -- **yk** “nam”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; “atqui”, Calvin, Gataker; “quamvis”, Piscator.
- ft42 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 9. sect. 5. & Nidda, c. 9. sect. 6. & Maimon & Bartenora in ib. & in Misn. Celim, c. 10. sect. 1.

ft43 -- Schroder. Pharmacopoeia, l. 3. c. 23. p. 140.

ft44 -- Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 10.

ft45 -- Opera, vol. 1, de Mirabil. p. 705.

ft46 -- "Maculas tamen retinebit iniquitas tua", Schmidt.

ft47 -- **µtkn** "nitet, [vel splendet], instar anri", Piscator; "obducatur se auro insigni", Junius & Tremellius; so Gussetius renders the word, "inaurari, auro ebduci"; and who rightly observes, that whatever is glided, or covered with gold, the more it is washed with nitre, or soap, the brighter it will appear; and so, whatever other methods are taken to wash away sin, but seeking for justification by the grace of God in Christ, it will be but the more manifest, Ebr. Comment. p. 410.

ft48 -- (Curtius) L. 5. c. 2.

ft49 -- De. Calceis Heb. l. 1. c. 7. sect. 4.

ft50 -- Lex. Heb. rad. **Æרץ**.

ft51 -- **wçpn twab** "in, [vel] pro desiderio animae suae", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Vatablus, Schmidt.

ft52 -- **htnat j wr** "ventum occasionis suae", Pagninus Montanus; "veatum occursus sui", Calvin.

ft53 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 1.

ft54 -- **ל** "ligno", V. L. Pagnanius, Montanus, Schmidt.

ft55 -- **awçl** "propter vanitatem, [sive] vaniloquentiam", Vatablus.

ft56 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 32. 2. & Cetubot, fol. 72. 1.

ft57 -- So Mechilta apud Yalkut in loc.

ft58 -- **hyl pam ba** "terra caliginis Dei", Gataker, Gussetius; "caliginis Jah", Montanus.

ft59 -- Midrash R. Tanchuma, apud Jarchi in loc. Vid. Yalkut Simeoni, in loc.

ft60 -- Misn. Trumot, c. 10. sect. 3. & Machshirin, c. 3. sect. 3.

ft61 -- **wndr** "voluimus non veniemus", &c, De. Dieu; "decrevimus non veniemus", Cocceius.

- ft62 -- **hyrwçq** “fasciae suae”, Tigurine version; “ligaminum suorum”, Munster, Calvin; “ligamentorum suorum”, Piscator.
- ft63 -- “Quandoquidem etiam (alios) malas docuisti vias tuas”, Noldius, p. 507. vid. No. 1998.
- ft64 -- **trtj mb** “in suffossione”, Vatablus, Calvin, De. Dieu; “effossione”, Junius & Tremellius; “perfossione”, Schmidt.
- ft65 -- **εν διορυγμασιν**, Sept. “in fossis”, V. L.
- ft66 -- “Cum perfossorio”, Pagninus, Montanus; “sub. instrumento”, Grotius; “terebro”, Cocceius.
- ft67 -- **Æykrd twñçl** “mutando viam tuam”, Vatablus, Piscator, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft68 -- **hz tam** “ab hoc, sub. loco”, Gataker; “ab ista”, Munster, Grotius; “sub. terra, etiam hinc exhibis”, Cocceius.
- ft69 -- **rwmal** “dicendo”, Montanus, Vatablus, Janius & Tremellius
- ft70 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 2.
- ft71 -- **tw[rh yç]j w** “sed fecisit mala”, Schmidt.
- ft72 -- **l kwj w** “et praevaluisti”, Vatablus, Schmidt; “et preavales”, Piscator, Gataker; “et evaluisti”, Cocceius.
- ft73 -- “Si ita loquereris, quanquam mala [plurirma] fecisti, praevaleres”, Grotius.
- ft74 -- **l qm** “a levitate”, a **l l q**, “velocem esse”, Calvin.
- ft75 -- Heb. “propter vocem scortationis ejus, [vel] famosam scortationem”, Piscator; “a voce scortationis ejus”, Schmidt; “propter famam scortationis ejus”, Cocceius; “prae famosa scortatione”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft76 -- **ynp l ypa al** “non faciam cadere facies meas super vos”, Schmidt.
- ft77 -- **y[d** “scito”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft78 -- **w[rw** “regent”, Gataker.
- ft79 -- **dw[hç]y al w** “neque reparabitur amplius, [vel] et non constuetur amplius”, Schmidt.

- ft80 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2.
- ft81 -- h[rm “ab amico suo”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “a socio suo”, Cocceius.
- ft82 -- μkrd ta ww[h yk “quia perverterunt viam suam”, Munster, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; “eo quod”, Piscator; “quod pravam viam inierunt”, Cocceius.
- ft83 -- bwçt yl a hwby μan l arçy bwçt μα “si reverteris ad me, O Israel, dicit Jehovah, reverteris”, Gataker,
- ft84 -- bwçt “quiescas”, Vatablus; “quiesce apud me”, Calvin.
- ft85 -- dwnt al w “et non vagaberis”, Gataker; “et non instabilis fueris”, Cocceius,
- ft86 -- w[rzt l aw “ut non seratis”.
- ft87 -- wzy[h “congregate vos, [sub.] ad fugiendum”, Vatablus; “confirmate vos [ad fugiendum]”, Piscator.
- ft88 -- “Confortamini”, V. L. “corroboramini”, Castalio; “agite viriliter”, Munster.
- ft89 -- rbç “contritionem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “confractionem”, Cocceius.
- ft90 -- So T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 11. 1. & Sanhedrin. fol 94. 2.
- ft91 -- hnyxt “gramine succrescente obducantur quidam” in Gataker.
- ft92 -- wmm “ab illo”, i.e. “ab illo proposito”, Cocceius; “ab eo”, Montanus.
- ft93 -- Not. ad Mosis Kimchi, [οδοιπορια](#), p. 186.
- ft94 -- hzh μ[l “de hoc populo”, Calvin, Vatablus.
- ft95 -- j x j wr “ventus nitidus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft96 -- ^yl t ytm d[“quousque morari sines”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft97 -- ^wa “iniquitatem”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Schimdt; “vanitatem”, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius.
- ft98 -- R. Joseph Kimchi, R. Jonah, and Ben Melech, but disapproved of by Abarbanel.

- ft99 -- **μyρxn** “obsessores”, Calvin, Buxtorf; a **rwX**, vel **rrX**, “obsedit”; so Jarchi.
- ft100 -- **[gn yk rm yk** “quamvis amarum sit, quamvis pertigerit”, Calvin.
- ft101 -- **ybl twryq** “parietes cordis mei”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft102 -- Orignum l. 18. c. 4.
- ft103 -- **rbç I [rbç** “contritio super contritionem”, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft104 -- **hddç** “vastata”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft105 -- **μyb[b** “in nubes”, Munster, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft106 -- **dwdç ytaW** “et tu vastata”, Pagninus, Montanus “et tu, res vastata”, Cocceius.
- ft107 -- **Æyny[Æwpb y[rqj** “scindes in fuco oculos tuos”, Montanus; “rumpes stibio oculos tuos”, Schmidt.
- ft108 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2.
- ft109 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 9.
- ft110 -- Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 6. p. 350.
- ft111 -- **hnwmal awl h Æyny[** “oculi tui respiciunt fidem”, V. L. “ad fidem” Justius & Tremellius, Cocceius, and some in Vatablus.
- ft112 -- **twbr[baz** “lupus desertorum”, Montanus; “lupus solitudinum”, Calvin; “deserta incolaus”, Pagninuns, Vatablus; “lupus camporum”, Schmidt.
- ft113 -- **Æl j l sa tazl ya** “ad quid, [vel] ob quid, [vel] quare parcam tibi?” De. Dieu.
- ft114 -- Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 199. No. 911.
- ft115 -- **w[bçyw** “et juraverunt”, **[bçaw** “cum saturarem”.
- ft116 -- **ελκοντες**, “trahentes”, Aquila, Symmachus & Theodotion in Bootius, l. 3. c. 5. sect. 3. Aben Ezra and Abendana interpret it of horses that come from Meshec; see Psal. cxx. 5. which were the strongest and most lascivious.

- ft117 -- **twçyj n** “propaginos; rami libere luxuriantes---item pinnae, vel potius munimenta et propugnacula extra muri ambitum libere excurrentia”, Stockius, p. 675.
- ft118 -- **hwwhyb wçj kw** “egaverunt Dominum”, V. L. Pagninus; “abnegant”, Piscator; “abnegarunt Jehovam”, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft119 -- **phl hç[y hk** “sic fiat illis”; so some in Vatablus; “sic eveniat ipsis”, Cocceius.
- ft120 -- **Æytwnbw Æynb wl kay** “vorabunt filios tuos et filias tuas”, Calvin; “devorabunt”, Vatablus; “comedent filios tuos et filias tuas”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft121 -- **bl ^yaw** “et non cor”, Pagninus, Montanus; “qui non habes cor”, V. L. “excors”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “cui cor non est”, Cocceius.
- ft122 -- “Significantissima impimis vox est” **wl yj t**, “quae significat ita angustia ut parturiens”, Schmidt.
- ft123 -- **rwyçy** “aspicit”, Vatablus, i. e. “quisque eorum”, Piscator; “aspicient”, Pagninus.
- ft124 -- **myçwqy Æçk rwyçy** “contemplatur quisque, cum quiescunt aucupes”, De. Dieu; so Ben Melech; “et cum resident aucupes”, Piscator, Gataker; “sit quiet and unmoved, that they may not frighten the birds by any noise, watching and expecting when they would get into the net”; so Gussetius.
- ft125 -- **tyj çm wbyxh** “fodiunt foveas”, Tigurine version.
- ft126 -- **[r yrbd wrb[** “transcendunt verba mali”, Schmidt; “transierunt verba mali”, Cocceius.
- ft127 -- **wj yl xyw** “ut prosperentur”, Gataker.
- ft128 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, for. 62. I.
- ft129 -- **wzy[h ενισχυσατε**, Sept. “confortamini”, V. L. “fortes estote”, Tigurine version.
- ft130 -- Misn. Menachot c. 8. sect. 3.
- ft131 -- **w[qt [wqtb.**
- ft132 -- Misna Nidda, c. 2. c. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

- ft133 -- Vid. Lydium de re Militari, l. 5. c. 3. p. 185, 186. & Van Tillin ib. p. 52.
- ft134 -- So Jarchi and Joseph Kimchi. Vid. Gataker in loc.
- ft135 -- **wdy ta çya w[r** “paverunt unusquisque manum suam”, Montanus; “eos qui sub manu sua sunt”, V. L.
- ft136 -- **hl l s wkpç** “fundite aggerem”, V. L. Munster, Tigurine version; “fundite vallum”, Schmidt.
- ft137 -- **hx[wtrk** “decidite, [vel] decernite consilium”. So Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 628.
- ft138 -- **yrswh** “cape disciplinam”, Vatablus; “admitte disciplinam”, Cocceius; “castigationem”, Schmidt.
- ft139 -- **Æmm yçpn [qt ^p** “ut non luxetur, [vel] avellatur anima mea a te”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt.
- ft140 -- **wj b** “in platea”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft141 -- **l l w[l [Æpç** “effunde in puerum”, Cocceius; “super infantem”, Schmidt; so V. L. “effundere”, Montanus.
- ft142 -- **bwj h Ærd hz ya** “quae sit via melior”, Vatablus; “via optima”, Schmidt.
- ft143 -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.
- ft144 -- **µb** “in iis”, Schmidt; “in eis”, Cocceius, Pagnanius.
- ft145 -- **çyak** “tanquam vir”, Pagninus; “ut vir”, Schmidt; “quam unus vir”, Grotius.
- ft146 -- **bwyal brj yk** “quoniam gladius est inimico”, Munster, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius; “quia (ibi) gladius (qui) hosti”, Schmidt.
- ft147 -- Gataker.
- ft148 -- **^wj b** “in exploratoria specula”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft149 -- **pyrrws yrs** “refractarii refractariorum”, Schmidt; “contumacium contumacissimi”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft150 -- By Mathiolus, Agricola and others, in Poli Synops.

- ft151 -- **trpw[utçam** “ab igne, et integrum est plumbum”, Munster, Calvin, Tigurine version.
- ft152 -- **wqtn al my[rw** “et mala non sunt evulsa”, Piscator, so some in Vatablus; “mala avelli non pussunt”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft153 -- **µhl warq καλεσετε αυτους**, “vocate eos”: V. L. Pagninus.
- ft154 -- Middot, c. 1. sect. 4, 5.
- ft155 -- **µkykrd wbyj yh** “bonas facite vias vestras”, V. L. Munster, Pagninus, Montanus; “efficite”, etc. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft156 -- Comment. in Zeph. ch. 1. fol. 94. L. Epitaph. Paulae, fol. 59. L.
- ft157 -- **ynp l [m** “desuper faciebus meis”, Montanus; “a faciebus meis” Schmidt.
- ft158 -- **yb [gpt l aw** “et ne oecurras mihi”, Calvin; “et ne obsistas mihi”, V. L. “et ne intervenias apud me”, Tigurine version.
- ft159 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 26. 2. Taanith, fol. 7. 2. & 8. 1. Sota, fol. 14. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 95. 2.
- ft160 -- **µymçh tkl ml** “operi coelorum”, Piscator, Gataker, Cocceius “machinae coelorum”, Munster, Tigurine version; so Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft161 -- Metamorph. l. 11. principio.
- ft162 -- Apologet. c. 24.
- ft163 -- Hist. l. 5. 1. 15.
- ft164 -- Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 456.
- ft165 -- Apud ib. l. 2. c. 10. p. 38.
- ft166 -- **j l çaw** “et quamvis miserim”, Ar. Interpr. “cum tamen mitterem”, Syr.
- ft167 -- **rswm wj ql al w** “neque acceperunt disciplinam”, Schmidt.
- ft168 -- Bibliothec. Par. 2. l. 20. p. 756.
- ft169 -- **µwqm `yam** “quod, [vel] eo quod nullus (alius. sit) locus”, Munster; “ideo quod non (erie) locus”, Schmidt.

- ft170 -- **tj xn hbçm µl çwry hzh µ[h hbbwç [wdm** “quare avertit hunc populum Hierosolyma aversione pertinaci? [vel] quare avertit populum hunc”, O Jerusalem, “aversio pertinax?” De. Dieu.
- ft171 -- **Pj wç swsk** “quasi equus ferox”, Heb. “inundans”, Piscator; “sisut equus effundens se”, Schmidt. So Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it.
- ft172 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 10. c. 23.
- ft173 -- De. Animal. 1. 3. c. 23.
- ft174 -- Ep. 1. 1. Ep. 7.
- ft175 -- De. Ritu Gent. Septent. 1. 19. c. 11.
- ft176 -- **µyrps rçç j [hç[rççl hnh ^ka** “utique ecce, mendacio operatus est; stylus mendacium scribarum est”, Schmidt. Approved by Reinbeck. De. Accent. Heb. p. 435.
- ft177 -- **µyçrwył** “haeredibus”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft178 -- **µpysa Psa** “eolligendo colligam eos”, Montanus, Tigurine version. So Piscator.
- ft179 -- **hpr̄m** “medelae, [vel] sanationis”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Schmidt.
- ft180 -- **ht[b** “terror”, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt.
- ft181 -- **rkn yl bhb** “in vanitatibus alienigenae”, Montanus; “[sub.] populi”, Vatablus; “dei alieni”, Pagninus So Ben Melech.
- ft182 -- **rbç l [** “super contritione”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “super confractio”, Schmidt; “ob fractionem”, Cocceius.
- ft183 -- **rçç µtçq** “veluti acum falsum”, Munster; “quasi arcum mendacii”, V. L.
- ft184 -- “Et tetenderunt linguam suam, arcus ipsorum mendacium est”, De. Dieu; “qui tendunt linguam suam, arcus eorum est mendacium”, Schmidt. Approved by Reinbeck. De. Accent. Heb. p. 437.
- ft185 -- **wj j bt l a j a l k l [w** “et omni fratri ne fidatis”, Paganinus.
- ft186 -- **bq[y bwq[** “supplantanto supplantat”, Schmidt.
- ft187 -- **hmr̄mb** “ob dolum”, Schmidt.

- ft188 -- **j j wç** “extensa, [vel] tracta”, Vatablus
- ft189 -- T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 30. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft190 -- Jugulans, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft191 -- **pyrhh l** [“super montibus”, Cocceius; “super montes”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft192 -- **hmhb r [d μmçh Pw[m** “ab ave coelorum usque ad bestiam”, Schmidt.
- ft193 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 145. 2. & Gloss. in ib. Vid. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 11. 1, 2.
- ft194 -- Vid. T. Nedarim, fol. 81. 1. & Bava Metzia fol. 85. 1, 2.
- ft195 -- Miss. Cetubot, c. 4. sect. 4.
- ft196 -- Misn. Moed Katon, c. 3. sect. 9.
- ft197 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 60. 2.
- ft198 -- **hdçh ynp l** [“super faciebus agri”, Montanus, Schmidt; “in facie agri”, Cocceius; “in superficie agri”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft199 -- **ytwā [dyw l kçh** “intelligendo et sciendo me”, Montanus.
- ft200 -- **pyab μymy** “dies [sunt] venientes”, Schmidt, Montanus; “venturi sunt”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft201 -- Written about 1750. Editor.
- ft202 -- In Thalia, vel l. 3. c. 8.
- ft203 -- **μkyl** [“super vos”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “de vobis”, Vatablus; “super vobis”, Cocceius.
- ft204 -- Vid. T. Bab. Succa, fol. 29. 1.
- ft205 -- **wtj y yk** “quamvis consterni soleant”, Vatablus.
- ft206 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 156. 1.
- ft207 -- **twqj** “decreta”, Targ.; “statua”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft208 -- Ritus, Vatablus; “ceremoniae”, Tigurine version.

- ft209 -- **awçny awçn** “portando portantur”, Schmidt; “portabitur” Pagninus; “portabuntur”, Montanus; “omnino portanda sunt”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft210 -- **wr [by tj abw** “in hoc uno Munster”, Tigurine version; “et certe in una quadem re obbrutescunt”, Piscator. So Jarchi and Abarbinel.
- ft211 -- The Talmudists seem to take the word **r [b** to have the signification of burning; for the sense of these words being asked, it is replied, there is one thing that burns the wicked in hell; what is it? idolatry; as it is here written, “a doctrine of vanities is the stock.”
- ft212 -- **tma µyhl a** “Deus veritas”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft213 -- **ˆykm** “aptavit”, Cocceius; “preparans”, Schmidt; a **ˆwk** “aptavit, disposuit”, Gussetius.
- ft214 -- **t [dm** “propter scientiam”, Pagninus, Montanus; “a scientia”, Calvin, Grotius, Schmidt.
- ft215 -- **wksn** “tectio, [sive] obductio ejus”, Vatablus.
- ft216 -- **rwxmb ytbçwy** “quae habitas in obsidione”, V. L. Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft217 -- **µhl ytrxhw** “oblidere faciana eos”, some in Vatablus; “et angustabo, [vel] obsidebo eos”, Schmidt; “faciam ut obsideant eos”, Calvin; “arctum ipsis facium”, Cocceius.
- ft218 -- **yrbç I [** “propter confractionem meam”, Cocceius Schmidt,
- ft219 -- **wl ykçh al** “non egerunt prudenter”, Vatablus, Tigurine version; “non intellexerunt”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft220 -- **h [wmç I wq** “vox auditionis”, Pagninus, Montanus; “vox auditis”, Vatablus, Calvin; “vox famae”, Schmidt.
- ft221 -- **wkrd µdal al yk hwhy yt [dy** “novi, Jehovah, quod non sit homini via ejus”, Schmidt; so Vatablus, Cocceius.
- ft222 -- **ynj [mt ˆp** “ne imminuas me”, Munster, Calvin, Cocceius; “ne diminuere facias me”, Pagninus, Montanus; “ne paucum reddas me”, Schmidt.

- ft223 -- **hw̄hy ḥma** “Amen, Domine”, Pagninus: Montanus; “Amen, O Jehovah”, Schmidt, Cocceius.
- ft224 -- **ytd[h d[h** “testificando tesficatus sum”, Schmidt; “contestando contestatus sum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft225 -- **μhyl [aybaw** “et induxi”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; “ideo adduxi”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “et feci ut venirent”, Cocceius.
- ft226 -- Vid. Lightfoot, Chorograph. Cent. ad Matt. p. 34.
- ft227 -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 53. 2.
- ft228 -- **Æt[r yk** “quum adest malum tuum”, Junius & Tremellius; “praesto est”, Piscator; extabit, Cocceius.
- ft229 -- R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 32. 1.
- ft230 -- **Pl a çbkk** “quasi agnus mansuetus”, V. L. “agnus assuefactus”; so some in De. Dieu; “tanquam agnus amicabile”, De. Dieu; “un agneau aimable”, Gallic version.
- ft231 -- **wmj l b ũ htyj çn** “mittamus lignum in panem ejus”, V. L. “corrumpamus veneno cibum”, Pagninus; “corrumpamus lignum in pane ejus”, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin.
- ft232 -- “Rumpamus lignum in earnem ejus”, De. Dieu.
- ft233 -- **hara** “videbo”, Munster, Schmidt; “visurus sum”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft234 -- **μhyl [dq̄p** “visitans super eos”, Montanus, Schmidt; “visito”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Cocceius.
- ft235 -- **μtdq̄p t̄nc̄ εν ενιαυτω επισκεθεως αυτων**, Sept. “anno visitationis eorum”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft236 -- **Æyl a byra yk** “etiamsi contendam tecum”, Cocceius, Gataker.
- ft237 -- **Ætwa r̄bda μyj p̄çm Æa** “verum tamen judicia loquar tecum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft238 -- **μçdq̄hw** “et sanctifica eos”, V. L. Montanus; “segrega”, Piscator; “destina”, Schmidt; “consecra”, Cocceius.
- ft239 -- So Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 564.
- ft240 -- Thus Schmidt, after Luther.

- ft241 -- **al m Æyrj a warq hmh** “illi clamarunt post te plena voce”, V. L. Tigurine version, Calvin; “pleno guttore”, Piscator, Cosceius.
- ft242 -- De. Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 5. sect. 3.
- ft243 -- So V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Jarchi, and Kimchi.
- ft244 -- **[wbx j y] h** “avis digtata”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gusetius; “ales unguibus praedita”, Cocceius.
- ft245 -- Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 11. col. 830, 838, 839.
- ft246 -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 16. 1.
- ft247 -- In Misn. Bava Kama, c. 1. sect. 4.
- ft248 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 6. 2.
- ft249 -- **l k l [** “de omnibus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft250 -- **pytmhrw bwça** “rursus misereat me illorum”, Junius & Tremellius; “rursus miserabor ipsorum”, Piscator; “denuo miserabor ipsorum”, Cocceius.
- ft251 -- **w[mçy** “audierint”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “audient”, Cocceius.
- ft252 -- **pytçp rwza** “cingulum linorum”, Montanus.
- ft253 -- **whabj al µymbw** “sed per aquam non duces eam”, Schmidt.
- ft254 -- **hnqaw** Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft255 -- **trpb** “in Euphrate”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin.
- ft256 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 46. p. 323.
- ft257 -- **tj çn** “corruptum erat”, Munster, Montanus, Schmidt; “computruerat”, Pagninus.
- ft258 -- **l kl j l xy al** “non proficiet omnibus”, Vatablus.
- ft259 -- “Non prosperabitur cuiquam”, Montanus; “ad ullam rem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft260 -- **ˆwag** “excellenciam”, Calvin, Piscator.
- ft261 -- **[dn al [wdyh** “an sciendo non scimus”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Schmidt.

- ft262 -- **dwdl** **µybçyh** “sedentes Davidi”, Montanus, Schmidt, Cocceius; “pro David”, Pagninus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft263 -- **whbgt** **l a** “ne elevetis vos”, Montanus, Pagninus; “exaltetis”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft264 -- **Pçn** **yrh** **l** [“in montibus crepusculi”, Montanus, Piscator; “montibus caecioribus intempesta nocte”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft265 -- See Berosus apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 1. & Contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 19. & Curtius, Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
- ft266 -- T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 5. 2.
- ft267 -- [**mdt** [**mdw** “et lachrymando lachrymabitur”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft268 -- **h**[**md** **yny**[**drtw** “et descendet oculus meus lachrymam”, Montanus, “lachrymis”, Cocceius; “descendere faciet”, Pagninus; “demittet”, Targ.
- ft269 -- **wbç** **wl** **ypçh** “degite humiliter”, Castalio; “abjectissime considite”, Junius & Tremellius; “loco humili considite”, Piscator
- ft270 -- **µymwl** **ç** “perfectionibus”, Vatablus, Montanus. It is by Schmidt left untranslated, “Schelomim”, which he takes to be the city of Jerusalem, sometimes called “Solyma”; the inhabitants of which were carried captive when Judah was; and so Junius and Tremellius translate it; “civita, pacatorum”, and understand it of Jerusalem; which has the signification of peace in its name.
- ft271 -- **Æyl** [**dqpy** **yk** “quando visitabit super te”; Cocceius; “quum visitaverit super te”, Schmidt.
- ft272 -- **Æyl** [**µta** **tdml** **taw** “docuisti istos contra te”, Piscator.
- ft273 -- **Ænw**[**brb** “propter multitudinem iniquitatis tuae”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Schmidt.
- ft274 -- Yoma, c. 3. sect 7.
- ft275 -- In T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 34. 2.
- ft276 -- De. Vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. l. 1. c. 7. sect. 9. p. 150, 151.
- ft277 -- “Andromedam Perseus nigris portarat ab Indis”. De. Arte Atnandi, l. 1.

- ft278 -- Phaleg. l. 4. c. 2. col. 215, 216.
- ft279 -- Vid. Golium, col. 2459, 2460. Castel. col. 2321, 2322.
- ft280 -- Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 17.
- ft281 -- Hierozoic. par 1. l. 3. c. 7. col. 786, 787.
- ft282 -- **wytwrbrbj** “liventee maculas suas”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft283 -- Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 19. Juvenal. Satyr. 15.
- ft284 -- **[rh ydml** “docti malefacere”, Montanus; “edocti malefacere”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “qui edocti estis malum”, Schmidt.
- ft285 -- **rbdm j wrl** “ad ventum deserti”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft286 -- **dw[ytm yrj a yrhj t al** “non mundaberis quousque adhuc, [vel] post quantum adhuc tempus”, Schmidt; “non mundaberis posthac aliquamdiu”; so some in Vatablus.
- ft287 -- **twrxbh yrbd l [** “super verbis, cohibitionum”, Junius & Tremellius; “retentionum”; Tigurine version; “prohibitionum”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft288 -- **htj** “confracta”, Schmidt; “atritam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft289 -- De. Anima. l. 5. c. 56.
- ft290 -- Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 32.
- ft291 -- De. Animal. l. 2. c. 21.
- ft292 -- Hist. Animal. l. 8. c. 8.
- ft293 -- Histor. l. 5. c. 3.
- ft294 -- Damir apud Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 16. col. 878.
- ft295 -- **l arçy hwqm** “expectatio Israel”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft296 -- **rgk** “quasi colonus”, Grotius; “advena”, Gataker.
- ft297 -- **j rak** “tanquam viator”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft298 -- **µhdn** “obmutefactus”, Fosterus, Mercerus,
- ft299 -- **wmxy yk** “quamvis jejunant”, Gataker.

- ft300 -- tma μwl ç “pacem veritatis”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft301 -- rqq̄ w̄zj “visionem mendacii”, Schmidt; “visionem falsitatis”, Montanus.
- ft302 -- hmh “ipsi inquam”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft303 -- μt[r̄ ta “suum malum”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft304 -- hnymdt “sileant”, Schmidt; “taceant”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft305 -- w[dy al w “et non agnoverunt, Supple, ulli eos”, De. Dieu.
- ft306 -- ḃa l a zrj s “nundinantur contra terram”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “mercaturam exercuerunt per terram”, Cocceius.
- ft307 -- ḃa l a rhs “est circuire terram negotiandi causa”, Grotius.
- ft308 -- tsam samh “reprobando reprobasti”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft309 -- Pausanias makes mention of an image of Jupiter Pluvius, and of altars erected to him in various places; Attica, sive l. 1. p. 60. Corinthiaca, sive l. 2. p. 119. Boeotica, sive l. 9. p. 602. and in India, as Apollonius Tyanaeus relates, in Vit. Philostrat. l. 3. c. 2. in fine, was a tub, which in time of drought they opened; from whence, as they pretended, clouds came forth and watered all the country. Near Rome was a stone called Lapis Manalis, which being brought into the city, was said to cause rain. A like fable is told of water being in the forehead of Jupiter Lycaeus, which being shook by an oaken branch in the hand of a priest, gathered clouds, and produced plentiful showers of rain when wanted; but these, with others, are all fables and lies. See Alex. ab Alex Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 16.
- ft310 -- T. Bab Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2.
- ft311 -- twj p̄cm [bra “quatuor familias, [sive] cognationes”, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Calvin.
- ft312 -- bwj sl “ad trahendum”, Calvin, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt; so Ben Melech,
- ft313 -- h[wzl “in commotionem”, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft314 -- “In horrorem”, Cocceius.
- ft315 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 102. 2.

- ft316 -- **Æl μwl çl l waçl** “ad petendum [de] pace tua”, Pagninus; “ad interrogandum te de paca tua”, Piscator; “[sive] prosperitate tua”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft317 -- **wbç al μhykrdm** “et tamen a viis suis non sunt reversi”, V. L. Diodatus, Genevenses.
- ft318 -- **rwj b μα l [** “contra metropolin, juvenem”, Junius & Tremellius, De. Dieu; “contra matrem”, Piscator; “super matrem, juvenem”, Cocceius.
- ft319 -- **twl hbw ry[** “civitatem et terrores”, Montanus; so Schmidt.
- ft320 -- “Vigilem, [vel] vigiles et terrores”, Gataker; “vigilias et terrores”, Coeceius.
- ft321 -- Ab <Arabic> “alteravit, mutavit et turbavit”, Golius, Castel. Schindler.
- ft322 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 88. 1.
- ft323 -- Vid. Jarchi & Abendana in loc.
- ft324 -- **hçpn hj pn** “efflabit animam suam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “expiravit animam suam”, Cocceius.
- ft325 -- **bwj l Ætwrç al μα** “si non absolvero te in bonum”, Schmidt. Vid. De. Dieu in loc.
- ft326 -- **Æb yt [gph awl μα** “sed faciam hostem occurrere tibi”, Calvin: “annon intervenirem pro te apud inimicum?” Junius & Tremellius; “nisi interveniam pro te apud inimicum”, Piscator.
- ft327 -- **ytd[hw** “et servire faciam”.
- ft328 -- “Et adducam inimicos tuos de terra quam nescis”, V. L. “et transire faciam hostes tuos per terram quam nescis”, De. Dieu; so Cocceius.
- ft329 -- **ynj pt Æpa Æral l a** “ne ad longanimitatem tuam adduc me”, De. Dieu; “nec me capias ad dilationem irae tua”, Gussetius.
- ft330 -- **μyqj çm** “ludentium”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; “jocantium”, Vatablus; “hilaria agentium”, Gataker.
- ft331 -- **Æbyça** “restituam te”, Tigurine version.

- ft332 -- **μxyr** [“violentorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt; “fortium”, V. L.
- ft333 -- **μyal j t ytwmm** “mortibus aegrotationum”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, “aegritudium”, Munster, Vatablus; “mortibus morborum”, Schmidt. So Stockius, p. 340, 597, who restrains it to the death of individuals by the pestilence.
- ft334 -- <Arabic> “magna et vehementi voce praeditus”, Golius ex Giggeio, col. 979.
- ft335 -- So the word is used in the Chaldee language: as Schindler observes in Lex. col. 1722.
- ft336 -- **wsrpy al w** “et non expandent, [sub.] manus suas”, Vatablus, Montanus; “extendent”, Pagninus, Calvin. So Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft337 -- “Non dividunt”, Tigurine version; “neque impertientur, [sub.] cibum”, Junius & Tremellius; “partientur panem”, Piscator; “neque cibum dabunt”, Schmidt. So Jarchi, Joseph Kimchi, and Abarbinel.
- ft338 -- **hl ah μyrbdh l k** “omnes res hasce”, Gataker, Piscator.
- ft339 -- **hnyj μkl ˆta al** “non dabo vobis gratiam”, Cocceius, Schmidt; “non dederō vobis gratiam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft340 -- T. Bab Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.
- ft341 -- So Noldius, Concord. Ebr. p. 507.
- ft342 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 87. 1.
- ft343 -- Vid. Joseph de Bello Jud. 1. 7. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft344 -- **hnwçar ytml çw** “sed reddum primum”.
- ft345 -- **hnwçar** “ab initio” Calvin; “initio”, Montanus.
- ft346 -- Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 6. c. 11, col. 842. of which stone, see Dioseorides, Hesychius, & Stephanus in ib.
- ft347 -- **μtwj bzm μhybn rkzk** “sicut recordantur filiorum suorum, ita recordantur ararum suarum”; so some in Vatablus.
- ft348 -- So in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 63. 2. & Gloss in ib.
- ft349 -- **Æbw** “qui [sunt] apud te”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft350 -- “Per te”, Piscator.

- ft351 -- **Æytl j nm htj mçw** “ita intermissionen facies”, Junius & Tremellius; so Schmidt.
- ft352 -- Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 21. & l. 16. c. 26. & l. 24. c. 9.
- ft353 -- Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 7.
- ft354 -- **l km** “de omnibus”, vid. Noldium, p. 548.
- ft355 -- **awh çnaw** “et immedicabili malo affectum”, Gussetius; “incurabiliter aegrum”, Cocceius.
- ft356 -- **rgd** “collegit”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; “collegit”, Montanus, Schmidt; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 82. 1.
- ft357 -- Hierozoicon, par. 2. l. 1. c. 12. col. 81.
- ft358 -- Vid. Frantz. Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 2. c. 11. p. 414.
- ft359 -- **hwqm**, the word here used, sometimes signifies a confluence or collection of waters, as in (^{QOHIO}Genesis 1:10) and elsewhere, a place to bathe in; hence Fortunatus Scacchus, in Sacror. Eleaochr. Myrothec. l. 1. c. 23. col. 159. renders it here, “the bath of Israel”, the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood is a fountain opened, in which sinners wash, and are cleansed from their sins, Zech. xiii. 1. and this agrees with the latter part of the verse, where the Lord is called “the fountain of living water”; so De. Dieu, on ch. xiv. 8, observes, the word is so used in Exod. vii. 21. and so R. Akiba interprets the words, saying, “what is “the meaning of **hwqm**? it is that which cleanses the unclean; even so God cleanses Israel;” and it is, adds De. Dieu, as if you were to call God the pool of Israel, or a confluence of waters where Israel may be washed from his filth.
- ft360 -- “Castigati a me”, Schmidt; so Stockius, p. 455, 725, Junius & Tremellius follow the same reading, only they render the words, not so properly, “castigationes meae”.
- ft361 -- **yl a pyrma hmh hnh** “ecce illi sunt dicentes ad me”, Schmidt.
- ft362 -- **Æyrj a h[rm ytxa al ynaw** “ego autem non festinavi ut essem pastor post te”, Calvin; “et me (quod attinet) non ursi [esse] pastor post te”, Noldius, p. 567.
- ft363 -- **µkytwçpnb** “in animabus vestris”, Calvin, Montanus, Schmidt.

- ft364 -- **μτçdq** “sanctificate”, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft365 -- **w[mç al** “non audiverunt”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft366 -- **μpr[ta wçqyw** “sed obturarunt cervicem suam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “indurarunt”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft367 -- **rswm** “discliplinam”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft368 -- **hyhw** “tamen erit”, Gataker; “erit autem”, Cocceius.
- ft369 -- **^w[mçt [mç** “audiendo audiveritis”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft370 -- **μl w[l hbçyw** “et inhabitabitur in seculum”, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft371 -- Misna Sheviith, c 9. sect. 2.
- ft372 -- Hieros. Sheviith, foI. 38. 4.
- ft373 -- **çb abw** “et intretis per portas”, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft374 -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2.
- ft375 -- **μynbah l [επι των λιψων**, Sept. “super lapide, [vel] typo”, Calvin.
- ft376 -- Apud Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc.
- ft377 -- “Lapideos typos”, Calvin; “super formas”, Montanus.
- ft378 -- Chambers’s Cyclopaedia, in the word “Pottery”.
- ft379 -- **rxwyh dyb rmj k hç[awh rça yl kh tj çnw** “sed corruptum est vas quod ille ficiens (erat) sicut lutum (solet) in manu figuli”, Schmidt, Montanus. So Abarbinel; and thus it is read in the margin of our Bibles.
- ft380 -- **rbda [gr** “momento loquor”, Schmidt; “momento eloquor”, Junius & Tremellius; “momento ut loquutus fuero”, Tigurine version.
- ft381 -- **wtwa byj yhl** “ad benefaciendum ei”, Montanus; “ut benefacerem ei”, Valablus, Pagninus; “benefacturum ei”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft382 -- **hdwhy çya l a** “ad virum Jehudah”, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt.

- ft383 -- **wrmaw** “sed dixerunt”, Schmidt; “sed dicunt”, Piscator.
- ft384 -- **wnbl gl ç ydç rwxm bwz[yh** “nunquid deserit aliquis [aquam manatem] de petra agri, [ut biblat] nivem Libani”; so some in Vatablus.
- ft385 -- **µyrz µym** “aquae alienae”, Schmidt, Montanus; “peregrinae”, De Dieu.
- ft386 -- **ynj kç yk** “quod obliti sunt”, Schmidt.
- ft387 -- **wrj qy awçl** “frustra adolebunt, [vel] adolent”, Pagninus, Calvin.
- ft388 -- **µl w[yl ybç** “semitae [quae a] seculo, [seu] antiquo”, vid. Schmidt; so Targum; “semitis jam olim praescriptis”, Piscator.
- ft389 -- **wçl b** “in lingua”, Montanus, Castalio.
- ft390 -- Propter “linguam istam”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft391 -- **wyrbd l k l a** “ad omnia verba ejus”, Gataker; “ad universa verba ejus”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft392 -- **brj ydy l [** “super manus gladii”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft393 -- **twm ygrh wyhy** “occisi morte”, Pagninus, Montanus, “i.e. peste” Schmidt; “occisi mortis”, Cocceius.
- ft394 -- T. Bab. Kama, fol. 16. 2.
- ft395 -- **Æynpl µyl çkm wyhw** “propellantur in offendiculum coram te”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “offensi ruant coram te”, Cocceius.
- ft396 -- **çrj rxwy qbqb tynqw** “emas, [vel] emitto oenophorum a figulo testaceum”, Munster, Tigurine version. So Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft397 -- Vid. Stockium, p. 150.
- ft398 -- **tysrj h r[ç** “portae fictilis”, Munster, Pagninus.
- ft399 -- “Portae solaris”, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius; so Ben Melech, and Stockius, p. 389.
- ft400 -- **µyab µymy** “dies (sunt) venientes”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft401 -- **qbqb & ytqbw**.
- ft402 -- De. Bello Jud. I. 6. c. 3. sect. 4.

- ft403 -- **hprj l** “sanari”, Montanus; “curari”, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft404 -- **μyamj h** “quae pollutae sunt”, Gataker.
- ft405 -- **tpthm**.
- ft406 -- **rwj çp [mçyw** “audivit autem”, Paschchurus, Schmidt; “audiens autem”, Paschhur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft407 -- **hwhy tybb** “in domo Jehovae”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft408 -- **çp** “abundantiam”, & **rwj** liberum sonat”, Hiller. Onomast. Sacr. p. 302. Paschchur, “auctus libertate”, ib. p. 904.
- ft409 -- **tpaw hwhy yntytp** “Domine si ego sim seductus, tu es qui me seduxit”, Genevenses; “pellexisti me, quando plectus sum”, Junius & Tremellius; sic Syr. “tu decepisti me, si deceptus sim; quidam” in Gataker.
- ft410 -- “Persuasisti mihi, O Jehovah, et persuasus sum”, Luther, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft411 -- **q[za rbda ydm** “quum loquor exclamavi, i.e. loquor exclamans”, Gataker.
- ft412 -- **arqa** “clamo”, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius; “proclamo”, Piscator.
- ft413 -- **rbd hyh yk** “quamvis”.
- ft414 -- “Verum, verbum Domini”, so some in Vatablus; “utique”, De. Dieu, Gataker.
- ft415 -- **ybl b hyhw** “atqui est”, Junius & Tremellius; “et exstitit”, Piscator; “sed factum est in corde meo”, Schmidt.
- ft416 -- **yml ç çwna l k** “omnis homo pacis meae”, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt; “omnes viri pacis meae”, Munster, Vatablus.
- ft417 -- **wl ykçh al yk** “quia non prudenter egerunt”, Montanus, Piscator; “prudenter agunt”, Calvin.
- ft418 -- “Erubescet valde, quia non prosperabuntur, ignominia aeterna non obliviscenda”, De. Dieu.

- ft419 -- “Pudefient, quod non profecerint, ignominia perpetuitatis (quae) non tradetur oblivioni”, Schmidt.
- ft420 -- **ybyr ta ytyl g** “revelavi causam meam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. So Schmidt.
- ft421 -- So it is supplied by Grotius and Schmidt.
- ft422 -- **μl w[trh hmj rw** “et ejus uterus, conceptus perpetuus”, Munster; “et vulva ejus, conceptio perpetua”, Pagninus, “et vulva ejus praegnans perpetuo”, Vatablus.
- ft423 -- **wnd[b an çrd** “interroga nunc pro nobis”, Vatablus: Pagninus; “inquire nunc”, Montanus.
- ft424 -- **ry[h ybçwy ta** “manentes in hac urbe”, Gataker.
- ft425 -- **Æl m tybl** “domui regis”, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Schmidt.
- ft426 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 1.
- ft427 -- Ib. fol. 7. 2.
- ft428 -- **Æyl a ymh** “ecce ego ad te”, Munster, Montanus.
- ft429 -- “Ecce tibi dico”, Strigelius; so Luther.
- ft430 -- “Ecce ad te venio”, Pagninus; so Kimchi.
- ft431 -- Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 1.
- ft432 -- **rma hk** “haec dixit”, Grotius; “sic dixit”, Schmidt.
- ft433 -- **rbdh ta wç[t wç[μα yk** “si namque faciendo feceritis verbum hoc”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft434 -- **Æl m tyb l [** “de domo regis”, Cocceius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft435 -- **wnbl h çar yl hta d[l g** “velut Gilead, ut caput Libani”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft436 -- **Ætyça al μα** “si non posuero te”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft437 -- **ytçdqw** “sanctificabo”, V. L. Montanus, Cocceius.

- ft438 -- **wyl kw çya** “virum et arma ejus”, Vulg. Lat. Vatablus; “virum et instrumenta ejus”, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft439 -- **wrmaw** “respondebitur”, Gataker; “dicetur”, Piscator.
- ft440 -- **wkb wkb** “deplorate deplorando”, Schmidt; “flete flendo”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft441 -- **µnj db[y wh[rb** “qui socium suum servire facit gratis”, Schmidt; “amici sui servitutum exigenti gratis”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft442 -- **wl ^ty al wl [pw** “et opus ejus non dabit ei”, Montanus; “mercedem operis”, Pagninus.
- ft443 -- **twdm tyb** “domum mensurarum”, Vatablus, Montanus, Calvin, Schmidt.
- ft444 -- **µyj wrm** “perflabilia”, Piscator; “vento exposita”, Vatablus, Montanus.
- ft445 -- **ynwl j wl [rqw** “et lacerat sibi fenestras meas”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft446 -- Nat. Hist. l. 35. c. 6.
- ft447 -- Geograph. l. 12. p. 373.
- ft448 -- Pagninus, Tigurine version, Castalio.
- ft449 -- Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 1179. So Castel Lex. Polyglott. col. 3664.
- ft450 -- Chambers’s Cyclopaedia, in the words “Cinnabar” and “Vermilion”.
- ft451 -- **rççb j wçm** “ungendo in minio”, Montanus; “uncta est minio”, Vatablus, Calvin; “ungit minio”, Cocceius.
- ft452 -- So Buxtorf, Gussetius, Stockius.
- ft453 -- Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 9.
- ft454 -- **wl bwj za** “ideo bene fuit ei”; so Noldius renders the particle, Concord. Par. Ebr. p. 7.
- ft455 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 6. sect. 3.
- ft456 -- **µl çwry yr[çl hal hm Æl çhw** “et projiciendo procul ultra portas Hierosolymae”, Schmidt. So Grotius and Gataker.

- ft457 -- **Æytwl çb** “in tranquillitatibus fuis”, Vatablus, Cocceius, Schmidt; “felicitatibus tuis”, Pagninus; “securitatibus tuis”, Montanus.
- ft458 -- Maundrell’s Journey from Aleppo, etc. p. 142, 143. Thevenot’s Travels, part 1. B. 2. c. 60. p. 221.
- ft459 -- **ytnj n hm** “quam gratiam habuisti, [vel] quomodo precata es”, Vatablus; “quam afficieris gratia”, Piscator; “quantum gratiae invenies”, Schmidt.
- ft460 -- Vid. Alexand. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 1. 2. c. 19.
- ft461 -- **μç bwçl μçpn ta μyaçnm** “elevant animam suam”, Vatablus, Pagninus; “tollunt animam suam ut revertantur eo”, Schmidt.
- ft462 -- **μyab μymy** “dies sunt venientes”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft463 -- Bemidbar Rabba, parash. 18. fol. 223. 2.
- ft464 -- **l ykçhw** “et prudenter aget”, Calvin, Tigurine version; “aget intelligenter”, Montanus.
- ft465 -- **warqy rça wmc hzw** “hoc nomen ejus est quo vocabit eum Israel”, Junius & Tremellius; “quo vocabit eum unusquisque”, Piscator.
- ft466 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1. R. Saadiah Gaon in Daniel vii. 13. R. Albo, Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 28. Abarbinel, Mashmiah Jeshuah. fol. 35. 2. Caphtor fol. 87. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 75. 2. Kimchi in loc. & in Ezek. xlvi. 35. & Ben Melech in loc.
- ft467 -- **μyab μymy** “dies venientes”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft468 -- This was written about 1730. Although the Jews are now in their land, they remain in unbelief to this present time and this prophecy will yet have a more complete future fulfillment. Editor.
- ft469 -- T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 12. 2.
- ft470 -- **μyabnl** “ad prophetas”, V. L. “quod ad prophetat ipsos”, Junius & Tremellius; “ad prophetas quod attinet”, Piscator.
- ft471 -- So Kimchi and Ben Melech. **wrb** [“pertransivit”, Vatablus, Montanus; “super quem transiit vinum”, Pagninus, Calvin; “penetravit”, Schmidt.
- ft472 -- Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 9.

- ft473 -- **ḱ al** “non sic”, Montanus; “dissimilis”, V. L.
- ft474 -- **μτρωβγ** “violentia eorum”. So the margin of our Bible.
- ft475 -- **wpnj** “hypocritae fuerunt”, Vatablus, Montanus; “hypocritas agunt”, Piscator; “hypocrisin exercent”, Schmidt, Cocceius.
- ft476 -- **hl pt** “insulsitatem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt; “intulsa”, Pagninus; “insulsam rem”, Munster, Vatablus; “insulsum”, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft477 -- So Schmidt.
- ft478 -- **l [bb, δια τον βααλ**, Sept. “per Baalem”, Schmidt. So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft479 -- **hrwr [ç a r [ç**, “pilus”.
- ft480 -- “Turpitudinem”, Munster, Montanus.
- ft481 -- **Pwan** “adulterando”, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt.
- ft482 -- **rqçb Æl hw** “et eundo in mendacio”, Schmidt; “et ambulando in falsitate”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft483 -- **hpnj** “hypocrisis”, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft484 -- **aryw** “et vidit”, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “qui videat”, Schmidt.
- ft485 -- **haxy hmh hwhy tr [s hnh** “ecce turbo Domini exandescencia”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; “en procella Jehovae! ira exivit”, Schmidt.
- ft486 -- **l wj y** “manebit”, Montanus, Cocceius; “permanebit”, Junius & Tremellius; “residebit”, Targ. “requiescet”, Syr.
- ft487 -- **μymyh tyrj ab** “in extremo dierum”, Cocceius; “in extremitate dierum”, Calvin, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft488 -- **hnyb hb wngwbtt** “intelligetis hoc inteliigentia”, Calvin, Gataker.
- ft489 -- **brqm** “e propinquo”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “vel propinquus”, Schmidt.
- ft490 -- **wrma** “dicunt”, Calvin, Cocceius.

- ft491 -- **ytm d[** “quousque?” Cocceius, Schmidt; “quousque tandem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “usque quando?” De. Dieu.
- ft492 -- **myabnh bl b çyh** “an est in corde prophetarum?”, De. Dieu, Gataker, Schmidt.
- ft493 -- **l [bb** “per Baalem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft494 -- **mwł j rpsy** “narret [ut] somnium”, Grotius, Gataker, Schmidt.
- ft495 -- **wta yrbd rçaw** “et penes quem est verbum meum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “at cum quo est verbum meum”, Schmidt; **καὶ ἐν ὡ ο λογος μου προς αυτον**, Sept.
- ft496 -- **tma** “vere”, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius; “veritate”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft497 -- **tma yrbd rbdy** “narret meum verbum veritatem, quod est veritas”, Kimchi, Ben Melech, Abarbinel.
- ft498 -- “Loquatur verbum meum sicuti est”, Schmidt.
- ft499 -- **yrbd** “verba mea”, Munster, Pagnius, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft500 -- **myj qwl h** “hic pro” **myqyl j mh** “qui lenificant linguam suam”, Pagninus, Gataker; “sumentes blandam linguam suam”, Schmidt.
- ft501 -- Animadv. in Job. p. 144.
- ft502 -- **açm hm ta myhl a trmaw** “dicito ad eos quodnam onus sit”, Schmidt. So the Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft503 -- **wrbd çyal hyhy açmh yk** “quia onus erit unicuique verbum suum”, Schmidt; “[vel] verbum ejus, nempe, Dei”, Dieu.
- ft504 -- **açn ytyçn** “forgetting I will forget”, and **açm** “a burden”.
- ft505 -- Annales Vet. Test. p. 123.
- ft506 -- Vol. 21. p. 60,
- ft507 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
- ft508 -- Scripture Chronology, p. 678.
- ft509 -- **[rm** “prae pravitate”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; “prae malitia”, Schmidt.

- ft510 -- T. Bab. Erubim, fol. 21. 2.
- ft511 -- **ryka** “cognoscam”, V. L. Gataker.
- ft512 -- **yl a wbc̣y yk** “quum reversi fuerint ad me”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft513 -- Annales Vet. Test. p. 119.
- ft514 -- See Prideaux’s Connexion, par. 1. B. 2. p. 130.
- ft515 -- Vid. Witsii Exercitatio. 11. in Miscel. Sacr. tom. 2. p. 282, 283.
- ft516 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 28. p. 81.
- ft517 -- Herodot. 1. 2. c. 157.
- ft518 -- Vid. Prideaux, Connexion, part 1. B. 1. p. 34.
- ft519 -- **hap yxwxq l k** “universis qui attonsi sunt in comam”, V. L. “barbitonsis”, Syr.
- ft520 -- Nat. Hist. I. 6. c. 28.
- ft521 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 596, 597, 598, 611.
- ft522 -- <Arabic>, “celer fuit, celeriter processit”, Golius, col. 2676.
- ft523 -- **whwn l [** “in habitaculo suo”, Junius & Tremellius; “vel [ex habitaculo]”, Gataker, Schmidt.
- ft524 -- **hn[y ddyh** “heded respondebit”, Schmidt; “ceusma respondebit”, Gataker.
- ft525 -- **rçb l kl awh j pçn** “judicium subibit ipse cum omni carne”, Tigurine version.
- ft526 -- **ða ytkrym** “a lateribus terrae”, Schmidt; “a finibus terrae”, Vatablus.
- ft527 -- **µy[rh ^m swnm dbaw** “et peribit fuga a pastoribus”, V. L. “effugiumperibit”, Schmidt; “perfugium”, Cocceius.
- ft528 -- **hnwyh** “gladii opprimentis”, Junius & Tremellius; “gladii abripientis”, Piscator. So Gataker and Ben Melech.
- ft529 -- R. David Gantz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 4. 1. Vid. Lydium, de Revelation Militare, l. 3. c. 7. p. 83, 84.
- ft530 -- Vid. Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 92, 107. Ed. Rhodoman.

- ft531 -- R. Azarias, Meor, Enayim, c. 21. fol. 89. 2. Vid Selden, De. Dieu, Syris, l. 2. c. 3. p. 275.
- ft532 -- Annales Vet. Test. p. 118.
- ft533 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 9.
- ft534 -- Vol. 21. p. 58.
- ft535 -- **bçj ykna rça** “quod ego (sum) cogitans”, Schmidt.
- ft536 -- **l a** “ad Jeremiam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft537 -- **hzh çyal twm j pçm** “judieium mortis est viro huic”, V. L. Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus; “reatus mortis”, etc. Schmidt.
- ft538 -- Vid. Nicolai de Sepulchris Heb. c. 3. p. 126.
- ft539 -- Apud Joseph. contra Apion. I. 1. sect. 20. p. 1344.
- ft540 -- Praepar. Evangel. I. 9. c. 40. p. 455.
- ft541 -- Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. I. 9. c. 41. p. 457.
- ft542 -- **awh µg** “etiam illud, [vel] ipsum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft543 -- Concord. Ebr. Partic. p. 143. No. 677.
- ft544 -- Philolog. Sacr. l. 4. p. 625.
- ft545 -- **µymy µytnç dw[b** “in adhuc duobis anois dierum”, Montanus; “intra adhuc biennium dierum”, Schmidt; “intra biennium dierum”, Cocceius.
- ft546 -- T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 41. 2. &, 42. 1.
- ft547 -- **¶ tj wm** “lora lignea”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft548 -- **hl wgh l kl** “universae migrationi”, Schmidt; “omni transmigratiōni”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft549 -- **µyçnal** “viris”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft550 -- **h[ri al w** “et non in malum”, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft551 -- **hwqtw tyrj a** “mercedem et quidem expectatam”, Piscator; so Ben Melech.
- ft552 -- “Posteritatem et spem”, Schmidt.

- ft553 -- rma hk yk “nam sic ait”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; “ideo”, Calvin; “ita namque”, Schmidt.
- ft554 -- “Scitote quod”, Vatablus.
- ft555 -- ןר [çh ןרnatk “tanquam ficus horrendas”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Stockius, p. 1129.
- ft556 -- ןרhrj a ytpdrw “et persequar post eos”, Calvin, Piscator.
- ft557 -- h[wzl “in commotionem”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft558 -- R. Gedaliah Shalsholet Hakabala, fol. 80. 1.
- ft559 -- ןl q “combussit”, Pagninus; “ustulavit”, Munster; so Ben Melech says the word signifies “burning”.
- ft560 -- Martin Hist. Sinic. p. 257.
- ft561 -- hl bn “stultitiam”, V. L. Schmidt.
- ft562 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin. fol. 93. 1.
- ft563 -- ןml j nh “quasi” ןl wj “somniator somniorum”, Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft564 -- ןdyqp “inspectores”, Cocceius, Gataker.
- ft565 -- çya l kl “adversus omnem virum”, Calvin; “contra omnem virum”, Schmidt.
- ft566 -- Vid. Hottinger. Smegma Orientale, l. 1. c. 7. p. 190.
- ft567 -- ayh hkra “longum est”, Pagninus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft568 -- hrs “apostasiam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “recessionem”, Schmidt.
- ft569 -- Æyl a ytrbd rça “quibus alloquor te”, Junius & Tremellius; “quae locutus fuero ad te”, Piscator.
- ft570 -- “Gentes dicturae sunt”, Vatablus.
- ft571 -- ^wqryl “in speciem morbi regii”, Junius & Tremellius; “in morbum regium”, Piscator.
- ft572 -- [çwy hnmmw “ideo ex eo servabitur”, Schmidt.

- ft573 -- R. Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 28. Abarbinel in loc. & in Mashmiah Jeshuab, fol. 35. 4.
- ft574 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.
- ft575 -- **j pçml** “in iudicio”, Pagninus, Montanus; “secundum, [vel] juxta iudicium”, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft576 -- **rwzml** “compressioni”, Junius & Tremellius; “ad compressionem”, Gataker.
- ft577 -- Misna Sota, c. 9. sect. 9.
- ft578 -- **ˆkl** “verumtamen, [vel] nihilominus”, Gataker. So Kimchi and Abarbinel.
- ft579 -- **Æl hkra hl [a** “adducam tibi emplastrum longum”, so some in Gataker; “faciam ut ad justam constitutionem assurgas”, Junius & Tremellius; “ut assurgat sanitas tibi”, Piscator; “nam faciam ut ascendat tibi proceritas”, Cocceius.
- ft580 -- **hl t l [** “colle suo”, Vatablus.
- ft581 -- **wj pçm l [** “secundum jus suum”, Vatablus; “ut oportet habitabitur”, Cocceius.
- ft582 -- **wr [xy al w pytdbkhw** “et honorabo eos, et non evilescent”, Montanus; “neque parvi habebuntur aut vilescent”, De. Dieu.
- ft583 -- **wryda** “praestans ejus”, Montanus.
- ft584 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.
- ft585 -- Midrash Tillim apud Galatin. de Cathot. Ver. l. 10. c. 1. p. 648.
- ft586 -- “Magnificus ejus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “dux ejus”, V. L. “magnificus dux ejus”, Munster, Tigurine version; “Rex eorum”, Syr.
- ft587 -- “Fortis ejus”, Pagninus; “potens ejus”, Schmidt.
- ft588 -- **dsj Æytkçm ˆk l [** “protraxi tibi misericordiam”, Vatablus; “protraxi, [vel] extendi ad te clementiam”, Calvin; “extendo erga te benignitatem”, Junius & Tremellius; “meam”, Piscator.
- ft589 -- Antiqu. Jud. l. 13. c. 2. sect. 3.
- ft590 -- **pywgh çarb** “in cacumine gentium”, Castalio; “in capite gentium”, Pagninus, Montanus.

- ft591 -- w[ymçh “auditum facite”, Pagninus, Montanus; “audiri facite”, Schmidt.
- ft592 -- μynwnj tb “cum beneficiis”, Tigurine version, Gataker; so Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft593 -- μym yl j n l a “ad torrentes, vel fluvios aquarum”, Munster, Tigurine version, Calvin, Cocceius; “ad fontes aquarum”, Schmidt.
- ft594 -- μnwgym “post moerorem suum”, Catakter.
- ft595 -- wnnya yk “quia non ipse”, Vatablus; “vel non ille” i.e. “non sit ullus”, Schmidt.
- ft596 -- Ætyrj al “posteris tuis”, Gataker; “posteritati tuae”, Schmidt.
- ft597 -- yt[mç [wmç “audiendo audiui”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft598 -- dml al “non instructus”, Munster; “non doctus”, Montanus.
- ft599 -- y[dwh ydj aw “et postquam ostensum est mihi”, Pagninus, Vatablus; “ostensum fuerit”, Junius & Tremellius; “et post notum est mihi”, Montanus.
- ft600 -- yl ryqy ^bh “nonne filius pretiosus mihi?” Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft601 -- μy[wç[ç dl y μα “nonne natus deliciarum?” Montanus; “unum natus deliciarum?” Schmidt.
- ft602 -- dw[wnrkza rkz “recordando recordabor ejus iterum”, Schmidt; so Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; “recordor”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft603 -- μyrwrmt “columnulas”, Schmidt; “pyramidas”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “palmulas”, Tigurine version, “a rmt palma”.
- ft604 -- ^yqmj tt ytm d[“quamdiu fatua eris?” Majus apud Stockium, p. 358.
- ft605 -- <Arabic> “mente laboravit, stultus fuit”, Golius, col. 653. “et dementer, more fatui egit”, Camus & Giggeius apud Castel. col. 1289. Arab. qmj “fatuatus, nugatus fuit, ineptiit”, Schindler, col. 603.
- ft606 -- Vid. Erlmanni, “novum omnium novorum”, etc. ad Jer. xxxi. 22. in Thesaur. Dissert. Theolog. Philolog. tom 1. p. 851.

- ft607 -- Zohar in Gen. tom. 13. 4.
- ft608 -- In Abarbinel. Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 37. 4.
- ft609 -- Apud Moses Hadarsan in Gen. c. 41. Vid. Galatin. de Arcanis Cath. Ver. 1. 7. c. 14. p. 52, 526.
- ft610 -- See my book of the "Prophecies of the Messiah", etc. p. 100, 101.
- ft611 -- **ytywrh** "inebriavi", V. L. Vatablus; "inebriabo", Piscator.
- ft612 -- **ytal m** "implebo", Schmidt; "explebo", Piscator; "explevero", Junius & Tremellius; "implevero", Cocceius.
- ft613 -- **pyab** "venientes", Montanus, Schmidt; "venturi sunt", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft614 -- Abendana, not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.
- ft615 -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 3. 2.
- ft616 -- Zohar in Lev. fol. 10. 1. & 24. 3. and on Numb. fol. 54. 4. Vid. Chizuk Emunah, p. 51.
- ft617 -- **pyh [gr** "quiescere cogit mare, etsi fluctus ejus fremuerunt", Gussetius, p. 778. So some in Gataker; "quo mari interminante sedantur fluctus ejus", Syr. Interpr.
- ft618 -- **wdgn** "ante ipsam", Tigurine version, Gataker
- ft619 -- "Coram eo", Pagninus, Montanus; "coram ipso", Calvin.
- ft620 -- De. Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 12. sect. 2.
- ft621 -- Travels, par. 1. ch. 39. p. 189.
- ft622 -- Florus, 1. 2. c. 6.
- ft623 -- **rpsb btkaw** "et scripsi in libro", V. L. Munster, Pagninus, Montanus; "in libello", Cocceius.
- ft624 -- **pyrpsh ta** "libellos hos", Cocceius, Schmidt; "literas has", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft625 -- **wnqy** "ementur", Cocceius, Piscator; "vedentur", Schmidt.
- ft626 -- **Æmm al py** "non est absconditum a te quicquam", Pagninus; "non potest occultari tibi ulla res", Junius & Tremellius.

- ft627 -- “Non mirabile est prae te ullun verbum”, Schmidt; “non est ulla res abscondita a te, sive mirabile”, Calvin; “non mirificabitur a te ullum verbum”, Montanus.
- ft628 -- **trma htaw** “tu vero nihilominus dicis mihi”, Piscator; “tu tamen dixisti ad me, Domime Jehovah”, Schmidt.
- ft629 -- **hntn ry[hw** “cum tamen urbs tradenda sit”, Schmidt; “quum tamen futurum sit”, Piscator; “quum civitas ipsa traditur”, Junius & Tremellius; “cum tamen urbs tradita sit”, Cocceius.
- ft630 -- **rbd l k al py ynmh** “celabitur, [vel] occultabitur”, Vatablus; “an mihi occultari possit ultra res”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft631 -- “Num prae me mirabile erit ullum verbum”, Schmidt; “nunquid a me mirificabitur omne verbum”, Montanus.
- ft632 -- **hdkl w** “ut capiat eam”, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt.
- ft633 -- **pytbh taw** “imprimis domos”, Schmidt; “nempe domos”, Piscator.
- ft634 -- **ytmj l [w ypa l [** “super naso meo, et super ira mea fuit mihi civitas haec”, Montanus; “in furore meo, et in ira mea”, Pagninus, Vatablus.
- ft635 -- **rswm** “disciplinam”, Cocceius; i.e. “correctionem”, Schmidt.
- ft636 -- **aygb rça l [bh twmb** “quae in valle”, Montanus; “excelsa Baal qui erat in valle”, Calvin.
- ft637 -- **kl ht[w** “attamen num ideo”, Schmidt.
- ft638 -- **μç pytj dh rça** “quo dispulero eos”, Schmidt; “quo depulero ipsos”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft639 -- **tmab** “in veritate”, Calvin, Cocceius, Schmidt; “in terra hac firma”, Junius & Tremellius; “in terra hac firma”, Grotius.
- ft640 -- **hdçh hnqmw** “et [vel] tum emetur ager”, Cocceius, Schmidt; “tum comparabitur ager”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft641 -- **twrxb** “munita”, Vatablus, Paganinus, Montanus; “fortia”, Tigurine version.

- ft642 -- **twrxn** “abstrusa”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “recondita”, so some in Vatablus.
- ft643 -- **brj h l aw twl l sh l a** “ad aggeres et vastitatem”, Tigurine version; “in missilia catapultaria, et in gladium”, Junius & Tremellius; “ad catapultas, et ad gladium”, so some in Calvin.
- ft644 -- “Bisque die numerant, alter pecus, alter et haedos”. Virgil.
- ft645 -- **uyab** “venientes”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft646 -- **bwj h rbdh** “verbum bonum”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft647 -- “Verbum optimum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft648 -- Abarbinel, Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 40. 2.
- ft649 -- **wnqdx hwhy wl arqy rça hzw** “et iste qui vocabit eam [est] Dominus nostra justitia”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; “hic est ille qui vocabit eam, [ad se], Jehova justitia nostra”, Gussetius.
- ft650 -- “Et hoc est [nomen] quo vocabit [eum] ille, Jehovah nostra justitia”. So some in Vatablus.
- ft651 -- **çya dwdl trky al** “non excindetur Davidi vir”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft652 -- Antiqu. Jud. 1. 10. c. 8. sect. 7.
- ft653 -- Vid. T. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 1.
- ft654 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 28. 2.
- ft655 -- T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 1.
- ft656 -- Vid. Kirehman. de Fuuer. Roman. 1. 3. c. 5.
- ft657 -- “Sub. myropolae”, Munster; “aromata odorata, sive res odoriferas”, Vatablus; “ustiones odorum”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft658 -- Histor. 1. 5. c. 5.
- ft659 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 28. p. 81.
- ft660 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 74.
- ft661 -- Hilchot Abadim, c. 2. sect. 2.
- ft662 -- Hilchot Abadim, c. 2. sect. 2.

- ft663 -- Ibid.
- ft664 -- **Æl rkmy** “se ventdiderit tibi”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft665 -- Hilchot Abadim, c. 1. sect. 1, 2. & c. 2. sect. 1.
- ft666 -- **Æm[m** “acuta te”, Schmidt.
- ft667 -- **μwyh mta wbçtw** “jam, [vel] et quidem conversi fuistis hodie”, Schmidt; “reversi quidem vos hodie”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft668 -- **μçpnl** “in animam suam”, Pagninus, Montanus; “secundum animam eorum”, Piscator; “ad desiderium suum”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft669 -- **h[wzl** “in commotionem”, Vatablus, Cocceius, Schmidt, “commotioni”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft670 -- Contra Julian, l. 10. apud Grotium in Gen. xv. 17.
- ft671 -- Zenobius apud 10.
- ft672 -- **μηρους τ εξεταμον ----- διπτυχα ποιησαντες, επ αυτων δ ωμοψετησαν.** Iliad 1. v. 461, 462.
- ft673 -- De. Inventione, l. 2. sect. 20.
- ft674 -- “Armati Jovis ante aram, paterasque tenentes Stabant, et caesa jungebant foedera poreia”. Aeneid. l. 8.
- ft675 -- Hist. l. 1. p. 14.
- ft676 -- **dybw** “in manum, inquam, exercitus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft677 -- **tyb l a** “ad familiam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft678 -- Temple-Service, c. 9. p. 1063.
- ft679 -- **ˆyy htçn al** “non hibimus vinum”, Vatablus, Schmidt.
- ft680 -- Elench. Trihaeres. Serrar. c. 24.
- ft681 -- Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 730. Ed. Rhod.
- ft682 -- **bdnwy l çya trky al** “non exidetur vir Jonadabo”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt, etc.
- ft683 -- Elench. Trihaeres. c. 24,
- ft684 -- Itinerarium, p. 82.
- ft685 -- Eccles. Hist. l. 2. c. 23.

- ft686 -- Apud Witsii Exercitat. 9. de Rechabitis in Miscell. Sacr. tom. 2. p. 235, 236.
- ft687 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon fol. 26. 1.
- ft688 -- **μtnj t l pt yl wa** “forte, [vel] fortasse cadet deprecatio eorum”, Piscator, Schmidt. So Pagninus, Montanus, etc.
- ft689 -- **μl çwryb μ[h l k** “omnis populus Hierosolyma”, Cocceius; “omnis populus in Hierosolyma”, Schmidt.
- ft690 -- **an bç** “sede quaeso”, Vatablus, Schmidt.
- ft691 -- **wh[r l a çya** “vir ad socium suum”, Montanus; “ad proximum suum”, Vatablus; “ad amicum suum”, Pagninus; “erga socium suum”, Schmidt.
- ft692 -- T. Hieros. Moed Katon, fol. 83. 2.
- ft693 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 26. 1.
- ft694 -- T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 26. 1.
- ft695 -- **l [** “de”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft696 -- **l [** “de”, Schmidt, etc.
- ft697 -- Vid. Yalkut & Kimchi in loc.
- ft698 -- Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 39. p. 454.
- ft699 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 3.
- ft700 -- **μkytçpn waçt l a** “ne efferatis animas vestras”, Tigurine version, Calvin; “ne tollatis (in spem) animas vestras”, Schmidt.
- ft701 -- **twl [j b** “cum recessisset”, Cocceius; “ascendisset”, Schmidt.
- ft702 -- **l yj ynpm** “propter exercitum”, Cocceius, Schmidt; “propter copias”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft703 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 3.
- ft704 -- **μ[h Æwtb μçm ql j l** “ad lubricandum seipsum”, Montanus; “ad delabendum”, Junius & Tremellius; “elabendo”, Piscator; “ut subduecret se”, Grotius.
- ft705 -- “Ut partem acciperet ibi in medio populi”, Schmidt.
- ft706 -- Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Sota, fol. 42. 1. & Pesikta apud Yalkut in loc.

- ft707 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 3.
- ft708 -- rḳḳ “mendacium est”, Vatablus; “falsitas, calumnia”, Schmidt.
- ft709 -- rwbh tyb l a “in, [vel] ad domum laci”, Pagninus, Montanus; “in domum foveae”, Schmidt.
- ft710 -- twynj h l aw “et in cellulas illius”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “et ad cellas”, Schmidt.
- ft711 -- yj w l l ḳl wḳpn wl htyhw “et erit illi anima ejus in praedam et vivet”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft712 -- hdkl w “ut capiat eam”, Schmidt.
- ft713 -- “Et capiet illam”, Cocceius; “et capiet eam”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft714 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 5.
- ft715 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 53. Shalshet Hakabala, fol. 13. 1.
- ft716 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 5.
- ft717 -- tmyw “moriatur enim”, Schmidt.
- ft718 -- “Qui moriturus fuerat in loco suo propter famem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft719 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 5.
- ft720 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 5.)
- ft721 -- Temple-Service, c. 33. p. 2028.
- ft722 -- yl a [mḳt al “non audies me”, V. L. Schmidt; “non audies ad me”, Montanus; “non auscultabis mihi”, Piscator.
- ft723 -- Æml ḳ yḳna “viri pacis tuae”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Schmidt.
- ft724 -- ḳab Pdḳt “combures igne”, Vatablus, Schmidt; “cremabis in igne”, Montanus.
- ft725 -- twmt al w “ne moriaris”, Gataker, Schmidt; “ut non moriaris”, Piscator.
- ft726 -- ytnj t yna l ypm “cadere feci deprecationem meam”, Pagninus; “cadere faciens fui”, etc. Schmidt.

- ft727 -- **wmm wçrj yw** “et tacuerunt ab eo”, Pagninus, Montanus;
“siluerunt”, Calvin.
- ft728 -- **rbdh [mçn al** “quia non auditum est verbum”, Pagninus,
Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft729 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 8. sect. 2.
- ft730 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 608.
- ft731 -- **µyj pçm wta rbdyw** “et locutus est cum eo, [vel] ipso iudicia”,
Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft732 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanct. p. 154.
- ft733 -- **µyj bj br** “praefectus coquorum”; so some in Vatablus; “magister
laniorum”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft734 -- **wyl [µyç Æyny[w** “et oculos tuos pone super eum”, V. L.
Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft735 -- Onomastie. Sacr. p. 604.
- ft736 -- **tybh l a** “in domum”, Schmidt; “ad domum”, Pagninus,
Montanus.
- ft737 -- **Æj l ma j l m** “eripiendo eripiam te”, Schmidt; “eruo eruoam te”,
Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft738 -- Comment in Hos. v. 8,
- ft739 -- **Æyl [yny[ta µyçaw** “ponam oculos meos super te”, Schmidt;
“et ponam oculum meum super te”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft740 -- Shebiit, c. 9. sect. 5. & Pea, c. 7. sect. 1.
- ft741 -- **ynpl dm[l** “ut stem coram”, Vatablus, Pagninus; “ad standum
coram”, Schmidt.
- ft742 -- **ytqw** “et autumnii fructus”, Schmidt; “fructus autumnales”, Vatablus.
- ft743 -- **[dt [dyh** “nonne cognoscendo cognosces”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft744 -- **çpn Ætkhl** “ut percutiat animam tuam”, Munster; “te in anima”,
Pagninus; “secundum animam”, Piscator; “ad percutiendum te (quoad)
animam”, Schmidt.

- ft745 -- **rbdh ta ç[t l a** “noli facere hoc verbum”, V. L. “ne facias verbum hoc”, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft746 -- **rqç** “mendacium”, Schmidt; “falsum”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft747 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 76.
- ft748 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft749 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft750 -- **dyqph rça** “quia illum praefecerat”, Vatablus. So Ben Melech.
- ft751 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft752 -- **hmj l mh yçna ta** “[inquam] viros belli”, Schmidt; “bellatores scilicet”, Piscator.
- ft753 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft754 -- Ibid. (Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 4.)
- ft755 -- **whyl dg dyb** “in manu Gedaliae”, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft756 -- So T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 61. 1.
- ft757 -- “Ad latus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “in loco”, some in Munster; “cum Gedalia”, De. Dieu, Gataker.
- ft758 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 4.)
- ft759 -- **ˆwma ynb l a** “cum filiis Ammon”, Schmidt.
- ft760 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 5.
- ft761 -- **hmj l mh yçna µyrbg** “mares, viros belli”, Schmidt; “nempe vires bellatores”, Piscator.
- ft762 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 5.
- ft763 -- **ˆnj wyw** “imprimis Johanan”, Schmidt; “nempe Johanan”, Piscator, Grotius.
- ft764 -- **wynpl µktnj t l yphl** “ut cadere facerem preces vestras coram ipso”, Schmidt.
- ft765 -- **[mç ytl bl** “ita ut non auscultetis”, Piscator, Cocceius; “ut non obediatis”, Pagninus, Schmidt; “ut non audiatis”, so some in Vatablus.

- ft766 -- **μkyl** [“alloquitur vos”, Junius & Tremellius; “ad vos”, so some in Vatablus.
- ft767 -- “Contra vos”, Calvin.
- ft768 -- **μkb ytdy[h** “contestatus sum vos”, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft769 -- **μkytwçpnb μty[th** “seduxistis [me] animis vestris”, so some in Vatablus; “fefellistis me”, Munster. So Ben Melech.
- ft770 -- “Fecistis errare animas vestras”, Pagninus; “fefellistis”, Calvin.
- ft771 -- “Seduxeritis vos contra animas vestras”, Schmidt.
- ft772 -- **μt[mç al w** “et tamen non vultis parere”, Vatablus.
- ft773 -- **w[dt [dy** “sciendo scietis”, Schmidt; “sciendo sciatis”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft774 -- **r qç** “mendacium”, Schmidt.
- ft775 -- Enterpe, sive l. 2. c. 30, 107.
- ft776 -- Apud Adrichem. Theatrum Terrae Sanctae, p. 125.
- ft777 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 470.
- ft778 -- **wryr pç** “teutorium elegans”, Montanus, Vatablus; “pulchrum”, Munster. So Ben Melech.
- ft779 -- Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 44. col. 456.
- ft780 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 59.
- ft781 -- So Schmidt.
- ft782 -- Vid. Aelian. de Animal. l. 11. c. 11.
- ft783 -- Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 3. c. 13. p. 117.
- ft784 -- Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft785 -- Apud Josph. Antiqu. ib. c. 11. sect 1. & contra Apion. l. 1. sect. 19. & Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 40. p. 455.
- ft786 -- Apud Joseph. Antiqu. ib. & contra Apion. l. 1. sect. 20.
- ft787 -- Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 456.
- ft788 -- **μydw hyh l k l a** “ad omnes Judaeos”, V. L. Castalio, Cocceius, Schmidt; “erga omnes”, Pagninus, Montanus.

- ft789 -- “Contra omnes Judaeos”, Junius & Tremellius; “de, [vel] contra”, Piscator.
- ft790 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 159.
- ft791 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanct. p. 121.
- ft792 -- Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9.
- ft793 -- **wyçn tw[r** “mala mulierum ejus”, Schmidt; “et mala foeminarum ejus”, Cocceius; “uxorum ejus”, V. L. Montanus.
- ft794 -- “Et mala uxorum cujusque illorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft795 -- **μçpn ta μυαçnm** “elevant, [vel] elevantes animam, suam”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Calvin; “attolunt animam suam”, Schmidt.
- ft796 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 77.
- ft797 -- Apolog. c. 23.
- ft798 -- **μybwj hyhgw** “et eramus hilares”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft799 -- “Daniel lunae propere novae, Daniel noctis mediae, [poculum]”. Carmin. l. 3. Ode 19.
- ft800 -- **hbx[hl** “ad exhilarandum illud”, Calvin; “ad laetificandum eam”, Munster, Pagninus.
- ft801 -- “Idolificando”, Piscator; so Ben Melech; “ut faciamus illas idolum”, Cocceius.
- ft802 -- **wnyçna yd[l bmh** “absque praestantibus viris nostris”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft803 -- **rpsm ytm** “viri numeri”, Montanus, etc.
- ft804 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 161, 162, 169. & Melpomene, sive l. 4. c. 159.
- ft805 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft806 -- **tyj nab yt[gy** “in gemitu meo”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatanblus, “in suspirio meo”, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft807 -- Vid. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 32. p. 286.
- ft808 -- **μywg l [** “super gentes”, Montanus; “de gentibus”, Cocceius.
- ft809 -- L. 2. sive Euterpe, c. 158.

- ft810 -- **myswsh wrsa** “ligate equos”, Montanus, Calvin; “alligate”, Schmidt.
- ft811 -- **wtky p̄hyrwb̄gw** “et fortes eorum contusi sunt, vel coutunduntur”, Schmidt, Cocceius, Piscator; “contriti sunt”, Vatablus.
- ft812 -- **swny l a** “non fugiet”, Pagninus, Montanus; “non effugiet”, Munster, Tigurine version.
- ft813 -- **wl l hth** “insanite”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt; “insano impetu agitamini”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft814 -- Cyropaedia, l. 6. c. 14. & l. 7. c. 9.
- ft815 -- Phaleg. l. 4. c. 26. col. 266.
- ft816 -- **awhh p̄wyh** “dies autem”, V. L. “atque dies”, Junius & Tremellius; “sed dies ille”, Schmidt.
- ft817 -- Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 51. col. 628, 629.
- ft818 -- Geograph. l. 16. p. 525.
- ft819 -- Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 734.
- ft820 -- E Trogo, l. 36. c. 3.
- ft821 -- Comment in 2 Kings xx. 13. So R. Levi Ben Gersom in ib.
- ft822 -- **yrx yj q** “tolle resinam”, Montanus, Munster, Calvin, Grotius.
- ft823 -- Nat. Hist. l. 24. c. 6.
- ft824 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 77.
- ft825 -- **rxardkwbn awbl** “de venturo Nebuchadretzare”, Junius & Tremellius; “de adventu Nebuchadretsaris”, Calvin, Munster, Piscator; “de veniendo”, Vatablus, Montanus.
- ft826 -- De. Animal. l. 11. c. 10.
- ft827 -- Apud Gregory’s Posthuma, p. 236.
- ft828 -- **waç p̄yrxm Æl m** “rex Aegypti, [rex] tumultus”, Munster, Vatablus; “rex perturbationis”, Calvin; so Ben Melech; “rex Aegypti, [vir] strepertus est”, Piscator, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft829 -- **d[wmh ryb[h** “transire fecit solennitatem”, De. Dieu.

- ft830 -- Borchard, Breidenbach, etc. in Lightfoot, Chorograph. on John, vol. 2. p. 495.
- ft831 -- Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 1, c, 51, 331, 383.
- ft832 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanctae, Zabulon, No. 95. p. 143.
- ft833 -- Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 113, 114. Ed. 7.
- ft834 -- Ib. p. 57.
- ft835 -- Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19.
- ft836 -- Ut supra (Theatrum Terrae Sanctae), Issachar, No. 19. p. 35.
- ft837 -- Antiqu. l. 5. c. 1. sect. 22.
- ft838 -- T. Bab. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 2.
- ft839 -- **awby μyb l mrkkw μyrhb dwbtk yk** “quia sicut Tabor in montibus, et sicut Carmel (scil. in montibus est) ita in mare veniet”, Schmidt.
- ft840 -- **Æl yç [hl wq yl k** “vase [vel] instrumenta migrationis fac tibi”, Piscator, Schmidt; “praepara”, Vatablus; “pare”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft841 -- “-----variisque coloribus Apis”, Ovid. Metamorph. l. 9. Fab. 12.
- ft842 -- De. Orbis Situ, l. 1. c. 9.
- ft843 -- Polyhistor. c. 45.
- ft844 -- Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 46.
- ft845 -- L. 3. sive Thalia, c. 28.
- ft846 -- Geograph. l. 17. p. 555. Ed. Casaubon.
- ft847 -- Piguorii Mensa Isiaca, tab. 4.
- ft848 -- De. Animal. l. 11. c. 10.
- ft849 -- **ḏq** “mactator”, Grotius. So Jarchi.
- ft850 -- So in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 32. 2.
- ft851 -- **qbrm yl g [k** “velut vituli saginae”, Montanus, Cocceius,
- ft852 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 50. 2.
- ft853 -- Hist. Animal. l. 4. c. 9.
- ft854 -- De. Animal. l. 15. c. 13.

- ft855 -- **rqj y al yk** “ut non investigetur”, Calvin.
- ft856 -- R. David Ganz. Chronolog. par. 2. fol. 10. 1. Elias in Tishbi, p. 11.
- ft857 -- Vid. Schmidt in loc & Stockium, p. 71. So Bochart. Phaleg. l. 1. c. 1. col. 5, 6.
- ft858 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 571, etc.
- ft859 -- Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 1. & contra Apion, l. 1. c. 19.
- ft860 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 75.
- ft861 -- **hawl mw** “et plenitudinem ejus”, Schmidt, etc.
- ft862 -- Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
- ft863 -- Clio, sive l. 1. c. 105.
- ft864 -- Vid. Bochart. Phaleg l. 2. c. 12. p. 88.
- ft865 -- **bawml** “ad Moab”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “de Moabo”, Vatablus, Cocceius.
- ft866 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft867 -- **ˆwbçj bawm tl ht dw[ˆya** “nulla amplius gloriatio Moab in Chesbon”, Calvin; “non ultra laus, Moab in Chesbon”, Montanus; to the same purpose Vatablus.
- ft868 -- **ˆwbçj a bçj** “cogitavit”, “excogitavit”.
- ft869 -- **ymdt** “silebis”, Montanus; so R. Judah in Ben Melech; “ad silentium redigeris”; so some in Vatablus.
- ft870 -- **ˆmdm wmdt**.
- ft871 -- Geograph. l. 6. c. 7.
- ft872 -- De. locis Heb. fol. 87. H. & 93. B.
- ft873 -- Not. Miscell. in Port. Mosis, p. 17, 18.
- ft874 -- Allegor. l. 2. p. 104.
- ft875 -- R. Iedaia Habadreshi, Bechinat Olam, c. 30. p. 184.
- ft876 -- Comment in Isaiam, c. 15. 2.
- ft877 -- Vid. Castell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 1749. & Gol. Lex. Arab. p. 2064.

- ft878 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft879 -- **axt axn yk** “quia volando volabit”, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; “quia avolando avolabit”, Schmidt; “nam avolabit”, Piscator.
- ft880 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft881 -- **μy[x** “viatores”, Tigurine version.
- ft882 -- Apud Drusium in fragmentis in loc.
- ft883 -- Nat. Hist. l. 11. e. 37.
- ft884 -- Deipnosoph. l. 11. p. 235. Rhodigin. 1. 30.
- ft885 -- **hl [hyr[w** “et civitates ejus conscendit”, Montanus; “ascendit super urbes ejus”, Gataker.
- ft886 -- “Sub. hostis”, Vatablus, Calvin; “vastator”, Gataker.
- ft887 -- “Et urbes ejus in quas ascendit”, Schmidt.
- ft888 -- **wyrwj b rj bm** “electio electorum ejus”, Gataker.
- ft889 -- **wt[r** “malum ejus”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft890 -- **wayqb bawm qpsw** “plaudat”, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; “plaudet”, Piscator; “complodat”, Munster, Tigurine version, Schmidt; “allidet”, Lyranus.
- ft891 -- “Complodet manus [super] Moabum [jacentem] in vomitu suo”, Gataker.
- ft892 -- **ddwnt t** “commovisti te”, Vatablus, Calvin; “commoves te”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “motitas te”, Schmidt.
- ft893 -- Iliad. 21. v. 495.
- ft894 -- Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92.
- ft895 -- **wç[^k al wydb** “vaniloqui ejus non rectum fecerunt”, Cocceius. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 38. 1.
- ft896 -- **hghy** “gemet”, Montanus.
- ft897 -- **ykbm** “a fletu”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Schmidt.
- ft898 -- “Supra fletum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gataker.

- ft899 -- **l mrkm** “de Carmelo”, V. L. “de Charmel”, Montanus; “ex Carmelo”, Schmidt.
- ft900 -- Aristotel. Hist. Animal. l. 4. c. 11. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 51.
- ft901 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 45.
- ft902 -- **dpsm hl k** “totus luctus (est) vel omnia luctus (sunt)”, Schmidt; “totus erit planctus”, Junius & Tremellius; “per omnia erit planctus”, Piscator.
- ft903 -- **ytrbç** “totalis confractio praedicitur”, Schmidt.
- ft904 -- **htj Āya** “quomodo consternata est”, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft905 -- **wl yl yh** “ululate”, Munster, Piscator; “ejulate”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft906 -- **mysn j wkm** “ex virbus (soil. suis) erunt fugientes”, Schmidt.
- ft907 -- **ça yk** “quia ignis”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft908 -- Antiqu. l. 13. c. 13. sect 5.
- ft909 -- **ˆwm[ynbl** “ad filios Ammon”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft910 -- “Contra filios Ammonis”, Schmidt; “de [vel] contra”, Vatablus; “contra”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft911 -- **dg ta µkl m çry [wdm** “cur igitur haereditate possedit Melchom Gad?” V. L. Lutherus, Sanctius, Castalio.
- ft912 -- **µyab** “sunt venientes”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft913 -- Hist. l. 5. p. 414.
- ft914 -- Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.
- ft915 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
- ft916 -- Ibid. (Antiqu.) l. 1. c. 11. sect. 5.
- ft917 -- Geograph. l. 16. p. 519, 520.
- ft918 -- **Æqm[bz** “defluxit vallis tua”, V. L. Schmidt; “fluxit”, Pagninus, Montanus; “fluit”, Cocceius.
- ft919 -- **hbbwçh tbh** “O filia pervesa”, Schmidt; “pervicax” vel “temeraria”, Grotius; “rebellis”, Pagninus, Calvin; “refractaria”, Montanus.

- ft920 -- Dialog. cum Tryphone Judaeo, p. 347.
- ft921 -- Comment. in lib. Job, fol. 2. 1. A.
- ft922 -- Misn. Yadaim, c. 4. sect. 4. T. B. Beracot, fol. 28. 1.
- ft923 -- **μwdal** “ad Idumeam”, V. L. “ad Edom”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft924 -- “Contra”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft925 -- **h[wmç** “auditum audivi”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft926 -- **Æyttn** “posui”, Munster; “reddidi”, Piscator; “dedi”, V. L. Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft927 -- Dabo, Pagninus, Montanus. So Ben Melech.
- ft928 -- **Ætxl pt** “simulacrum tuum”, Pagninus, Vatablus; “idolum”, Grotius. So R. Sol. Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 12. 1.
- ft929 -- “-----Deus, inde ego furum, aviumque Maxima formido.” Horat. Sermon. 1. 1. Satyr. 8. ver. 3, 4. “Et custos furum atque avium cum falce saligna Hellespontiaci servet tutela Priapi”. Virgil. Georgic. 1. 4. ver. 110, 111.
- ft930 -- Comment. in Obad. fol. 52. C.
- ft931 -- Iliad. 22. v. 308.
- ft932 -- De. Hist. Animal. 1. 9. c. 32.
- ft933 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 10. c. 3.
- ft934 -- Ibid. c. 6.
- ft935 -- Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 41. p. 193.
- ft936 -- Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 82. Ed. 7.
- ft937 -- Comment. in Zech. xi. 3.
- ft938 -- **ˆtya hwn l a** “ad caulam fortis”, i.e. “pastoris validi et fortis”, Schmidt.
- ft939 -- “Sub. loci robusti”, Vatablus; so Ben Melech.
- ft940 -- **hyl [m wnxyra h[ygra yk** “nam momento currere faciam cum (nempe Nebuchadanosarem) supra eam”, De. Dieu, Gataker.
- ft941 -- Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1.
- ft942 -- **qçmdl** “ad Damascum”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.

- ft943 -- “Contra Damascum”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft944 -- **wgmn** “liquefacti sunt”, Vatablus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft945 -- **htpr** “remissa erit”, Junius & Tremellius; “remissa est”, Cocceius, Piscator; “remissa facta est”, Schmidt.
- ft946 -- **hqyzj h j j rw** “et apprehendit tremorem”, Munster; “et horrorem apprehendit”, Schmidt; “et horrorem febrilem prendet”, Junius & Tremellius; “apprehendet”, Piscator.
- ft947 -- Opera, par. 2. Ep. 24. p. 145.
- ft948 -- Itinerarium, p. 54, 55.
- ft949 -- Travels, par. 2. B. 1. p. I9.
- ft950 -- Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 121, 122. Ed. 7.
- ft951 -- Geograph. l. 16. p. 520.
- ft952 -- **kl** “certe”, Gataker.
- ft953 -- **rdql** “ad Cedar”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; “contra Kedarem”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “contra Arabian”, Schmidt.
- ft954 -- **hkj** “percussurus est”, Junius & Tremellius, Grotius.
- ft955 -- **mdq ynb** “filios Chedem”, Montanus, Vatablus.
- ft956 -- **wyl ç ywg l a** “ad gentem quietam”, V. L. Munster, Schmidt; “tranquillam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “pacificam”, so some in Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft957 -- **hj bl bçwy** “habitantem confidenter”, V. L. Pagninus; “in fiducia”, Montanus; “in fiducia magna”, Vatablus; “secure”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft958 -- **hap yxwxq** “attonsi comam”, V. L. “praecisi lateribus”, Piscator.
- ft959 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 4.
- ft960 -- Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 25, 26, 27.
- ft961 -- De. urbibus apud Cocceium in loc.
- ft962 -- Geograph. l. 16. in principio, 507.
- ft963 -- In T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 10. 2.

- ft964 -- **l bb l a** “ad Babel”, Montanus; “de Babylone”, V. L. “de Babel”, Cocceius.
- ft965 -- **hmhb d[w μdam** “ab homine et usque ad animal”, Pagninus, Montanus; “ad bestiam”, Schmidt.
- ft966 -- **μyrh** “ad montes”, Vatablus. So R. Jonah in Ben Melech.
- ft967 -- “A montibus”, Piscator.
- ft968 -- **l ykçm** “orbantis”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Piscator.
- ft969 -- Geograph. l. 11. p. 361.
- ft970 -- **μqyr bwçy al** “quae non redibit frustra”, Schmidt; “quae non revertitur frustra”, De. Dieu; “qui non redit vacuus”, Cocceius.
- ft971 -- **hçd hl g[k** “sicut vitula exterens”, Tigurine version; “triturons”, Cocceius, De. Dieu.
- ft972 -- **μyrybak yl hxt** “hinnistis sicut fortes (equi)”, Munster, Vatablus, Piscator, Schmidt; “ut caballi”, Cocceius.
- ft973 -- **μywg tyrj a** “finis seu extremitas gentium”, Vatablus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft974 -- Comment. Ebr. p. 30.
- ft975 -- Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 509.
- ft976 -- Comment. in Isaiam, fol. 23. C.
- ft977 -- Cyropaedia, l. 9. c. 1. & l. 7. c. 1.
- ft978 -- **hyl a wdy** “jacite contra eam”, Pagninus, De. Dieu; “jacite ad eam”, Montanus.
- ft979 -- Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
- ft980 -- **wmx[** “exossavit eum”, Munster, Montanus, Cocceius.
- ft981 -- **whwn l a** “ad habitaculum”, vel potius “caulam”, Schmidt.
- ft982 -- **μytrm ðah l [** “contra terram rebellantium”, Pagninus; “super”, Montanus; “contra terram rebellionum”, Schmidt.
- ft983 -- **dwqp ybçwy** “habitatores visitationis”, Vatablus, Calvin, De. Dieu.

- ft984 -- **wrxwa** “thesaurum suum”, Vulg. Lat. Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft985 -- **wm[z yl k** “vasa irae suae”, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus; “vasa indignationis suae”, Montanus.
- ft986 -- **qm** “a fine”, Vatablus, Montanus, Schmidt; “a fine terrae”, Piscator; “ab extremis finibus”, Tigurine version, Grotius.
- ft987 -- **hysbam** “horrea ejus”, Montanus, Cocceius; “granaria ejus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft988 -- **pymr [wmk** “sicut acervos, sub. tritici”, Vatablus; “frumenti”, Piscator.
- ft989 -- Carmin. l. 2. Ode 16.
- ft990 -- Cyropaedia, l. 2. c. 1.
- ft991 -- **kl** “certe”.
- ft992 -- Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 23.
- ft993 -- Ibid.
- ft994 -- **wdz** Heb. “superbia”, Schmidt; vel “vir superbiae”, Piscator; so Abarbanel.
- ft995 -- “Erit”, Abarbanel; “irruet”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft996 -- **pydck l [brj** “gladie, super Chaldaeos, scil. veni, ades”, Schmidt.
- ft997 -- **pydbh** “vectes”; so some in Gataker.
- ft998 -- “Divinos”, V. L. Vatablus, Tigurine version, Calvin, Pagninus; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 84.
- ft999 -- **wl anw** “stultescant”, Schmidt; “ut stulte agant”, Piscator; “et insanient”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft1000 -- **wl l hty** “gloriantur”, Vulg. Lat. Schmidt, Munster, Tigurine version.
- ft1001 -- **pymyab** “horrendis” vel “terriculamentis”, Schmidt, Munster, Calvin; “terricula”, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft1002 -- Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 26.

- ft1003 -- Cyropaedia, l. 5. c. 15.
- ft1004 -- Cyropaedia, l. 5. c. 15.
- ft1005 -- Terpsichore, sive l. 5. c. 49. & Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 61.
- ft1006 -- Cyropaedia, l. 1. c. 5.
- ft1007 -- Ibid. l. 4. c. 16.
- ft1008 -- Carmin. l. 1. Ode 29.
- ft1009 -- Xenophon. Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 23.
- ft1010 -- Ibid.
- ft1011 -- **rwj b ym** “quis juvenis?” Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft1012 -- **pyrz** “alienos”, Cocceius; some in Vatablus; so Kimchi, Ben Melech, Abendana.
- ft1013 -- **ml a** “viduus, [sive] viduatus”, Vatablus, Calvin, Montanus; “ut vidua”, Pagninus; “orbis”, Schmidt.
- ft1014 -- **muca hal m muxra yk** “quia terra illorum repleta est delicto, [sive] reatu, [vel] poena”, Grotius; so some in Gataker. **larcy cwdqm** “a Sancto Israelis”, Montanus, Schmidt; “propter Sanctum Israelis”, Vatablus, Calvin, Cocceius; so Ben Melech.
- ft1015 -- **wmdt l a** “ne excindamini”, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt; “ne committitote ut excindamini”, Piscator.
- ft1016 -- **rbct** “confracta est”, Schmidt; “fracta est”, Cocceius; “contrita est”, Piscator.
- ft1017 -- Xenophon, Cyropaedia l. 4. c. 2.
- ft1018 -- **wnytqdx** “justitas nostras”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft1019 -- **pyxj h wrbh** “acuite sagittas”, V. L. Castalio; “exacuite”, Montanus.
- ft1020 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 148.
- ft1021 -- “Ponite pennas in sagittis”, so some in Vatablus.

- ft1022 -- **μyj l ɕh wal m** **πληρουτε τας φαρετρας**, Sept. “implete pharetras”, V. L. Castalio, So Syr. this version is preferred by Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 860, 945.
- ft1023 -- “Implete scuta, scil. oleo”, Stockius, p. 1098.
- ft1024 -- **μybrah** “insidiatores”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft1025 -- **wɕpnb** “per animam suam”, Pagninus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft1026 -- **ql yk** “ut, [vel] quasi bruchō”, V. L. Cocceius, Montanus, Grotius, Schmidt.
- ft1027 -- **yl hta ɓm** “malleus es, [vel] fuisti mihi”, Pagninus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft1028 -- “Dispersi, perdidī”, Lutherus; “conquassavi”, Munster; “dissipavi”, Piscator.
- ft1029 -- **yt xp nw** “ut dissiparem”, Junius & Tremellius; “ut dispergam”, Schmidt.
- ft1030 -- **yt ml ɕw** “sed rependam”, Piscator; “sed retribuam”, Schmidt.
- ft1031 -- **wɕdq** “sanctificate”, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft1032 -- Cyropaedia, l. 5. c. 15. & l. 7. c. 21.
- ft1033 -- **ql yk** “sicut bruchum”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft1034 -- De. Animal. l. 10. c. 13.
- ft1035 -- **rms** “horripilantem”, Montanus; “qui horret”, Piscator, Cocceius.
- ft1036 -- Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 2. col. 456.
- ft1037 -- “Horret apex capitis, medio fera lumina surgunt Vertice”, etc. Epigram. 13.
- ft1038 -- “Non tam [horrentem], quam [horrendum] sonat”.
- ft1039 -- **l j tw** “et parturiet”, Schmidt. So Ben Melech.
- ft1040 -- **hmq** “stabit, [vel] stant”, Schmidt.
- ft1041 -- **μj l hl wl dj** “cessaverunt a praelio”, V. L. “desinent pugnare”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “cessarunt pugnare”, Schmidt. So Pagninus, Montanus.

- ft1042 -- Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 5. c. 19. Herodot. l. 1. sive Clio. c. 190.
- ft1043 -- Xenophon, ib. l. 5. c. 10.
- ft1044 -- **hxqm** “a fine”, Montanus; “ab extremitate”, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, De. Dieu, Schmidt.
- ft1045 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 191.
- ft1046 -- Politic. l. 3. c. 3.
- ft1047 -- **wçptn** “praeoccupata”, V. L. “comprehensa”, Montanus; “occupati”, Tigurine version, Schmidt.
- ft1048 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 191.
- ft1049 -- **µymga ta** “paludes”, V. L. Syr. Grotius; “stagna”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft1050 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 191.
- ft1051 -- Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 22.
- ft1052 -- <Arabic> “arundinetum feris et hinc munimentum, castellum”, Camus apud Golium, col. 33. “castellum, munimentum viarum, arces”, Castel. Lex. col. 29.
- ft1053 -- **hkyrdh t[** “tempus calcandi eam”, Pagninus, Calvin; “tempus calcare eam”, Montanus; “eo tempore quo illa calcari solet”, Piscator.
- ft1054 -- The “Cetib”, or textual reading, is “us”; but the “Keri”, or marginal reading, is “me”, which our version follows, and so the same in the four following words, in the text.
- ft1055 -- Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 14. col. 436.
- ft1056 -- Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 3. c. 14. col. 436.
- ft1057 -- Apud Strabo. Geograph. l. 15. p. 480.
- ft1058 -- De. Animal. l. 6. c. 63.
- ft1059 -- Itinerarium, p. 76.
- ft1060 -- T. Bab. Megilia, fol. 15. 2.
- ft1061 -- <Arabic> “furor ac repentina mors”, Camus apud Golium, col. 1634. “tremor, timor mortis aegroto contingens”, Giggeius apud Castel. col. 2772. So R. Sol. Urbui. Ohel Moed, fol. 32. 1. interprets the words of trembling.

- ft1062 -- Canon. Chron. p. 607.
- ft1063 -- Apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 19.
- ft1064 -- Var. Hist. l. 13. c. 3.
- ft1065 -- Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
- ft1066 -- L. 1. sive Attica, p. 29.
- ft1067 -- Hist. l. 8. c. 7.
- ft1068 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 189, 190.
- ft1069 -- **l çm l [l çm** “dominator super dominatorem”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft1070 -- **^kl** “praeterea”; so Gataker.
- ft1071 -- Connexion, par. 1. B. 2. p. 101. B. 4. p. 242, 243.
- ft1072 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 178.
- ft1073 -- Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
- ft1074 -- Herodot. l. 1. c. 181.
- ft1075 -- Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
- ft1076 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 178.
- ft1077 -- Geograph l. 16. p. 508.
- ft1078 -- Bibl. l. 2. p. 96.
- ft1079 -- Apud Diodor. ib.
- ft1080 -- **hbj rh l bb twmwj** “mari Babelis lati”, Schmidt.
- ft1081 -- Politic. l. 3. c. 3.
- ft1082 -- Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
- ft1083 -- Ut supra. (Bibl. l. 2. p. 96.)
- ft1084 -- Ut supra. (Geograph l. 16. p. 508.)
- ft1085 -- Apud Marsham Canon. p. 590.
- ft1086 -- Vita Apollon. l. 1. e. 18.
- ft1087 -- Orat. 3. p. 236.
- ft1088 -- Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 26.
- ft1089 -- L. 1. sive Clio, c. 179.

- ft1090 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 25. p. 72, 73.
- ft1091 -- Vid. L'Empereur, Not. in Mosis Kimchii, [οδοιπορια](#), p. 254, 255. & Noldii Concordant. Ebr, p. 114. No. 577.
- ft1092 -- [hj wnm rç](#) "princeps Menuchae", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft1093 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 45. Vid. Kimchi in loc.
- ft1094 -- [hwby Pa l \[yk](#) "nam praeter iram Jehovae, quae fuit contra Hierosolyman", Schmidt.
- ft1095 -- T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 18. 2. & Taanith, fol. 28. 2.
- ft1096 -- Antiqu. 1. 10. c. 8. sect. 2. Ed. Hudson.
- ft1097 -- Ibid. (Antiqu. 1. 10. c. 8. sect. 2. Ed. Hudson.)
- ft1098 -- [µyj pçm wta rbdyw](#) "qui cum eo locutus est judicium", Schmidt. So Cocceius.
- ft1099 -- [Æl m ynpl dm\[](#) "qui setit coram rege", Schmidt.
- ft1100 -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 29. 1.
- ft1101 -- Vol 4. p. 189. & vol. 21. p. 61.
- ft1102 -- Annales Vet. Test. p. 131.
- ft1103 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
- ft1104 -- Scripture Chronology, p 684.
- ft1105 -- Autiqu. 1. 10. c. 8. sect. 5.
- ft1106 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
- ft1107 -- [l wdgh tyb l k taw](#) "omnem domum magnatis", Cocceius; "omnemque domum magnam", Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft1108 -- Menachot, c. 11. sect. 6.
- ft1109 -- [twnkmh tj t rça](#) "qui erant in loco basium", Piscator,
- ft1110 -- [hj wr](#) "ad ventum", Montanus; "ad omnem ventum", Tigurine version; so Ben Melech; "versus ventos", Schmidt; "ventum versus", Piscator; "in ventum", Cocceius.
- ft1111 -- Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.
- ft1112 -- Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 2.

- ft1113 -- **Æl mh ynp yarm** “ex videntibus facies, [vel] faciem regis”,
Montanus, Piscator; “de videre facientibus facies regis”, Schmidt.
- ft1114 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 8. sect. 5.
- ft1115 -- Ibid.
- ft1116 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 8. sect. 5.
- ft1117 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 77.
- ft1118 -- Seder Olam, c. 28. p. 81.
- ft1119 -- Canon, Ed. Bainbridge, p. 48.
- ft1120 -- Apud Euseb. Evangel. Praepar. l. 9. c. 41. p. 457.
- ft1121 -- Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 8.
- ft1122 -- Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 20.
- ft1123 -- **twbj wta rbdyw** “ac locutus est cum eo bona”, V. L. Schmidt.
- ft1124 -- Annales Vet. Test. p. 138.
- ft1125 -- Scripture Chronology, p. 710.
- ft1126 -- Vol. 21. p. 64.
- ft1127 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 28. p. 81.